

# Welcome to Bronco Nation!!!



**2023-2024**

## **Student/Family Handbook**

Bennett's Mill Middle School

210 Lester Road

Fayetteville, GA 30215

Phone: 770-716-3982

School Hours: 8:10 am to 3:10 pm

### **Our Mission**

To construct a learning environment that promotes excellence, character, and student achievement.

### **Our Vision**

Our students will be capable of living and working effectively, responsibly and productively in a global environment.

# Our Bronco Motto:

*We are **E**ngaged*

*We are **E**mpowered*

*We are **E**thical*

***E<sup>3</sup>** Is How You See  
Excellence In Me!*

Greetings Bronco Families,



We are very excited to have you here for our 2023-2024 school year!

To our sixth grade students, middle school is the beginning of a new and exciting journey. For our returning students, each year brings new responsibilities, opportunities, and room for educational growth. To our new students and families, WELCOME!!!! We are so happy you are here!

We are proud to say that we have a wonderful dedicated faculty and staff that has made a commitment to providing our middle school students with support during this unique time in their lives. Our staff come from different backgrounds and have a variety of knowledge and experience that help enhance and support our diverse community.

Bronco parents and students are encouraged to participate in all opportunities that are offered here at BMMS. We have many clubs, organizations, an award winning Fine Arts Department, and several championship athletic teams. Please consider one of these fantastic opportunities!

We believe family involvement is key to a successful education and increases the success of our students. Our PTO offers leadership and volunteer opportunities for parents and grandparents to stay involved. Please consider joining our PTO.

Our Website contains current information about our school operations. This includes the school calendar for upcoming events as well as a section of quick links to our most frequently asked questions.

Please make sure to stay informed by reading all emails from the school and the district, and by creating a login for Schoology and Infinite Campus. Access instructions for these two platforms can be found on our website or at FCBOE.org.

Here at Bennett's Mill, we value a safe learning environment for our students and strive to make their experience here a positive and fruitful one. We appreciate your efforts to support us in teaching our students to be E<sup>3</sup>: Engaged, Empowered, and Ethical.

We are excited to be on this middle school journey with you!

J.P. Ward, Principal  
Aimee Gumerson, Assistant Principal  
Rica Smith, Assistant Principal

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# Attendance

## Arrival and Departure Procedures

Students can be dropped off as early as 7:40 am through the car rider lane. Students will be directed to enter the building through the bus loop until 8:10 am. After 8:10 am, students must report to the front office to sign in.

Car rider students must remain in the car until the vehicle reaches the front sidewalk. Students should not be dropped off in the parking lot which causes an unsafe condition where the student must cross lanes of traffic to reach the school. Any student walking to school must use the concrete sidewalk and crosswalks.

Bus riders will enter the building through the Fine Arts hallway doors. All students will report to their 1st period / Home Room class. Students who are eating breakfast will eat in the designated area in the cafeteria.

When school is dismissed, all bus riders will exit using the designated hallway for their grade level, to the bus loop.. Bus rider students must exit the building and board the bus. Students cannot linger in the hallway or outside in the bus loop. Car riders will exit the building through the front doors. Car rider students must wait for their ride on the front sidewalk. Students cannot cross lanes of traffic to be picked up in the parking lot. Safety first! Car rider students must be picked up by 3:30 pm.

## Attendance Policy

Students are expected to be present at school each day school is in session. Students with good attendance usually experience better growth and achievement in the classroom. **Georgia Law allows for student absences to be excused only for the following reasons:**

1. Personal illness
2. A death or serious illness in the immediate family
3. Religious holidays
4. Absences mandated by order of governmental agencies
5. Conditions which render school attendance impossible/hazardous to health and safety as determined by the Fayette County School System.

All other absences are considered ***unexcused***.

Parents can help ensure good attendance by planning family trips at times when school is not in session and making appointments for after school hours whenever possible so that you do not have to check your student out of school.

A student must be in school and counted present for ½ day before being eligible to attend or participate in any school sponsored activity after normal school hours. A student must be in school on Friday to attend events over the weekend. Examples: games, practices, tryouts, dances, concerts, club meetings, etc. The cut-off time for ½ day attendance is 11:20 a.m.

Students must bring an excuse note from a parent to the front office the day the student returns from an absence. According to the Fayette County Public Schools Attendance Protocol, the school administration may request appropriate medical documentation after 5 personal notes are written by a parent/guardian to excuse absences. Please see the Attendance Protocol in the Fayette County Code of Conduct for additional attendance requirements. Parent notes will not be accepted after three days following the absence.

### **Checking In Late**

**Students who arrive at school after the 8:10 morning bell must sign in at the front office.** Please note that an excused tardy may include illness, funeral, doctor or dentist appointments, or absence mandated by a government agency. Students who check in late will be issued a Check-in pass which will admit the student to class.

Students who arrive on a late bus will not be counted tardy. If a student is on time for school but late to homeroom, he/she will be required to sign in at the front office. This will count as an unexcused tardy. In the event of excessive unexcused tardiness, disciplinary action will occur.

### **Checking Out Early**

Any student who needs to leave campus prior to normal dismissal must be checked out from the office by a parent, guardian, or authorized adult listed on the emergency form. The following rules apply:

1. **Checkout arrangements will not be made over the telephone.** The office will call students for checkout upon the arrival of a parent, guardian, or authorized adult. Sometimes it is difficult to locate the student promptly, so parents might experience a delay.
2. **Photo identification will be requested from the adult picking up the student.**
3. Early checkouts will not take place after 2:45 p.m.

