

Student-Parent Handbook

Inspecting and reviewing records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and local policy 5125 give parents and students over 18 years of age the right to inspect and review their education records. Parents or guardians who want to see their child's records should call the school to make an appointment with the principal or guidance counselor. School officials will schedule an appointment within 45 days for you to review and inspect the records. The school may charge a per-page copying fee for copies.

What if records are inaccurate or misleading?

If a child's records are inaccurate or misleading, parents or guardians may ask the principal to make corrections. They should write to the principal and specify the changes they want made, and tell him or her why the record is inaccurate or misleading. The principal must respond to such a request within five days. If the principal decides not to change the record, parents or guardians may file a grievance and request a hearing before a hearing officer. A parent or student may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education regarding alleged failures of a school to comply with FERPA by writing the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20202-8520.

Who else may see records?

- **Divorced parents.** If parents are divorced or separated, both parents have a right to inspect and copy their child's education records unless a court limits or restricts a parent's access.
- **School personnel** who have a legitimate need to see the records, such as teachers, substitute teachers, teacher assistants, student teachers, school assistant superintendents and other administrative personnel, as well as the Board of Education.
- **Juvenile justice, law enforcement officials and emergency medical personnel.** When information from a student's records is needed to locate a child or the child's parents to respond to an emergency, that information may be provided to juvenile justice, law enforcement and emergency medical personnel.
- **Rules for children with disabilities.** The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), a federal law, requires school officials to

provide information to juvenile justice and law enforcement officials about a student's disability whenever school officials refer a student with a disability to one of those agencies.

- **Other schools.** The school system will forward a copy of your child's education records to a school in which your child enrolls upon written request of that school.
- **Other exceptions.** Other exceptions are described in Policy 5125, which may be obtained in your principal's office or from the school system's attorney (727-2509).

Surveys

Parents have the right, on request, to inspect research surveys or studies conducted by third parties. The school system will not release students' names and addresses to researchers unless parents are notified in advance and in writing.

No students or former students shall participate in surveys or research projects on the following subjects without written consent from their parent or guardian: political beliefs; mental and psychological problems; sex behavior and attitudes; illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior; critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships; legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers; religious practices or beliefs; or income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such programs).

Student and former students are not required to participate in research studies or surveys if their parents object.

— *Policy 1326*

Grading

Report cards are sent home after the end of each quarter and show a child's academic progress, behavior and attendance. Elementary and middle school report cards are sent in a brown envelope that parents should sign and return. Keep the report sheet.

High school report cards are given to students and do not require a parent's signature.

Parents should receive reports about their child's grades and behavior at least three times during each nine-week grading period, as well as a report card at the end of the grading period.

Report cards contain a lot of information. If you do not understand the reason for a grade or have other questions, please make an appointment to see the teacher or a guidance counselor.

Be sure you know how your child is doing in relation to grade level. A "C" in a regular high school course does not mean the same level of achievement as a "C" in an honors or Advanced Placement course.

Grades may be based on a standard for all students, individual student progress, progress in relation to ability, or progress in relation to the rest of the class.

At the end of the school year, parents can pick up their child's report card at school or provide postage and have it mailed home.

— *Policy and AR 5124*

Report card dates

Report cards are sent out as quickly as possible at the end of each quarter; high school report cards take longer to finish.

Elementary schools:

1st quarter: the week of Nov. 7-10;

2nd quarter: the week of Jan. 30-Feb.

3;

3rd quarter: the week of April 16-20;

4th quarter: within a week after the last day of the school year.

Middle schools: Nov. 3; Jan. 26; April 6; June 15.

High schools will send home report cards within 7 days of the end of each quarter.

Testing

Tests can be useful, but they are only one way of evaluating a child's performance and needs. Students take many different kinds of tests.

