

Student Handbook



2023 – 2024

Improving tomorrow by learning today

Welcome to Westwood Elementary School

On behalf of the staff and myself, I am pleased to welcome you to the 2023-2024 school year! We are looking forward to a dynamic partnership with you to ensure our students achieve their highest potential. We share the responsibility for our students' achievement and want you to know that we will do our very best to ensure your child's success. If you have any questions about the rules and expectations, please feel free to contact administration or your child's teacher at 336-877-2921.

Jennifer Holden, Principal

School Expectations and Information

ARRIVAL: In an effort to make our school operate as efficiently and safely as possible, we ask that you drop your child(ren) off and let them walk in on their own. Doors in the front will not open until 7:15am. Please do not drop off students prior to this time. ONLY students who are riding a bus to the middle or high school may be dropped off in the back between 7:15 a.m. - 7:45 am. Any students riding a bus will remain on the school bus until instructed to exit the bus and proceed to the serving line to get breakfast or wait in the gymnasium by grade level. Parents dropping off middle school students that have K-6 siblings may opt to let them off in the back as well.

K-6 students may be dropped in the back starting at 7:15 a.m. at the covered walkway. Students being dropped off at the front main entrance may be dropped off between 7:15 a.m. to 7:45 a.m.

If a student would like breakfast and is a morning car rider he/she may enter the building at the cafeteria doors to get breakfast. Morning car riders arriving prior to 7:30 that do not want breakfast must enter the building and go straight to the gym until 7:30. If a student wishes to eat breakfast he/she must go to the cafeteria FIRST, prior to entering the gym. If a student goes to the gym first, then he/she is not permitted to return to the cafeteria for breakfast. Students arriving after 7:45 a.m. must report to the front entrance with a parent/guardian where office staff will assist with sign-in and lunch order before heading to class.

In the event of a two-hour delay, please do not drop students off before 9:15 a.m.

ATTENDANCE: Regular attendance enables a child to be more successful in school and develop good habits. A written note from the parent or guardian must document all absences within three (3) days after the child returns to school. Ashe County School's attendance policy requires that the school notify parents after a child has missed five (5) consecutive school days or ten (10) accumulative absences. Parents will also be contacted when a child has accumulated three (3) unexcused absences, and again when he or she has six (6) unexcused absences. An unexcused absence occurs when a child is absent for an invalid reason or when a parent fails to send a note explaining any absence within three (3) days after the child returns to school. Students picked up prior to 11:15 a.m. will be counted absent for the entire school day.

Attendance Policy 4400

The Ashe County Board of Education recognizes that regular school attendance plays a significant role in the academic performance of all students. The following attendance policy is designed to promote optimum student attendance.

The public school laws of North Carolina require compulsory attendance for all children between the ages of seven and sixteen years (G.S. 115C-378). Every parent, guardian, or other person having charge or control of such a child enrolled in Ashe County Schools by law must cause that child to attend school continuously for a period equal to the time when the public school is in session.

The following reasons can be accepted by school personnel as valid excuses for school absences:

1. Illness or injury
2. Death in the immediate family
3. Medical or dental appointments
4. Court or administrative proceedings
5. Religious observances
6. Educational opportunity
7. Quarantine
8. Special emergencies as determined by the principal

If a student has accumulated three (3) unexcused absences in a school year, the law requires that the principal/designee notify the parent/guardian of the student's excessive absences from school.

K – 6

Students will not have more than 18 absences per year to be eligible to be promoted to the next grade level. In order to be recorded present, a student must be in class at least one-half of the school day. Students are counted present when participating in authorized school activities approved by the principal.

Students who have missed more than eighteen (18) days are referred to the principal/designee. The opportunity for an appeal of retention due to attendance is provided by the principal/designee during the last two weeks of the school year. Appeals should be based upon appropriate reasons for absences, consistent participation in after-school tutorial sessions when needed, and completion of all make-up assignments.

Students will have the opportunity to make-up work or tests missed due to his/her absences. Except for extenuating circumstances as determined by the principal, upon the student's return to school, arrangements for make-up work shall be made within three (3) days, and make-up work must be completed within ten (10) days. Students may be asked to stay after school to make up missed assignments due to absences. The emphasis in make-up work should be on mastery of knowledge and skills rather than upon literal make-up of the hours missed.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-47, -84, -288(a), -378 to –383

Cross Reference: Student Accountability Standards (Policy 3420)

Adopted: June 27, 2002

Amended: April 7, 2014

Attendance Procedure 4400

School attendance is recorded on a daily basis for every student using data from PowerSchool.