### **Make-Up Work**

For an excused absence, the student will be allowed to make up work missed in each class. **It is the student's responsibility to obtain and complete any missed work.** A day's absence does not excuse a student from responsibility for previously assigned lessons or tests on the day of the return. Make-up work should take approximately the same time as the time missed from class. After two weeks into a nine-week grading period, an "Incomplete" becomes an "F". Please use the parent portal through Infinite Campus to review your child's grades. During absences, homework assignments may be obtained from Schoology or Infinite Campus parent portal after 5:00 p.m. each day. Schoology is also a valuable resource for obtaining work. Pre-Arranged absences must be submitted in writing to the principal for approval. A parent may come by and pick up the student's work, if pre-arranged. **Please allow at least 24-hour notice when calling for make-up work to be compiled.**

## Change of Transportation

Any student traveling home with another student on a different bus than assigned will need to submit a note to the front office before Homeroom. **A note is required from BOTH parents agreeing to this change. The front office will issue a bus pass. Bus drivers are not permitted to allow students other than those assigned on their bus without a bus pass from the office.**

**\*\* If a student is not registered for the bus, the parent/guardian must contact the transportation department at 770-460-3520.\*\***

# Academics

## GRADES AND REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be sent home every nine weeks. While we use numerical grades, the following scale is given for comparison:

90-100	A
80-89	B
71-79	C
70	D
Below 70	F

## HONOR ROLL

To be named on the regular honor roll, **a student must maintain a nine week grade of at least 90** in each academic and connections class during each nine week grading period.

To be named on the Principal's honor roll, **a student must maintain a nine week grade of 93 or above** in each academic and connections class during each nine week grading period.

## PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports will be posted on Infinite Campus at the 4 1/2 week mark of the 9 weeks term. Grades are continually updated on the parent portal through Infinite Campus. Students will be given their username and password.

## EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES/NO PASS NO PLAY

**Students are encouraged to participate in school-sponsored clubs, athletics and other available extra-curricular activities.** Students wishing to participate in athletics must pass at least 4 academic subjects the semester before participating. These academic requirements also apply to 8th graders playing sub-varsity sports at the high school level. This is a Fayette County Board of Education policy. Board policy states that students have one year of eligibility for athletics in the 7th grade and one year in the 8th grade.

If out-of-school suspension or in-school suspension has been assigned, a student will not be allowed to participate in or attend any extracurricular activity until the completion of the suspension. If absent on the day of an activity, the student may not participate or attend.

Students must be in school and counted present for ½ day before being eligible to participate or attend any school sponsored activity after normal school hours. Students must attend school on Friday for half a day to participate in week-end school sponsored activities. Examples: games, practices, tryouts, dances, concerts, club meetings, etc.

### **15 MINUTE RULE**

**Students must be picked up no later than 15 minutes after an activity has ended (games, dances, detentions, clubs, etc.).** Students not picked up on time following after school activities may be prohibited from participating in or attending future extra-curricular activities. According to the Fayette County Code of Conduct, participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege, not a right. Students with multiple office referrals, chronic attendance issues, and/or low grades may be excluded from attending extra-curricular events.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Students enrolled in Physical Education (P.E.) will be required to dress out and participate unless they have a doctor's excuse. P.E. teachers will explain clothing requirements for P.E. classes. Students are issued lockers in the gym, and it is recommended that all personal items be kept in the lockers during class. If a student is ill, the parent must write a note explaining the reason for not participating in P.E. class. If a student has been enrolled in P.E., a doctor's note explaining why the student cannot take the course is required for a schedule change.

### **HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION**

The Fayette County BOE recognizes its responsibility, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, to provide a free appropriate education to those students enrolled in an educational program who have a medically diagnosed physical condition that restricts them to a hospital or their home for a period of time that will significantly interfere with their education. More information may be obtained from the appropriate guidance counselor.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

All field trips are directly related to the curriculum taught in a class or classes. Each team is limited to 2 field trips per year.

Students with the following disciplinary resolutions will not be allowed to participate in field trips unless a parent or guardian accompanies them:

**\*\* More than two different occurrences of ISS in a semester.\*\* Any out-of-school suspension in a semester.**

**\*\*More than 3 days-student will not attend the field trip.**

The school will not guarantee that any money paid toward any field trip will be refunded if a student is unable to attend. These requirements also apply to overnight field trips.



If a student does not attend a field trip, alternative assignments will be given. Each student must have a permission slip signed by the parents/guardians to participate in a field trip. Any student with 6 unexcused absences from school in a semester could be prohibited from attending field trips.

### **PROMOTION/PLACEMENT/RETENTION**

Any student failing more than one academic subject for the year in the 6th, 7th or 8th grades will be referred for review to determine promotion, placement, or retention. Eighth grade students must also pass both the Math and the reading component of the English/Language Arts sections of the Milestones standardized test in order to be promoted to 9th grade. The principal makes the final decision regarding placement or retention.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Counselors are available to assist students and parents in all areas of middle school life. Some guidance services include registration, assistance with educational planning, interpretation of test scores, occupational and career information, study skills, help with home, school and/or social concerns, or any other questions students may like to discuss. Counselors meet with students individually, in small groups, and in classroom guidance activities.

In addition to all the other services provided through the Guidance Department, students and parents should be aware that resources are available to them in areas pertinent to today's youth. Students need to contact their school counselor for specific details concerning individual needs.

Students who want to meet with their counselor may pick up a "Conference Request" form from one of their team teachers, or from the Guidance Office. The counselor will call the student up at an appropriate time. Parent conferences are encouraged for better communications. If a conference is desired, it should be scheduled in advance by calling your child's Team Leader. The team will arrange the conference at the earliest possible time.

### **2023-2024 counseling assignments:**

Tanji Tucker : Last names A-J

[tucker.tanji@fcboe.org](mailto:tucker.tanji@fcboe.org)

Tama Trammell : Last names K-Z

[trammell.tama@fcboe.org](mailto:trammell.tama@fcboe.org)

## **PERMANENT RECORDS**

Each student's permanent record folder is kept on file in the front office vault. Parents may submit a Records Request form to the registrar in order to receive copies of their student's records. Please allow 24 hours for requests to be processed.

## **WITHDRAWALS**

The following procedures must be followed when withdrawing a student from Bennett's Mill Middle School:

1. The parent or guardian should contact the School Office at least two days before their final day.
2. The parent will need to provide the new school name that the student will be attending.
3. Chromebooks issued through the 1:1 Initiative, textbooks, and library books must be turned in. Any financial obligations must be paid at the time of withdrawal. Parents will receive a withdrawal form and a release for records to present to the new school. Georgia mandates all students' records are to be sent directly to the new school.