- Teacher-designed tests and textbook tests show how much material a student has learned in class. These may cover one day's work or a full semester's.
- Diagnostic tests can be used before a subject is taught to find out how much a student already knows. Appropriate instruction then can be planned.
- Quarterly or semester assessments are given in science, reading and math in grades 3 through 5. In grades 6 through 8, quarterly or semester assessments are given in reading, math, social studies, science, Algebra I and Integrated Math I and II. High school students take assessments quarterly or by semester in English I, Biology, Physical Science, Civics and Economics, U.S. History, World History and Integrated Math I and II.
- Standardized tests compare students' abilities or achievements to standards,

K-2 GRADING SCALE

4 = Exceeds grade-level expectations

3 = Meets grade-level expectations

2 = Making progress toward grade-level expectations

1 = Does not meet grade level expectations

3-5 GRADING SCALE

A = Excellent progress

B = Very good progress

C = Satisfactory progress

D = Slow progress

F = Unsatisfactory progress

6-12 GRADING SCALE

A = 93 – 100

Superior Performance

B = 85 – 92

Good Performance

C = 77 – 84

Satisfactory Performance

D = 70 – 76

Poor Performance

F = 69 & below

Failing

usually national or state samples of students the same age or grade.

For questions about tests or test scores, call your teacher or school counselor.

Aptitude testing

Aptitude tests are used to assess a student's academic aptitude and predict the student's level of success in school. They test abilities such as problem solving, discovering relationships, evaluating and remembering. An aptitude test is given to select students in grade 2 and to eligible students in grade 5. It is one factor in decisions about placement in classes for academically gifted students and in other programs.

Achievement tests

Nationally standardized achievement tests are used for testing for special programs such as Title 1 and academically gifted. The multiple-choice tests are spread over several days and cover reading, language and mathematics. They are standardized and compare your child to other children at the same grade level throughout the United States.

End-of-Grade Tests

The North Carolina end-of-grade tests given in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 measure achievement in reading and math. Students in grades 5 and 8 also take end-of-grade tests in science.

The tests include multiple-choice questions requiring problem-solving skills. Parents or guardians will receive their child's test results for the multiple-choice sections with the final report card.

For middle school students, grades on end-of-grade tests account for 25 percent of the student's final grade for the respective subject. For elementary school students, end-of-grade tests will be used to improve a student's final grade in the fourth quarter for the subject tested, but will not be used to reduce a student's grade.

North Carolina Writing Test

The North Carolina Writing Test is given to 10th-graders on the second Tuesday in March. Students are asked to write a short essay on a given topic. The test measures a student's ability to write an organized, coherent essay with a main idea and supporting details. The writing assignment varies each year.

End-of-Course Tests

End-of-course tests are given statewide at the end of Algebra I, English I and Biology. They take up to 4 hours and are given instead of a teacher-created test at the end of the course. They are based on the material required for each course by the state and compare students with those in other schools in North Carolina. They also provide information about how our school system compares with others in these subjects.

Grades on end-of-course tests account for 25 percent of the student's final grade for the course.

Retesting

If a student is not proficient in a subject on the regular end-of-grade or end-of-course test, the student is required to retest. Students scoring at Level II must retest. Parents of students scoring at Level I may request that their child not be retested in that subject. Students scoring at Level III or IV in a subject are considered proficient and will not retest.

Language Proficiency Tests

A Language Proficiency Test is initially given to students who have a language other than English listed on their Home Language Survey. (The HLS is administered to all students upon entering WS/FCS.) Students who do not score superior on this initial assessment are reassessed annually with an alternate form of the test.

PSAT

The PSAT is offered in October to 11th-graders who are currently taking or have completed geometry. Students register for the test at their schools. Those who score in the top one-half of one percent of juniors in each state are eligible to be named National Merit Semifinalists. They then take the SAT and meet other requirements before being named finalists or receiving National Merit Scholarships.

PSAT scores are not reported to colleges but give an indication of how well a student can expect to score on the SAT.

SAT

The SAT is used to predict academic performance in college. Most students who take the SAT plan to go to college. Many colleges use the score as part of the admissions process.

The SAT consists of three sections: critical reading, math and writing. The test format includes an essay, short reading passages and multiple-choice questions.

Some colleges also require students to take one or more SAT subject tests.