A student's absence will be determined excused if the absence falls under one of the criteria in Policy 4400.

Upon a student being absent from school a note must be turned into the school three (3) days after the absence in order for the absence to be counted as excused.

An educational opportunity may be approved by the principal for one pre-arranged trip of up to three (3) days by the principal if a student has accumulated less than seven (7) absences for the year.

Requests must be submitted in writing to the principal at least two (2) weeks prior to the trip.

An attendance team will be established at each school and will include the (principal or designee), Family Support Facilitator, and other appropriate staff.

The attendance team will meet once a month to review student absences. The committee will review attendance documentation throughout the month as needed. The attendance team will check the following documentation based on the North Carolina Compulsory Attendance Law (Part 1 – Article 115C-371):

- That the principal or his designee had notified the parent guardian, or custodian of the child's excessive absences after the child has accumulated **three (3) unexcused absences** in a school year. The parent, guardian, or custodian will receive a copy of procedures and policy at this time.
- That after not more than **six (6) unexcused absences**, the principal has notified the parent, guardian, or custodian by mail that he/she may be in violation of the Compulsory Attendance Law may be prosecuted if the absences cannot be justified under the established attendance policies of the state and local boards of education. **Students will be required to bring medical documentation for each absence after missing six (6) unexcused absences.**

Following written notification to the parent, the school attendance team and Family Support Facilitator, will work with the child and his/her family to analyze the causes of the absences and determine steps, including adjustment of the school program or obtaining supplemental services to eliminate the problem.

A phone call, school conference, or home visit, (including the Attendance Counselor and/ or Family Support Facilitator), with the parent is recommended when a student has missed six (6) or more unexcused absences.

- Upon a student accumulating **ten (10) absences** the principal will require that the student bring in medical documentation after this date to document reasons for the absences.
- After **ten (10) accumulated unexcused absences** in a school year, the principal, along with the school's attendance team will review all circumstances contributing to the absences to determine if the parent has made a good faith effort to comply with the law. If the principal determines that the parent, guardian, or custodian has not made a good faith effort to comply with the law, the principal shall notify the district attorney and the director of social services of the county in which the child resides.

PERFECT ATTENDANCE:

Students who have zero absences and 2 or less unexcused tardies for the school year will be eligible for perfect attendance. However, 3 unexcused tardies would negate perfect attendance.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT: Helping students learn to behave responsibly may be the most important task that we as parents and educators have. Classroom discipline will be attended to in an assertive yet caring manner so that learning can be safe and fun for all. Students are expected to conduct themselves in such a manner that their actions reflect positively on themselves, their school, and their community. Westwood has implemented PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports) to set clear, concise, and consistent expectations for students throughout the school and on the school bus. Our staff works to establish these expectations and reinforce the positive behaviors displayed. Severe and repetitive behavioral offenses will be dealt with through the principal's office as stated in Ashe County Schools' "Student Code of Conduct." (See School Board Policy 4301 "Authority of School Personnel")

AFTER SCHOOL DETENTION: Students may be assigned after school detention for inappropriate behaviors. Students would remain in classroom until parents pick them up promptly at 3:45.

BUS DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES: Safety is at the forefront of everything we do that involves transporting students. Parents, please stress the importance of proper bus behavior and how it relates to their safety as well as the safety of others with your child. Remember, bus transportation is a privilege. The following procedures shall be followed in handling cases of misconduct on school buses.

- 1st infraction – written warning by the driver with a copy sent home to be signed and returned
- 2nd infraction – 2nd written warning by the driver with a copy sent home to be signed and returned to school as well as a student conference with administration with lunch detention and/or after school detention along with a phone call to parents
- 3rd infraction – 3rd written warning, parent phone call and suspension from riding the bus for 3-5 days (principal's discretion)
- 4th infraction – suspension from riding the bus for 5-10 days (principal's discretion)
- 5th infraction – suspension from riding the bus for 10-15 days (principal's discretion)
- 6th infraction – permanent suspension of riding privileges for the present school year

Administration has the right to suspend bus ridership for serious offenses as defined in ACS Student Code of Conduct and School Bus Discipline Contract at any time.