## **Title 1**

Bennett's Mill Middle School is fortunate to be a designated Title I School. Title I funding allows us to enrich our academic offerings tremendously through our Extended Day Academic Support programs, Parent Power Series Workshops, personnel and the purchase and use of materials and resources for our students and parents. Having all of our parents and community engaged and involved is a priority at BMMS. Education is a vital partnership between the school, students, parents/guardians and the community. Student success is the goal of every staff member at Bennett's Mill and we are devoted to utilizing research-based best practices to guide every student, every day, to reach their full potential.

Our Title 1 Student and Parent Support Specialist, Melanie Holt ([holt.melanie@fcboe.org](mailto:holt.melanie@fcboe.org)) is always willing to assist with any questions you may have. She is an excellent resource for our community. A variety of learning resources available for students, parents and teachers. These resources include computers for special projects, calculators, color pencils, board games, Milestone prep workbooks and resources, study buddies, and other miscellaneous school related materials.

Title I also provides opportunities for students to make up work during Saturday M.A.A.S. sessions. The sessions are held at BMMS from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM, and will be conducted on dates to be announced.

# **STUDENT INFORMATION**

## **POLICY / PROCEDURES**

The principal is the designated leader of the school and, in concert with the staff, is responsible for the orderly operation of the school. In cases of disruptive, disorderly, or dangerous conduct not covered in this Handbook or the Fayette County Student Code of Conduct, the principal may undertake corrective measures, which he/she believes to be in the best interest of the student and/or school, provided any such action does not violate school board policy or procedures. The principal or his/her designee has the authority to conduct investigations into possible violations of school and county rules and procedures and to interview and take written statements from students without the presence of the student's parent or guardian.

THE FAYETTE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE ON THE BASIS OF RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEX OR HANDICAP IN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES AND EMPLOYMENT.

## **COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES**

In accordance with the policy of the Fayette County Board of Education, it is the policy of Bennett's Mill Middle School that students shall have the right to present and resolve complaints relating to matters affecting the student relationship at the lowest organizational level possible. Bennett's Mill Middle School encourages all students to resolve complaints informally in a spirit of trust where possible. The Guidance Department offers mediation when necessary to resolve conflicts between students. Complaints and Grievances with teachers should be addressed with the administration.

## **HALL PASSES**

Students are not allowed in the hall without a pass except during class changes. Students may not visit the front office, Guidance Department, clinic, or any other location other than their assigned classroom without teacher permission and a pass. Any teacher may issue passes. Students will be allowed to go to lockers at times designated by their teachers.

## **INSURANCE**

Accident insurance is offered through the school at the beginning of the school year for students who would like coverage. Brochures are available in the front office. Coverage begins with the first day of school and continues throughout the school year. Coverage is not mandatory, unless the student is participating in extracurricular athletics and is not covered under any other insurance. Applications are available in the school office. If a student decides to enroll after the initial enrollment period, or if a student enters school after the deadline, insurance is still available; the parent is responsible for submitting the application and payment. Applications are available in the school office all year. A student can purchase insurance any time during the school year. Coverage begins on the date the application and payment is postmarked.

## **LOCKERS**

Each year, the school charges a fee. The money is used for expenses related to lockers, the clinic, lockers, and other school support items. Locker repairs/maintenance are done each year, along with the changing of combinations.. Students should not reveal combinations to anyone or allow others to use their lockers. Do not bring large sums of money or valuable jewelry to school. Students must not "jam" or tamper with the locks on their lockers. This may result in the loss of the use of the locker.

### **STUDENTS MAY NOT PLACE STICKERS OR TAPE ON THE LOCKERS.**

Locker combinations are personal possessions, and care should be taken to prevent anyone from learning that combination. If someone is trying to learn another person's combination, report this to your homeroom teacher or to the principal's office. Remember that students are responsible for the safety and security of combinations, personal property and school materials. Lockers are the property of the Fayette County School System and are subject to inspection by authorized school personnel. School officials have a legal right and obligation to assure enforcement of all school policies. The courts have reaffirmed that administrators have the legal authority to search a student, his/her locker and other personal effects if there is a reasonable suspicion that any school policy or law is being violated.

## **BACKPACKS**

Students are not allowed to carry backpacks during the school day. Students must leave these items in their lockers. They are not allowed in classes for any reason. The administration has the discretion to determine if a bag can or cannot be used.

## **STUDENT OBLIGATION**

Students are responsible for any books or other material issued to or checked out to them by teachers or the Media Center. (This includes materials and items issued for fundraising). Materials and books that are lost or damaged while assigned to a student are that student's responsibility. At the end of the year, students will not receive their final report cards until all materials have been returned and all fines and obligations have been paid. Students may also be excluded from school activities until fines are paid. Students are responsible for replacement or repair costs of issued materials or books that are lost or damaged.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Students are expected to be responsible for personal property. Names should be on all clothing, especially P.E. clothes. Students should never leave personal articles unattended. Unclaimed lost and found items will be donated to charity approximately every nine weeks. Please make an effort to recover lost items as soon as possible. Lost and found bins are located in the cafeteria.

## **BREAKFAST AND LUNCH INFORMATION**

School lunch in the cafeteria will be offered to students for a charge for the 23-24 school year. Students may purchase a la carte items for an additional charge. Our cafeteria uses a Point of Sale System. Every student will have an account with a personal identification number (PIN). It

is very important that students do not share this number with anyone. School breakfast and lunch accounts can be funded through multiple methods:

Cash or check (\$300.00 maximum check limit) payments to the cafeteria Please note that the Fayette County Board of Education uses Envision Payment Solutions™ as our check guarantee program for returned checks.

Myschoolbucks.com using a debit or credit card in any amount will be deposited into the student's lunch account. Any/all monies given to the cafeteria will first be applied towards all outstanding charge balances. Students with meal charges will be denied other purchases, such as a la carte, extra milk, etc.