The SAT is offered several times a year on Saturdays. A fee is charged. Some students may be eligible to have their fees waived; contact your school counselor or www.collegeboard.com for more information.

Advanced Placement Exams

Students in Advanced Placement courses are required to take the nationally administered Advanced Placement exams in May. Those students who score well can earn college credit or advanced college placement.

The exam fee for the 2010-11 school year was \$87 for each exam. Financial assistance is available based on need.

For more information, please call the A.P. Coordinator at your school.

International Baccalaureate

Students in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme at Parkland High School take tests at the end of each year in several subjects. Scoring well enough on these tests can earn college credit at participating schools.

Student-Parent Handbook

A fee is charged. Some students may be eligible to have their fees waived; contact your school counselor for more information.

Preparing for testing

There are several things adults can do to help their child do well on test days.

- Be sure that your child gets a good night's sleep before the test.
- Be sure that your child eats a good breakfast.
- Encourage your child to listen to the directions and to the amount of time allowed for each section.
- Be sure that your child has the pencils or other equipment that are needed.
- Be sure that your child is at school on time on test day.
- Do not schedule dental or medical appointments on test days.
- Recognize that the tests are important, but do not make your child nervous.

Driver's License Eligibility

North Carolina legislation is designed to motivate and encourage students to complete high school.

In order to receive a driver's license or permit, a student under the age of 18 must allow the N.C. Dept. of Motor Vehicles access to the student's educational records to show that he or she has made adequate academic progress in the previous semester in order to obtain a Driving Eligibility Certificate.

In addition, the student's driving permit or license will be revoked if the student does not make adequate academic progress each semester, drops out, or is suspended/expelled for more than 10 consecutive school days.

There may be exceptions, such as medical problems, for work or for exceptional children.

Dual Enrollment

Forsyth Tech

Forsyth Tech allows students to enroll in math, science and technical (or career-oriented) college courses free of tuition while they are in high school. They are responsible for fees and for purchasing textbooks and supplies.

Students must meet the prerequisites for admission to FTCC and to the specific courses. Applications are available in high school counseling centers. Grades earned at FTCC become part of the student's high school transcript.

Learn and Earn online classes are also available through FTCC. Learn and Earn online programs offer a wide variety of college courses.

Area colleges and universities

Students may enroll for credit at N.C. A&T State University, Salem College, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Wake Forest Uni-

versity and Winston-Salem State University for elective courses that are not offered as part of the school system's curriculum.

— Policy and AR 6176

Homework

Homework strengthens skills, develops self-discipline and shows areas that need attention. As a parent, you are responsible for supporting the teacher's efforts by ensuring that your child completes homework assignments. Children are responsible for doing their work.

Helping with homework

Parents can do their part by:

- Providing a comfortable place for their child to do homework, such as a table or desk with enough light for reading.
- Scheduling a regular time for homework.
- Serving as a consultant about problems but not doing the child's work.
- Asking the teacher if they do not understand why the homework was assigned or what it should accomplish.

The amount of time needed to complete homework each day varies. School-system guidelines suggest up to 30 minutes of homework in kindergarten through second grade, 30 minutes to 45 minutes in grades 3 and 4, 45 minutes to 75 minutes in fifth grade, 45 minutes to 90 minutes in middle school, and 60 minutes to 90 minutes in high school.

Projects, studying for tests or exams, and some courses require more homework. In advanced classes such as academically gifted, highly academically gifted, honors, Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate – classes designed to provide higher levels of challenge – students may need more than the usual recommended time to complete homework assignments.

— Policy and AR 6154

Tutoring and other services

Parents or guardians who feel that their child needs extra help or special attention should make an appointment with their child's teacher to discuss the concern. The teacher may be able to suggest some help, such as a volunteer to work with the child, or other strategies.

A school counselor also may offer references to other resources. Counselors or teachers can initiate the process of testing and evaluation to determine if a child needs specialized services through the academically gifted program or because of a physical or mental handicap or learning disability.

Private tutoring services sometimes are effective for students who have difficulty or need more personal attention than the classroom teacher or parents can provide. Although the school system cannot recommend a particular service, several are listed under "Tutoring" in

TESTS FOR EACH GRADE

An asterisk marks a test required by the ABCs of Public Education, the state's accountability plan for schools.