Use of cell phones on the school bus by elementary students is prohibited.

- 1st offense-driver will warn -parent call from school
- 2nd offense-driver will ask for cell phone-parent pick up
- 3rd offense-3-5 day bus suspension
- 4th offense-2 week bus suspension
- 5th offense-remainder of the year bus suspension

All students will receive a Bus Discipline Contract. This form provides a detailed description of rules, offenses, and consequences for infractions related to any bus transportation. This form must be signed by the parent and student and returned to the school.

CAFETERIA: Everyone is expected to assist in making the cafeteria a pleasant place to enjoy meals. Students share in the responsibility for good housekeeping and proper conduct while in the cafeteria. Westwood serves breakfast between 7:15 a.m. and 7:45 a.m. When school is on a delayed schedule, breakfast will still be served. We recommend that lunches be paid on a weekly basis by cash or check. Please make every effort to pay for your child's lunch in a timely manner. While charging meals is strongly discouraged, there is a \$10.00 limit on cafeteria charges. Students may **not** purchase "extras" in the cafeteria if they have an outstanding balance.

Breakfast and Lunch are free to all students this upcoming school year.

Second Meal prices for the 2023-24 school year are:

\$1.75 for breakfast Students

\$3.00 for K-8 students

\$3.25 for High School students

A la Carte items will be available at each school.

Adults

Breakfast \$1.75

Lunch Price \$5.00

If you have questions concerning your child's bill in the cafeteria, please contact the cafeteria manager at 336-877-2967. Westwood will send letters and Connect 5 reminders if your child has a negative lunch balance on a periodic basis.

Parents are welcome to have lunch with their children after the first week of school, except during EOG testing time. Parents who wish to eat lunch with their children must follow the following guidelines:

- Visiting parents/guests are required to sign in at the front office and meet your child in the cafeteria. After lunch, please say "good bye" in the cafeteria as parents and visitors may not go to the classroom or down the classroom halls after lunch due to protecting instructional time.
- Parents / guest have two choices as to where they sit in the cafeteria:
 - At the designated "Parent Table" with their child only. Other students may not be pulled to the "Parent Table".
 - At the lunch table with other students if your child wants you to eat with their classmates. This is only an option if there is room at the tables.
- In fairness to all students and in order to keep our cafeteria from violating federal competitive food regulations, please do not bring food to your child at school in packaging from outside restaurants. If you choose to bring lunch, please repackage any commercially prepared food in an unmarked container. All foods, including cakes and cupcakes, for classroom parties must come from commercial sources. (Board Policy #6230 – Nutritional Standards for Food Selection)

CHECKS: We do not keep cash on hand in the office and are unable to cash checks or make change. Checks may be sent for payment of field trips, yearbooks, fundraising, etc. Checks for lunch monies may be made out to Westwood Elementary Cafeteria. Two party checks are not accepted. When you provide a check as payment, you authorize the Ashe County School's agent to make a one-time transaction to process the payment. You also authorize this agent to collect a fee through electronic transfer or bank draft from your account if your payment is returned unpaid.

CODE OF CONDUCT: Ashe County Schools has developed a Code of Conduct related to student behavior. Parents are asked to review its contents and discuss these expectations with their children. All kindergarten and new student parents will be required to sign an acknowledgement that this information has been provided to them

Students should conduct themselves in a kind and courteous manner in all interactions with students and teachers.

1. The use of cell phones during school hours, including bus rides, **is not allowed**. Cell phones will be confiscated by the principal if seen at school. Administration will return the phone to the parent.
2. Students are not to bring excessive amounts of money to school.
3. Students may not buy, sell, or trade items at school. **Pokemon cards are NOT allowed** at school. Students caught trading or displaying cards will be asked to give the cards to school personnel and parents will be notified to pick up cards from the office.
4. Damage to school property must be repaired or replaced at the expense of the offender.
5. Chewing gum is not allowed at school or on the bus.
6. Toys, games, electronics, etc. are not permitted without teacher approval.