Parents can view their student's meal account balance in Infinite Campus and myschoolbucks.com. Notifications will be sent both via email and phone calls to all messenger contacts in Infinite Campus when balances are low. Students are not allowed to charge a lunch. If a student forgets their lunch or lunch money or has insufficient funds in the lunch account, an alternate meal will be provided. The alternate meal will include a cheese sandwich and milk or a side salad and milk only. Students with dairy allergies will receive a side salad, fresh fruit choice and water.

### **RETURNED CHECKS**

Checks returned from the bank for any reason will be assessed a fee of \$25.00. If a NSF check is not recovered within a reasonable time, legal measures will be taken to recover the check amount and any processing fees.

### **BMMS CELL PHONE/ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY**

Students are allowed to bring personal cell phones/smart phones/smart watches to school. These devices may not be used for personal communication (calls, texting, messaging, emails, etc.) during the day. **Devices may not be used in the hallways, restrooms, or commons areas between 7:40 a.m. and 3:15 p.m. Devices must be turned off and stored in the student's locker. Students may not use their devices in the hallways while walking to dismissal areas in the afternoon.**

**This policy applies to any electronic device that may be used for personal communication. The policy also includes the use of headphones/earbuds/air pods/other similar devices unless they are being used with the chromebook for academic purposes approved by the teacher.**

It is the direct responsibility of any student bringing a device to school to use it appropriately and secure and safeguard it. It is strongly suggested that a protective cover be used with each device and the device has a clear identification of the owner. Students should never let another student use or borrow their personal device. **Students are not allowed to use their devices to take photographs or videos AT ANY TIME** while on school property or school sponsored transportation (including attendance at after school or extra-curricular activities).

**Bennett's Mill Middle School is not responsible for any devices that are lost, stolen, or broken at school or during school sponsored events.**

**Students are not permitted to bring personal computers, laptops, or tablets to school.**

**Consequences for students found to be in possession of cell phones and other electronic devices during school:**

First Offense: 2 ISS lunch detentions

Second Offense: 1 day ISS

Third Offense: 3 days ISS

Fourth Offense: 1 day of OSS. Device is confiscated and must be returned to parent.

Fifth Offense: Progressive days of OSS for each additional offense

Parents - Please do not call or text your student during school hours. Also, please do not encourage your student to call or text you during school hours. These are violations of the policy as well as a disruption of the learning environment, and your child could face disciplinary action. If you need to leave a message or contact them in the case of an emergency, you may call the front office at (770) 716-3982

### **MESSAGES**

Messages to students cause interruption of classroom instruction. Therefore, **messages will be given to students only in cases of emergency, and only if from their parent or guardian.**

### **CELEBRATIONS**

Please refrain from sending or bringing celebratory items to the school to celebrate your student. Unfortunately, items such as sodas, cupcakes, cakes, cookies, juice, and or donuts may compromise the safety of some students in regards to food allergies. In addition, these items may disrupt our learning environment. Any flowers and or balloons brought or delivered to the school will remain in the main office until the end of the day. *Please note that balloons are not permitted on school buses.*

### **MISC DROP OFFS**

Items may be dropped off in the main office for your student anytime during the day. However, these items will only be distributed to the student at specific times during the day (such as lunch and/or connections). **We will not disturb instructional time to have a student retrieve their item.** Lunches from home can be dropped off in the front office before their child's lunch time. Parents may bring food for their child only.

### **TELEPHONE USE**

Students are only allowed to use office phones for emergencies. All non-emergency phone calls must be made before or after school. Students are not permitted to receive phone calls. NO EXCEPTIONS. **The use of cell phones is not permitted during the school day unless permission has been granted by an instructor for educational purposes. Cell phones**

**should be off and placed in the student's locker when not used for instruction.** Any phones dropped off for students will be held in the main office until the end of the school day.

## **VISITORS**

Friends or relatives from other schools or cities will not be allowed to visit during classes at Bennett's Mill Middle School. Also, they are not allowed to attend school dances. Parents are always welcome at the school; however, classroom visits and conferences with teachers must be scheduled through the counseling department in advance. All visitors to the school must sign in at the front office upon entering the building and provide a picture ID upon request.

# **STUDENT HEALTH & SAFETY**

## **FIRST AID/ILLNESS**

A staffed clinic operates during school hours each day. If a student needs first aid or becomes ill, the student should alert his/her teacher. Following the protocol as set forth in the School Health Services Manual, the teacher will determine if the student's complaint can be handled in the classroom or if a clinic visit is necessary. If a student is injured, the student will receive immediate attention from the clinic staff. A parent will be notified if the injury is serious. **When a student is running a fever greater than 100.4° or is unable to return to class, the parent(s) must come and check the student out of school.** Your student may not return to school until they are fever free and symptom free (without medication) for a minimum of 24 hours AND one complete school day.

## **MEDICAL INFORMATION**

It is essential that parents provide the clinic staff with any medical information deemed necessary. **All medical information must be updated each year on the emergency/disaster form.** If your student has a severe allergy, asthma, diabetes, seizures or a chronic health condition which may require medication or special care during school hours, we recommend you and your healthcare provider complete and sign a Health Care Plan available on the county website ([www.fcboe.org](http://www.fcboe.org)) under "School Health Services" or from the school nurse.

## **MEDICINES**

In the event the administering of medication to a student during school hours is necessary, the clinic staff will provide control and assistance in the administration of medication. **A parent/guardian must complete and sign an authorization for the administration of all medications. For prescribed medications, a physician must also sign the authorization** detailing the medication's name, dosage, route, time and side effects. All medications must be brought to the school office or clinic before the start of school by a parent/guardian accompanied by the authorization. **DO NOT SEND MEDICATION TO SCHOOL VIA THE STUDENT.**

In the event that a parent/guardian cannot bring the medication to school, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify the school. Only the principal or school nurse has the authority to give approval for the student to transport the medication and authorization to school. All medications must be in their original containers with valid expiration dates. Prescription medications are limited to no more than a 30-day supply. Any student that needs to carry medication due to a life threatening condition requires a complete and signed authorization from the parent/guardian and the physician. Any student not complying with this policy and possessing any medication (prescription or over-the-counter medications) on the school campus shall be subject to discipline as set forth in the Fayette County Schools Student Code of Conduct policy.