End-of-grade tests will be given May 14-17. Retest dates are May 29-June 1. Other test dates are as listed.

Tests for each grade

Second Grade

ITBS – Nov. 14-16

COGAT – Nov. 2-4

Third Grade

N.C. End-of-Grade Tests*

Fourth Grade

N.C. End-of-Grade Tests*

Fifth Grade

N.C. End-of-Grade Tests*

Sixth Grade

N.C. End-of-Grade Tests*

Seventh Grade

N.C. End-of-Grade Tests*

Eighth Grade

N.C. End-of-Grade Tests*

Ninth-12th Grades

N.C. End-of-Course Tests*

– Jan. 13-20, May 31-June 7
at all schools

10th Grade

N.C. Writing Assessment*

– March 13

Language Proficiency Test

WAPT upon initial entry;

ACCESS – Spring 2012

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT PARENTS' RIGHT-TO-KNOW

In 2001, the federal government made significant changes to the way it funds federal programs in public schools by passing the No Child Left Behind Act.

Parents whose children attend schools receiving Title I money have the right to request certain information about their child's teachers, and school systems are required to inform them of that right. Information that parents may request includes:

- *Whether the teacher has met state qualifications for a teaching license for the grade levels and subject area he or she is teaching.*
- *Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency, lateral entry or provisional license for the subject area he or she is teaching.*
- *The level and subject area of any bachelor or graduate degrees or teacher certification areas earned by the teacher.*
- *Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and their qualifications.*

To request this information, please call the Human Resources department at 748-4079. Under state law, the school system cannot release this information to parents unless their child attends a school that receives Title I money.

the Yellow Pages of the telephone book.

Nonprofit programs such as NAACP Learning Centers, the Best Choice Center, Upward Bound and churches also may be able to help.

Parents also may check with their schools to see if teachers are interested in tutoring. It is up to parents to determine if the person is qualified and to negotiate a price.

Getting Involved

Children do better in school if their parents are involved, and there are many ways to participate:

- **Visit the school.** Open house is held before each school year begins. A day is set aside for parent-teacher conferences in the fall. Visits during the school day also are welcomed; please call ahead to schedule if you wish to visit on a school day.
- **Read the notes and newsletters that are sent home from school.**
- **Read the registration materials closely before making decisions on courses.**
- **Ask questions.** Teachers, guidance counselors and principals will explain discipline policies, choices for students, grades and many other topics.
- **Call for a conference.** Teachers are generally available before and after school, but please call in advance to set a time.
- **Notify the school of changes in telephone numbers or addresses.** The school then can reach someone in an emergency and make sure parents receive information and materials mailed to students' homes.
- **Notify the school if marital or parental status changes.** The school needs to know which parent has custody of a child. Parents who do not have custody still may be able to arrange to receive grades and information.
- **Read school-system publications that are sent home.**
- **Watch Cable 2 for programs about the school system and announcements about meetings and activities.**
- **Check the school system's website, wscfs.k12.nc.us.** The site is updated regularly with important information for students and parents.
- **Join the PTA.** Each school has a Parent-Teacher or Parent-Teacher-Student association. PTAs and PTSAs help schools in many ways. They provide a forum for information and concerns and raise money for extra computers, books, playground equipment, field trips and other educational needs. Most PTAs meet at least three times a year.
- **Volunteer.**

Buses

Bus transportation is provided to high school students who live more than 1.5 miles from school or middle and elementary students who live more than 0.5 mile from their school. Stu-

dents who live within the designated walk zone of school may be allowed to ride a bus if space is available. Buses will be routed within 0.5 mile of students' residences for traditional school programs. Buses may be routed to pick up students who live closer if they face hazardous conditions when walking.

It should not take more than one hour for most students to get to school under normal conditions, although some routes take longer. Buses may use only state- or city-maintained roads and follow primary routes. Buses do not stop at every house; stops must be 2/10 of a mile apart unless there are safety considerations.