Administration has flexibility in utilizing various consequences for reinforcement of school expectations violations include but not limited to conferencing, time out, lunch detention, afterschool detention on Tuesday and Wednesdays, In School Suspension as well as Out of School suspension.

CELEBRATIONS: Each classroom will celebrate birthdays one day each month. If families would like to bring in treats or snack for the class to honor your child's birthday, please make arrangements with the classroom teacher prior to the last week of the month. Cakes and cupcakes for classroom parties must come from commercial sources (**Board Policy # 6230-Nutritional Standards for Food Selection**).

COMPUTER USE: Computers and other technology equipment in the labs, media center, and classrooms are available for students and teachers to use as a tool to enhance the instructional program. Students must have, on file, an Acceptable Use Policy and a web permission form signed by the student and parent. Unacceptable use will result in a forfeiture of use.

CONNECT 5: Parents and students will be contacted by phone using the Connect 5 system to find out information concerning school delays, dismissals, closings, and school news. Families will need to decide which phone number will work best, and list that number under "home phone" on the consent form. In the case of split families, please let the office know that the calls need to go to two households, and which two numbers to use. Additionally, ensure that your email is correct on consent forms as we will be utilizing the email capabilities with Connect 5.

DELIVERIES and INVITATIONS: Students may not receive gifts, flowers, and deliveries at school. Invitations to social events and celebrations outside the school environment may not be distributed at school. Confidentiality laws prohibit schools from providing names, addresses, and phone numbers of other students to parents.

DISMISSAL: Parents using the afternoon carline for student pick up are asked not to arrive on campus before 2:10 p.m.. In order to ensure the safety of all students, parents need to remain in vehicles and stay in the big parking lot. Buses will begin loading at 2:45 p.m. and will be dismissed as quickly as possible. Car riders will be dismissed as soon as buses pull out of the parking lot. We ask that you wait until the buses have dismissed to pull to the designated pickup areas so as not to block the route for exiting buses.

DRESS CODE:

The purpose of the dress code is to ensure that a student's dress and appearance promote a positive learning environment, does not disrupt the learning of others or the general operation of the school, and does not create a safety hazard. Both research and experience have shown that student conduct, identification with the school purposes and activities, personal pride and self-respect, and even the level of learning responses of students are all related to personal appearance and mode of dress. Maintaining a positive learning environment and ensuring the health and safety of each student are high priorities of the Ashe County Schools.

Students are expected to dress in a manner that does not cause disruption in school and promotes respect. Clothing should be clean, neat, and appropriate for school wear. Clothing or accessories that are disruptive, potentially injurious, or that creates a question regarding a student's health and safety, will not be allowed. Students who are dressed inappropriately will be required to change the clothing or accessories in question. If a student has to be sent to the office because of a dress code infraction, instruction time is interrupted for the student, the teacher, and the other students in the class. Furthermore, more time is lost for the student if the administration determines that the clothing must be changed and the student must wait for a parent to bring the change of clothing. **It is vital that students understand that time out of class will be regarded as unexcused.**

School administrators have the authority and the responsibility to determine what clothing or accessories are disruptive to the school environment or injurious to a student's health and safety. Cooperation among school personnel, parents (or other legal guardians), and students is essential in the implementation and enforcement of school regulations, including this dress code. Decisions regarding a student's clothing or accessories will be made in accordance with the following guidelines.

GRADES K-6

- **Headgear.** No headgear or sunglasses will be worn in the building, except those worn for obvious or established reasons. Hats/Hoods are not allowed to be worn inside the building.
- **Shirts/Blouses/Tops.** Blouses/shirts/tops must be secured to the shoulder and worn at all times.
 - o No halter-tops, strapless tops, spaghetti straps (less than 2"), bralettes, camisoles, or tube tops are allowed.
- Blouses/shirts/tops that expose any portion of the waist, hips, or midriff are not allowed. Other blouses/shirts not appropriate for school include but are not limited to, low-cut, see through (top underneath must meet dress code), backless tops or have inappropriate cut out holes or slits.
- No sleeveless/cutout t-shirts are allowed unless an undershirt that meets dress code guidelines is worn.
- **Shorts/Skirts/Pants.** All shorts and skirts must reach the mid-thigh or the end of the fingertips with arms down at the side.