### **IMMUNIZATION**

All students entering or attending Grades Pre-K through 12th grade in the Fayette County School System are required to have a complete Georgia Certificate of Immunization Form 3231 in accordance with Georgia Law, OCGA 20-2-771. All students must be immunized against disease as specified by the Georgia Department of Human Resources, or have a medical or religious exemption on file at school. NEW immunization requirements for Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, "New Entrants", and 6th Grade students are available on the county website ([www.fcboe.org](http://www.fcboe.org)) under "School Health Services. "Every child admitted initially to a public school in Georgia must have a Certificate of Eye, Ear and Dental Examination completed by a Georgia licensed practitioner or a qualified representative of a local health department. The only form accepted is Georgia Department of Human Resources Form 3300.

Bennett's Mill is proud to have Martha Runyan as our school nurse. She can be reached at [runyan.martha@fcboe.org](mailto:runyan.martha@fcboe.org).

### **District Civility Policy**

**The Fayette County Board of Education has a civility policy to encourage positive civil and professional behavior between school system employees and citizens. All exchanges between employees and citizens are to be considerate, respectful and professional. Under no circumstances should unpleasant exchanges with inappropriate language take place in the presence of children. Please see Civility Policy in the Student Code of Conduct.**

### **SCHOOL SECURITY**

To increase student safety, all of our exterior doors are locked. To enter our building, please come to the **Main Office** door and ring the doorbell located to the left of the doors. One of our staff may ask you a few questions regarding your visit and then buzz you in. We thank you in advance for your understanding of our heightened level of security.

If you come to check out your student, **please make sure to bring a photo ID to ensure a swift check-out process.** Your ID will be matched against the approved list of contacts on your



student's Infinite Campus account. Parents/Guardians without proper photo ID and/or are not on the approved contact list will **not** be allowed to sign out the student.

If you come for a Parent/Teacher conference, **please make sure to bring your Driver's License to ensure a fast check-in process.** Parents without proper photo ID will have to reschedule their meeting.

If you come to volunteer in our building, please make sure you have completed the necessary volunteer application located on the FCBOE.org website *prior to your visit*. Also **please bring your Driver's License to ensure an easy check-in process.**

## **SAFETY DRILLS**

**Fire Drills:** A fire drill is signified by a special alarm that continues to sound for a long period of time. If a fire alarm sounds, students should follow these steps:

1. Go directly to the assigned exit. This is to be done quickly and silently.
2. Remember that it may not be a drill and treat it as such. The reason for silence is that, in the event of fire, orderliness and calmness are necessary to ensure safety.
3. A signal will be given to mark the end of the drill.

**Tornado Drills:** Administration will notify the faculty of any threat of severe weather.

1. Students will report to the area indicated on procedure maps posted throughout the building.
2. Students will sit on the floor with knees pulled to chest and head down.
3. Students will not talk so that instructions can be heard.
4. A signal will be given to mark the end of the drill.

## **SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER**

Bennett's Mill Middle School has a full-time school resource officer provided jointly by the Fayetteville Police Department and the Fayette County Board of Education to help ensure the safety and security of all students and personnel in this facility. Security cameras are installed throughout the building. The SRO has the latitude to press charges when criminal acts have occurred on school property.

Bennett's Mill Middle School is honored to have Officer Katheryn Gonzalez as our SRO. She can be reached at [gonzalez.katheryn@fcboe.org](mailto:gonzalez.katheryn@fcboe.org).

# STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

## SCHOOL ACADEMICS

1. Each student has the responsibility to develop good work and study habits.
2. The student should clarify with the teacher any questions pertaining to the instructions for homework.
3. Students should bring their fully-charged Chromebook to school each day.
4. The student should use an organizational notebook which includes dividers labeled for each subject, ample paper, and a zipper pouch that fits in the binder to hold pens, pencils, etc.
5. The student should take home any materials and information necessary to complete the assignment.
6. The student should learn to budget time.
7. When the teacher provides study time during the day, the student should take advantage of it.
8. The student should plan long term assignments so it is not necessary to complete the assignment all at one time.
9. With the assistance of their parents, students should:
  - A. Set aside a special time in which to complete assignments.
  - B. Find a special place in which to work free from excessive noise and other distractions.
  - C. Organize time so assignments can be completed in a reasonable length of time.
  - D. Carefully check completed assignments.
10. It is the student's responsibility to turn in all completed work to the teacher by the date requested.
11. Students should promptly complete make up work due to an excused absence.

## TWO RULES FOR SUCCESS

1. **THINK** before you speak or post. Is it **T**True, **H**elpful, **I**nspiring, **N**ecessary, and **K**ind?
2. Keep your **HANDS, FEET, and OBJECTS** to **YOURSELF**.

## TESTING

The standardized tests given to students each year have an important impact on their academic career. In addition to the state required test, the Georgia Milestones, students will be tested several times annually to monitor their growth in academic courses. Assessment scores are utilized for student placement and grouping as well as showing mastery of content and certain required objectives. It is of utmost importance that students do their best on all school assessments due to the implications that the results may have on their academic placements.

## SCHOOL PRIDE

Because Bennett's Mill is a beautiful facility and because students should have pride in their school, students are asked to help build school pride by doing the following:

1. Respect the facility, the grounds, and the building.

2. Pick up all trays in the cafeteria, as well as trash on the tables. Remember, other students have to eat at the same tables during other lunch periods. Clean lunch tables and areas when assigned.
3. Help pick up litter from the floor in classrooms each day.
4. Keep student restrooms clean.
5. Sit in chairs, not on desks and tables.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Bennett's Mill Middle School students have the right to learn and every teacher has the right to teach in a safe, positive environment. Students who choose to behave inappropriately also choose the consequences of that behavior. Every student should be responsible for his or her own behavior. Bennett's Mill has implemented Positive Behavior Supports and Interventions (P.B.I.S.). The following general rules apply to all students:

**I am Engaged**

**I am Empowered**

**I am Ethical**

**Bennett's Mill Middle School administrators and teachers will regard all written and/or verbal threats, implied or direct, toward students, staff members, or school and staff property, as acts of malice and endangerment. The school's discipline action will be immediate and severe. Incidences may be reported to the police and/or sheriff's department depending on the specific jurisdiction.**

## **DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES**

Bennett's Mill Middle School students are subject to the Fayette County Board of Education Student Code of Conduct during the school day and at all school sponsored events. Records will be kept in the office and notification of infractions will be sent home to the parents of students who violate discipline rules.

