

W.A. Bess Elementary School

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Parent-Student Handbook 2023-2024 School Year

School Website



<https://www.gaston.k12.nc.us/bess>

Facebook

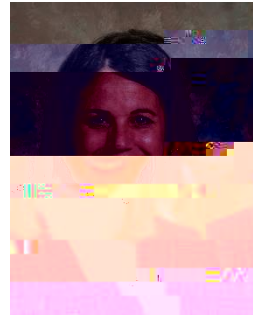


<https://www.facebook.com/WABessElementary>

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WELCOME FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear W.A. Bess Families,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year at W.A. Bess Elementary School! Our students, staff, and parents take great pride in our school. Bess has the distinction of being named a 2022 National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education and achieving status as an A+ School by the N.C. Department of Public Instruction. W.A. Bess is a place where staff and families come together to ensure children are cared for, productive, confident, and compassionate. We strive to provide a safe and orderly learning environment and exciting educational program for your child each day.

The purpose of this handbook is to inform you of routine procedures at W.A. Bess Elementary School as well as the policies adopted by the Gaston County Board of Education. Please read this handbook completely and carefully and discuss its content with your children. If further information is needed, please feel free to contact our school at (704) 866-6075, visit the school office, or schedule a meeting.

PLEASE NOTE: Any guidance, instruction, or other changes in policy and procedures that may occur after this handbook has been printed

MISSION, VISION, AND BELIEFS

W. A. Bess Elementary School's vision is to equip students for academic success needed for a strong foundation in becoming lifelong learners who contribute to their community. The school's mission is to create a nurturing and learning environment. Leading the school in realizing its vision and in accomplishing its mission are beliefs that include providing equitable academic opportunities for all W.A. Bess students and in teaching and modeling positive character traits.

PHILOSOPHY OF W.A. BESS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

At W. A. Bess Elementary School, we believe that each child is unique. We are challenged each day in this creative profession with the opportunity to work with developing young minds, freeing them to mature into their maximum potential in all areas: academically, socially, physically, emotionally, and creatively. To fulfill our philosophy, we have established several objectives:

- To provide a broad range of educational experiences to accommodate individual needs.
- To help all students develop their potential.

to wait for a teacher to open the door to exit or enter the vehicle.

For safety reasons, we ask parents to not pass cars during morning drop off and to wai

A written notification will be sent to parents/guardians when a student accumulates excessive absences.

BUS RIDER INFORMATION

Students who live in the W.A. Bess attendance area are allowed to ride the bus. Parents sign a bus permission slip at the beginning of the year that outlines the rules students must follow.

Students are assigned to buses. No changes can be made without prior approval of the principal or assistant principal. All bus rules apply to **each** W.A. Bess bus rider. These rules are to be followed while waiting at the bus stop, on the bus, getting off the bus and continue until each student has safely reached school and home. Video-streamed security cameras allow the administration and driver to monitor student behavior on the bus.

Students who choose to ignore the bus driver's directions are endangering the safety of themselves and others. Those students will be suspended from the bus and may possibly lose the privilege of riding if the behavior continues. A student's privilege of riding the bus may be revoked on the first violation if the act is extreme. If students are suspended from riding the bus then it is the parent's responsibility to provide prompt transportation to and from school.

If your child's mode of transportation is going to change, then you **must send a note in writing** prior to 1:50 p.m. Transportation changes will not be accepted over the phone in order to ensure student safety.

CAFETERIA AND SCHOOL NUTRITION

The cafeteria and school nutrition is an important part of the school experience. Breakfast and Lunch are served daily.

In compliance with the Gaston County Schools Department of School Nutrition, ALL foods brought into the school FOR ANY OCCASION must be store bought and meet GCS regulations.

conference, please telephone, email, or send a note with your child to schedule a convenient time for all.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

All parents are encouraged to take an active role in the education of their children and be involved in all school functions. Parents are welcome to volunteer time and services and request conferences to communicate concerns.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

W.A. Bess Elementary School invites you to become an active member of our P.T.O. as we anticipate another successful year of parental involvement. Your participation facilitates a sense of community between the parents and teachers with a focus on student success. Parent support is evidenced by serving on the committee and attending scheduled meetings.

The chief objectives of the Bess P.T.O. are the following:

1. To promote the welfare of all children.
2. To promote a closer relationship among parents, teachers, and administration.
3. To provide a secure, enjoyable, and rewarding educational atmosphere.

Bess P.T.O. Board meetings will occur monthly. Families will be informed of meeting dates and times via ParentLink messages by phone and email and the P.T.O. Facebook page.

PERMISSION TO USE STUDENT PICTURES AND INTERVIEWS

During the school year, your child could be photographed while engaged in a school activity. Please complete the appropriate paperwork for your child to be photographed, videotaped, and/or interviewed by system employees or media regarding routine school topics and activities for public information. Sometimes these pictures are included in a local newspaper or shown on our website or Bess social media. Parents will use the Gaston County Schools Photographic/Videotaping Permission Form to indicate if they do or do not give permission for their child's photograph to be used. Parents will use the Gaston County Schools News Media Interview Permission Form to indicate if they do or do not give permission for their child to be interviewed.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued at the end of each grading period on the dates listed below.

October 19, 2023
January 11, 2024
March 14, 2024
By June 5, 2024 (mailed)

Now that Parent Assistant is available to 3rd - 12th grade parents you can see your child's current averages and assignments at any time. You are encouraged to contact the teacher directly with grading questions regarding your child.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM

The Bess SIT will meet monthly (check our website for dates and times). A parent representative serves on SIT, but meetings are open to all who wish to attend.

SCHOOL PICTURES

Carolina Photography will make professional pictures of W.A. Bess students throughout the school year.

Fall Picture Day - Wednesday, October 4, 2023
Fall make-up pictures - Wednesday, November 8, 2023
Holiday pictures - Wednesday, November 8, 2023
Class pictures - Wednesday, January 31, 2024
Spring pictures - Wednesday, March 13, 2024
Yearbook pre-orders will be available in early Spring 2024.

SCHOOL SAFETY

Keeping children safe while at school is one of our main priorities. Each Bess classroom has been s6()JTJET3-29025(been)4(ROO

Please inform the school of home, work, or cell telephone number changes.

STANDARDS BASED LEARNING

Elementary schools across Gaston County will continue to focus on implementing standards-based learning and grading practices in all K-5 classrooms this school year. Knowing where students are in their progress toward meeting standards-based learning objectives is crucial for planning and delivering classroom instruction. Standards-based assessments give teachers more information about each

WITHDRAWAL OF STUDENTS

The school should be notified at least two days in advance of a student's withdrawal. All textbooks, technology, and library books must be returned and lunch payments and other debts must be cleared before transfer of records occurs.

Thank you for partnering with us to
continue building success at
W.A. Bess!