- All tops worn with tight legwear (i.e. leggings, tights, jeggings, skinny jeans, yoga pants etc.) must cover the buttock and pelvic areas.
 - Fabric must not be see through (i.e. tights and pantyhose).
 - Slits, holes, or tears in shorts /skirts / pants are not permitted above the mid-thigh or above the length of fingertips with arms down to side.
 - Shorts, skirts, or pants must be worn securely around the waist with no bagging or sagging.
 - The waistline of shorts/skirts/pants must be worn on or above the hips with no underwear showing and may not be worn rolled at the waist.
 - Belts may not be excessive in length and should not be hanging from either side of the body.
 - Pajama tops or bottoms are not permitted.
- **Footwear.** Health regulations and safety factors require that shoes be worn at all times.
 - **Undergarments.** Undergarments must never be visible.
 - **Words/Symbols.** No student clothing shall display words or symbols that advocate or depict violence, drugs, alcohol, sexual implications, gang affiliation, or other illegal activity expressively or implied. Clothing may not use or depict hate speech targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation or any other protected group.
 - **Jewelry/Accessories.** Jewelry or accessories that may be used as weapons are not permitted at school, including, but is not limited to, jewelry such as spiked rings, spiked bracelets, two or three finger rings that are connected, and bulky chains worn around the neck or waist. Sharp objects such as spikes are not allowed on clothing or book bags.
 - **Other Inappropriate Dress.** Any student dress/appearance not specifically prohibited in this policy but which school administration deems disruptive to the learning process will not be allowed. To ensure student health and safety, school administrators may adopt and implement additional dress and appearance regulations for certain curriculum areas, such as science labs and vocational classes.
 - **Exceptions.** Exceptions to this policy may be made by school administration on an individual basis for a *bona fide* religious, medical, or other appropriate reason. Schools may designate special dress days at the direction of the principal.
 - **Applicability to School Sponsored Trips and Events.** This policy applies to all school sponsored trips and events. Any deviation from the policy will be discussed by the advisor and the principal or his designee.

DRUG FREE SCHOOL ZONE: Students are prohibited from possessing, using, transmitting or selling drug paraphernalia or counterfeit (fake) drugs. Students may not in any way participate in the selling or transmitting of prohibited substances, regardless of whether the sale or transmission ultimately occurs on school property. Prescription and over the counter drugs are not in violation of this policy if

possessed and used in accordance with Board of Education Policy 6125, Administering Medicines to Students.

The Ashe County Board of Education prohibits the possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages, including beer, malt liquor and wine, on property owned or occupied by the school district. Any person who violates this policy will be asked to leave the school property immediately and, if he or she fails to do so, will be arrested and prosecuted for criminal trespass, disorderly conduct or any other charge that may be appropriate.

Student behavior is further addressed in Board Policy 4325, Narcotics, Alcoholic Beverages and Stimulant Drugs. The principal will report any student who has engaged in criminal behavior to the appropriate law enforcement agency in accordance with Board of Education Policy 4335, Criminal Behavior.

EARLY CHECK OUT: If you plan to pick up your child before the school day has ended, please come by the office when you arrive. Send a note to school with your child that morning notifying the teacher when he/she is to be picked up. This gives the teacher time to prepare the student's assignments. Students may leave school only when a parent or guardian comes to pick him/her up. If someone other than a parent or guardian is coming to pick up your child, please let us know by phone or note. Let your child and his/her teacher know dismissal arrangements before coming to school. We need to limit telephone calls and keep the lines open for emergencies and school business.

FIELD TRIPS: Field trips are an important part of the educational experience at Westwood Elementary School. You will receive an in-county permission form at the beginning of the year that will enable your child to participate in all in-county field trips. In order for your child to participate in out-of-county trips, you will need to sign and return a permission slip prior to the scheduled trip. School-aged siblings of students going on a field trip are encouraged to remain at school. Choosing to take a child on a field trip with your student will result in an unexcused absence for that child. Children who are not enrolled in school at Westwood Elementary may not participate in school sponsored trips. Students must ride on the bus to all field trips or they will be counted absent from school on that day. Students may ride back from a field trip with a parent or legal guardian only. If you cannot pay for your child's field trip, you must complete an application to be reviewed by administration and the school counselor.