Attempts will be made by telephone to notify parents of In-School and Out-of-School Suspension. This is not always possible in every case; however, written notification (copy of referral) will be sent home with the student. In cases of teacher detention or administrative detention, written notice will also be sent home with the student. **It is the responsibility of the student to give the paperwork to the parents/guardians.** To be in compliance with Georgia Law, discipline records of students withdrawing from Bennett's Mill Middle School are forwarded to the next school. The following is a partial list of offenses for which a student may be punished. **(This list is by no means complete and may be expanded to include any offense that is harmful or disruptive.)**

1. Insubordination: unwillingness to follow the instructions of any school personnel
2. Improper bus conduct
3. Smoking or the possession of any form of tobacco, vape, lighter, or matches
4. Destroying property/vandalism

5. Possession of a dangerous weapon or item that can be used as a weapon (Refer to the weapons at school policy)
6. Fighting or encouraging fighting, **regardless of who starts it**
7. Skipping classes or leaving campus without permission
8. Violation of the dress code
9. Chewing gum
10. Trespassing: entering or remaining on school property after being warned.
11. Theft
12. Gambling of any form
13. Possession or use of electronic devices
14. Selling of or buying any prohibited product.
15. Physical aggression: (hitting, kicking, punching, pushing, etc.)
16. Bullying/verbal harassment
17. Forgery: falsifying teachers' signatures, parent signatures, report card alterations or making duplicate report cards
18. Excessive tardiness to class and/or school
19. Display of gang symbols, paraphernalia, etc.
20. Threats of violence/verbal aggression
21. Being out of class without a teacher or office hall pass or other proper authorization
22. Academic dishonesty
23. Profane or otherwise objectionable or vulgar language or gestures to students or faculty
24. Failure to bring all necessary materials to class (agenda, paper, pencils, pens, books,)
25. Truancy
26. Possession of, use of, alcoholic beverages, nonprescription drugs, inhalants, or drug paraphernalia at school or any school sponsored activity
27. General misconduct in class, assemblies, lunchroom, or any school sponsored activity
28. Consistent lack of effort in class
29. Public displays of affection (ie. kissing, hugging, holding hands, etc)
30. Tampering with any fire equipment
31. Horseplay: even when done in a playful manner, often leads to injuries and sometimes fighting. There is no such thing as "play" fighting. Activities such as shadow-boxing and/or slap-boxing may receive the same consequences as fighting.
32. Refusal to sign forms
33. Sexual harassment (Refer to sexual harassment policy)
34. Racial remarks/Ethnic slurs
35. Derogatory personal remarks: students will not be allowed to make insulting and derogatory remarks to their classmate
36. Sexual impropriety: sexual acts performed between consenting partners
37. Improper use of technology/computer use violation/computer trespassing or tampering

## **NUISANCE ITEMS:**

Any item which disrupts the school program, such as laser pens, radios, music players, Ipods, body sprays, perfume/cologne, cameras, computer games, toys, wallet chains, baby oil, comic books, trading cards of all kinds, fidget spinners, or any item that disrupts the learning environment should not be brought to school. Students found with such items will have them confiscated and will be subject to disciplinary action. Large sums of money (more than \$40) should not be brought to school except when paying for school purchases such as a yearbook.

## **CONSEQUENCES**

Students will be punished in a reasonable and fair manner with regard to the offense. Student infractions are recorded on discipline forms. It is the responsibility of the student to get all forms signed by a parent/guardian and returned to school by the next regular school day. Some consequences are:

- Verbal warning
- Silent lunch
- Mediation
- Temporary removal from class
- Administrative detention
- Loss of school privileges
- On-Team Suspension
- Student is prohibited from attending or participating in extracurricular activities
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Placement in an alternative school
- Referral to law enforcement
- Saturday School
- Behavior Plan

**In-School Suspension (ISS)** is an alternative to Out-of-School Suspension. A Paraprofessional is assigned to supervise the In-School Suspension program. This program includes the use of an In-School Suspension classroom where students are suspended from their regular classes, but remain in school during regular hours in an effort to complete class assignments and tests. Failure to follow the rules of ISS may result in additional days of ISS or out-of-school suspension. Students may not attend extra-curricular activities until the assigned dates of ISS have been completed.

**Out of School Suspension (OSS)** Students are not allowed to be present on any Fayette County School campus during the period of their OSS, including after regular school hours. It is the student's responsibility to make up missed assignments.

## **ASSEMBLY CONDUCT**

Assemblies are a regularly scheduled part of the curriculum and, as such, are designed to be educational, as well as entertaining, experiences. They provide one of the few opportunities in school to learn formal audience behavior. Regardless of the type of program, courtesy demands that the student body be respectful and appreciative. In live entertainment, unlike radio, TV or movies, the performers are very conscious of their audience. Talking, whistling, whispering, stamping of feet and booing are discourteous. Yelling is appropriate ONLY at pep rallies. Students are expected to observe the following rules for assemblies:

1. Do not take books or coats to the assembly unless instructed otherwise.
2. Proceed to the assembly area quietly and promptly. Find your seat quickly.
3. When the principal asks for your attention, please respond immediately.
4. Be courteous to the performers and to your neighbors. Applaud in keeping with the occasion. Applause should be generous and courteous.
5. You will be dismissed in an orderly manner when it is time to leave.

## **BUS CONDUCT**

Bus drivers carry a heavy burden of responsibility. Students and parents should be aware that the sole purpose of the school bus is to transport students safely to and from school. Remember that riding the bus is a privilege, not a right. Students who do not follow the bus rules may lose the privilege of riding. The bus stop is considered school property. The following guidelines must be followed when riding the bus and/or at the bus stop.