While the school system provides bus transportation for most students, it does not provide supervision of students as they travel to and from bus stops or while they wait at stops.

Parents of pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and first-grade students must provide or arrange supervision at bus stops, including someone to meet their child at the bus stop in the afternoon. If a student is given this responsibility, he or she must be in the fourth grade or older. If no one is at the bus stop in the afternoon to meet a pre-kindergarten or kindergarten student, the parent will be called immediately and will be told to pick up the child at the next school along the route of the bus. If the parent doesn't pick up the child within 30 minutes, he or she will be charged a \$10 childcare fee.

Students in first grade or older must be responsible for their own safety as they travel to and from their bus stop. Parents can help by escorting them to and from school or the bus stop. They are encouraged to organize community watch programs to provide adult supervision.

The principal has the authority to suspend students' bus-riding privileges and to suspend them from school for misconduct on the bus.

You will be notified of your child's misconduct in the same manner as if the misconduct had occurred at school.

The school system has a special phone number, **748-2287 (then press 4)**, for parents to call when they have transportation questions or issues.

—AR 5131.1 and Policy 3541

Food

All schools offer a well balanced, nutritious breakfast and lunch. Prices and serving sizes vary by grade.

	Breakfast	Lunch
Elementary	\$1.90	\$2.35
Middle	\$2.00	\$2.45
High	\$2.10	\$2.55

Reduced-price breakfasts (30 cents) and lunches (40 cents), as well as free meals, are available for students who qualify based on family size and income. Applications are sent home annually with students. For additional forms, call the Child Nutrition office at 771-4526.

Students may not charge meals. Those who

Student-Parent Handbook

INTERNET USE

Students in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools may use the Internet in a supervised school classroom environment after complying with the following:

A. Students will receive instruction in the proper use of Internet.

*B. Students, parents or guardians of students under the age of 18 shall be notified in writing of the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools Policy and Regulations for the use of the Internet and told that their child will be granted access to the Internet unless they object in writing.
- AR 6161.1*

The school system's Internet use regulations are included in the policy section of this handbook and on the school system's website.

COPYRIGHT GUIDELINES

Copyright guidelines are explained in Administrative Regulation 6161.4 and should be followed by students and faculty.

These rules are applied to all formats, including print, Internet sites, graphics, sound files, and all multimedia resources. For a copy of the regulation, visit the school system's website.

forget their lunch money may request a voucher for a vegetable (not French fries), milk and two rolls. Parents must reimburse the school for the value of the voucher meal.

Supplemental items are available at all schools. Parents are encouraged to prepay for meals. You may prepay at your child's school or prepay online by clicking on "Lunch Menu" under Quick Links on the school system's homepage.

Before- and After-School Care

Most elementary schools and some middle schools offer before-school care, after-school care or both for children of working parents. The programs are located at the schools.

Most programs begin between 6:45 a.m. and 7 a.m. and run from the end of school until 6 p.m.

The YMCA and YWCA offer some programs, while individual schools run others.

A fee is charged. Scholarships are available for needy students. More information about programs and fees is available at individual schools.

Other agencies such as churches and private day-care centers also provide before- and after-school care. Students may be picked up by the program's bus or ride the school bus if the program is in their attendance district.

After-school programs in schools do not operate when school closes early for bad weather. Many day-care providers also close in bad weather. Be prepared to make other arrangements for days when there is early dismissal, late opening or closing because of bad weather.

Field Trips

Field trips supplement classroom activities and must be approved by the principal. Every attempt is made to make costs reasonable and to provide financial assistance when necessary so that all students can participate.

According to Policy 6153, schools may decide to cancel or postpone field trips based on warnings of terrorist attacks issued by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.



WINSTONNET

WinstonNet offers the free use of computers, free high-speed Internet access and free email at more than 40 locations across Forsyth County. Parents can use WinstonNet to stay in touch with their children's teachers and principals.

Parents and students can use WinstonNet at Winston-Salem recreation centers, Forsyth County libraries and Winston-Salem State University's community knowledge centers.

For more information, please visit www.winstonnet.org.