1. Talk in a normal tone (no screaming).
2. Remain seated (no changing of seats). Back to back, bottom to bottom.
3. Keep head and hands inside the bus.
4. Remain quiet when approaching and stopping for railroad crossing.
5. No food or drinks on the bus.
6. No tobacco, matches or lighters on the bus.
7. No weapons of any type are allowed.
8. No tampering with any equipment on the bus (such as the emergency door).
9. No vulgarity, profanity, or obscene gestures.
10. No throwing of objects of any type inside the bus or out the bus window.
11. No littering on the bus with paper, pencils, etc.
12. No getting on/off bus at stops other than regular stop unless you have written permission.
13. No harassment of other students.
14. Face forward when seated. NOTE: Large items (including large instruments), balloons, stuffed animals, flowers, glass objects, animals, firearms, weapons, perfumers or other potentially hazardous materials will not be allowed as they pose a danger to others. Any student disobeying the transportation rules may be removed from the bus.

## **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

No talking or other forms of communication are permitted during any test or quiz. Giving or receiving information from any person or source in any form NOT sanctioned by the teacher shall constitute a cheating offense. This includes classwork, homework, study guides, tests, etc. A zero (0) will be given on the assignment to all students involved in the incident and further disciplinary action may be taken. Students may be allowed to complete an alternate assignment to redeem credit.

## **DRESS CODE**

Students are expected to dress and be groomed in such a way as to reflect neatness, modesty, cleanliness and respect for your school. Students must ensure that their dress does not distract or cause disruption in the educational program or orderly operation of the school. School administrators will be responsible for determining dress code violations. The principal may interpret or add to these provisions as he/she deem to be in the best interest of the school, students or the educational process.

### **The following are the standards for school dress:**

1. Students must wear clothing that includes both a shirt with pants or a skirt or the equivalent (ex. dresses, leggings, shorts) and footwear. Undergarments must not be exposed.
2. Garments will cover the waist, shoulders, back, torso, and chest in all situations. No skin may show at the waist.
3. Pants, shorts, slacks, shirts, dresses, and skirts will be of appropriate size and fit. Holes in the pants or shorts must be below the fingertips. Pants, shorts, and skirts must always be worn on the waist. The entire buttocks and upper thigh must be covered.
4. Clothing must not symbolize, suggest, display or reference: tobacco, cannabis, alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia, profanity, hate, promotion of violence, illegal activities, and/or pornography. Clothing should respect the intent to sustain a positive learning environment.
5. Sleepwear may not be worn.
6. Footwear must be worn at all times. Footwear that may cause damage to floors (ex.: cleats, skates, etc.) are not allowed.
7. Sunglasses may not be worn inside the buildings.
8. Wallet chains or other types of chains, or any jewelry that may be potentially dangerous or disruptive are not allowed.
9. Hats, caps, non-religious head coverings, visors, or hoods may not be worn inside the building.
10. Gang-related clothing, bandannas, signs, flags, symbols, and tattoos are not allowed.

## **LUNCHROOM CONDUCT**

Students are required to keep the lunchroom clean. In order to accomplish this, the following rules must be followed:

1. Students are to put all used, disposable articles in the waste containers.
2. Students are not to misuse any lunchroom facility (including equipment, chairs and tables).
3. Students are not allowed to take food or drinks out of the lunchroom.
4. Students who spill food/drink are expected to clean up after themselves.
5. Students must be orderly, courteous and respectful in the serving line.
6. Carbonated drinks are not recommended to be brought for school lunch.
7. Students must sit with their class at their assigned table.

## **HARASSMENT**

Any act of harassment based upon race, color, religion, national origin, disability and gender (including sexual orientation and gender identity) is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, sexual harassment as used in connection with Title IX. Penalty may range from short-term suspension, long-term suspension or expulsion. Incidences may be reported to local law enforcement.

## **BULLYING**

(Bullying (OCGA 20-2-751.4- revised)

An act, that is:

- a. Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so;
- b. Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or
- c. Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:
  - (1) Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of Code Section 16-5-23-.1; or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in Code Section 16-5-23-.1;
  - (2) Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education?
  - (3) Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment? or
  - (4) Has the effect of substantially disrupting the order operation of the school?



d. The term applies to acts which occur on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities or by the use of data or software that is accessed through a computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system.

e. The term also applies to acts of cyberbullying which occur through the use of electronic communication, whether or not such electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment, if the electronic communication:

(1) is directed specifically at students or school personnel,

(2) is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of this specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school, and

(3) creates a reasonable fear of harm to the students' or school personnel's person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose.

f. Electronic communication includes but is not limited to any transfer of signs, signals, writings, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

### **HOMEWORK**

Cooperation by parents is a necessary factor for homework to be meaningful. It is important for parents to support the teacher. You can show your support and assist your student by following the guidelines below:

1. Instill in your student an attitude that homework is an important and necessary part of the learning process.
2. Provide a quiet, well-lighted place for your student to study.
3. Establish a regular homework time in your home and have a special place free from excessive noise and other distractions where the student can work.
4. Encourage and support your student's efforts and be available for questions. Remember, homework is the student's responsibility, not the parent's.
5. Set aside time to review, to check your student's homework for accuracy and neatness and to check your Infinite campus, Schoology, or your student's notes for assignments.

6. Communicate with the teacher whenever the student has consistent difficulty with homework assignments.
7. Encourage the student to seek help and ask questions of the teacher when in doubt about an assignment.
8. Monitor grades regularly on the parent portal through Infinite Campus. Students will be given a username and password the second week of school.
9. Student homework assignments may be obtained on a daily basis using Infinite Campus, Schoology, or teacher websites. Weekly emails are sent to the parents through Infinite Campus to inform them of failing grades or missing assignments.

### **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent-teacher conferences are encouraged for better communications. If a conference is desired, please email your child's team leader or counselor. Teachers are not available to meet with parents during instructional time. The team leader will contact you to arrange a team conference at the earliest possible time. Students are taught in middle school by a team of teachers. Therefore, it is important in most instances that all members of the team attend all conferences.

### **CLASSROOM OBSERVATION**

On those occasional instances where parental observation in the classroom is deemed appropriate, the following guidelines shall be adhered to in order for that visit not interfere with the instructional process, nor violate the privacy rights of the other students in the classroom.

- The observer must be a parent or legal guardian of the student being served
- Scheduling shall take place at least 48 hours prior to the visit
- Visit must be scheduled through the student's counselor
- The visit must be approved by the principal and the teacher of the student
- The maximum observation time shall be for one class period
- Observations will be limited to one per semester per child

### **CONTACTING ADMINISTRATORS**

While we attempt to accommodate parents/guardians who desire to meet with an administrator, we cannot guarantee that the principal or assistant principals will be available to meet with individuals who come to the school unannounced. It is recommended that parents/guardians call ahead and schedule an appointment. Administrators make every effort to return phone calls and emails within 24 hours.

### **PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)**

The Bennett's Mill Middle School Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) is a vital part of our school operation. The PTO acts as a forum for parents, teachers and the community to communicate and support the students at Bennett's Mill. It is also a fundraising tool to supplement much needed teacher and student support, teaching aids, i.e., computers, software, video/audio

equipment, cameras, science and math equipment, and media supplies. Parents are encouraged to join and take an active part in the PTO and volunteer at the school.

## **FINE ARTS**

The Bennett's Mill Middle School Fine Arts Programs include Art, Band, Chorus, Drama, and Orchestra. For information on our outstanding programs, please contact the following:

Art	Krista Horan	horan.krista@fcboe.org
Band	Shannon Feloss	feloss.shannon@fcboe.org
Chorus	Tiffany Peoples	peoples.tiffany@fcboe.org
Orchestra	Kevin Anderson	anderson.kevin@fcboe.org

## **ATHLETICS**

Bennett's Mill Middle School offers a variety of athletic opportunities for 7th and 8th grade students, including football, girls' volleyball, cheerleading, boys and girls basketball, and boys and girls track. 8th graders may play sub-varsity sports at Fayette County High School, as long as the sport is not offered at the middle school level.

**Athletic Director: Rica Smith      smith.rica@fcboe.org**

## **COACHES**

Football:	Jody Travis	travis.jody@fcboe.org
Volleyball:	Mary McCurdy	mccurdy.mary@fcboe.org
Volleyball:	Anna Kerber	kerber.anna@fcboe.org
Cheerleading:	Erin Biggs	biggs.erin@fcboe.org
Boys Basketball:	L.V. Hill	hill.lv@fcboe.org
Girls Basketball:	Troy Merritt	merritt.troy@fcboe.org
Track:	Karen Smith	smith.karen@fcboe.org

## **ELIGIBILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN ATHLETIC/EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

### **MIDDLE SCHOOL (7th and 8th GRADE)**

- Students must pass 4 academic subjects the semester preceding participation.
- A player must not reach his/her 15th birthday prior to May 1st preceding their 8th grade year. A player must not reach his/her 14th birthday prior to May 1st preceding their 7th grade year.

- An eligible student can participate in each sport, in the 7th grade and in the 8th grade.
- Students must adhere to all rules and regulations outlined in the Athletic/Extracurricular Code of Conduct and/or specific written guidelines developed by the coach and/or school administration.
- Middle school athletics are governed by the Fayette County Middle School Athletic League (FCMSAL).
- 8th grade eligibility to participate in sub-varsity sports at feeder HS if that sport is not offered at the middle school.

## **ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS**

- Students will be permitted to participate in conditioning, tryouts, games or practice extracurricular activities only if they have been in attendance at least one-half of the school day according to the State Board of Education. Exceptions must have administrative approval.
- Students in ISS are excluded from all school-sponsored activities until completion of the assigned days.
- Students under out-of school suspension may not participate in conditioning, tryouts, practice, or games until they return to class. Example: a suspension is through Friday; a student cannot play on Saturday GHSA (By-Law 1.560). A suspension is considered to have ended when the student is physically readmitted to the classroom.

# **Technology**

## **TECHNOLOGY / CHROMEBOOK POLICY**

Bennett's Mill students have been issued Chromebooks by the district for use at school and at home. Students are not allowed to bring personal devices (other than cell phones) and must use a school-issued device. Chromebooks must be used for academic purposes only and cannot be used for games, movies, or other non-academic activities. Circumventing our school's web-site filters or jailbreaking a Chromebook may result in long term suspension or expulsion.

**Students will abide by the following rules/procedures outlined by the Fayette County Device User Agreement:**

1. I will take good care of my District-issued device.
  - a. Cords and cables must be inserted carefully into the device to prevent damage.
  - b. Device will be kept in the provided case at all times unless the device needs to be used in “tablet” mode for instructional purposes.
  - c. Devices must never be left in an unlocked locker, unlocked car or any unsupervised area.
  - d. Report any software/hardware issues to your teacher as soon as possible.
  - e. Keep the device in a well-protected, temperature-controlled environment when not in use.
2. I will never loan out my District-issued device to other individuals.
3. I will keep food and beverages away from my device since they may cause damage to the device.
4. I will not disassemble, jailbreak, or hack into any part of my or any District-issued device or attempt any repairs. Hacking/jailbreaking a chromebook could result in long term suspension or expulsion.
5. I will protect my District-issued device by only carrying it in the case provided.
6. I will use my District-issued device in ways that are appropriate and meet the school's expectations—whether at school, at home, or anywhere else. If I use my device in a way that is inappropriate, I may be disciplined by my school.
7. I will not place decorations (such as stickers, markers, etc.) on the District-issued device. I will not deface the serial number sticker on any District-issued device.
8. I understand that my District-issued device is subject to inspection at any time without notice and remains the property of the Fayette County Public Schools. Nothing I do with the device is private, and nothing I have on the device is private.
9. I will not share my password(s) with anyone other than a teacher or adult from my school or my parent/guardian.
10. I understand that if I damage or lose my device, or if it is stolen, I will have to pay a fine.