GRADING SCALE: The Ashe County Schools now follow a 10-point grading scale that took effect with the start of the 2015-16 school year. This change gives students of Ashe County Public Schools equal footing with students from other school districts that have adopted the 10-point grading scale.

The new scale will not be retroactive for past report card grades or the recalculation of GPAs. Students in kindergarten through the second grade do not receive letter grades. That policy will stay the same. The new grading scale is as follows for grades 3-12;

A	90 - 100
B	80 - 89
C	70 - 79
D	60 - 69
F	➤ 59

HALLWAY EXPECTATIONS: Movement by students in the hallway is essential and should happen in a quiet, orderly fashion. To minimize disruptions, we have zoned our school to represent acceptable

noise levels. The main hallway is Zone 0 and is a no talking zone. The grade level hallways and auditorium are Zone 1 and voices should be a low whisper. The cafeteria is Zone 2 and only 1 or 2 people should hear your voice. The playgrounds are Zone 3 where you can use your outside voices.

HEALTH ROOM: The Health Room is open for student services from 7:30a.m. to 2:30p.m., and is staffed by a Registered Nurse. It is located in the administrative area. Services available may include: minimal physical assessment in the event of acute illness, chronic and specialized health care maintenance, first aid, information and education about health care issues of student interest and concern. ALL medications must be presented to the School Nurse or Administrator.

Health Room Rules:

1. In the event of acute illness, a parent/guardian will be called and asked to check out a student and take him/her home or to the doctor for evaluation. We ask that parents try to pick up students with an acute illness within 30 minutes of the phone call from the school.
2. Communication between the nurse and student is confidential.

Immunizations: NC Law requires all student's grades K-12 to have a complete immunization record. Bring the completed "shot record" to school as soon as possible. A "Request for School Health Record Information" will be sent to you if any immunizations are found incomplete. Children must have their immunizations up to date to continue in school.

Communicable Illness: Children need to come to school healthy and ready to learn. Below are a few guidelines we ask you to follow concerning your child's health. These guidelines are in place to prevent spread of illness and infections. If you have any questions, please contact the school nurse.

- **Fever:** If a child's temperature is 100 degrees or greater, he/she should remain home until he/she has been without fever for a full 24 hours without anti-fever medication. Remember that fever is a symptom indicating the presence of an illness.
- **Flu:** Symptoms include abrupt onset of fever, chills, headache, and muscle aches. Runny nose, sore throat, and cough are common. Your child should remain home from school until symptoms are gone and the child is without fever for a full 24 hours.
- **Head Lice:** Lice are small grayish-tan, wingless insects that lay eggs called nits. Nits firmly attach to the hair shaft, close to the scalp. Nits are much easier to see and detect than lice. They are small white specks, which are usually found at the nape of the neck and behind the ears. Children found with live head lice should remain in class, but be discouraged from close direct head contact with others. The school nurse will contact the parents to discuss treating the child (Frankowski & Bocchini, 2010). Students with nits only should not be excluded from school (American School Health Association, 2005, Frankowski & Bocchini, 2010, Pollack, Kiszewski & Spielman 2000), although further monitoring for sign of re-infestation is appropriate. In some cases, over the counter treatments fail to eliminate live lice. Your child's physician may then order a prescription for the treatment of head lice.
- **Pinkeye:** Pinkeye is characterized by redness and swelling of the membranes of the eye with burning or itching, discharge coming from one or both eyes, or hardened discharge on the eyelids. Your child should remain home from school until receiving full 24 hours of antibiotic therapy and without fever for 24 hours.
- **Strep Throat:** This normally begins with a fever, sore and red throat, pus spots on back of throat, and tender swollen glands of the neck. High fever, nausea and vomiting may occur. Your child should remain home from school until receiving 24 hours of antibiotic therapy and without fever for 24 hours.

- Vomiting and Diarrhea: This is characterized by a stomach ache, cramping, nausea, vomiting, and/or diarrhea, possible fever, headache, and body aches. Your child should remain at home until the symptoms have stopped for a full 24 hours. If your child has had any of these symptoms during the night, he/she should not be sent to school the following day.

Health Screenings: Throughout the school year, children will be screened for problems with their dental health, vision, and hearing. The following schedule applies to screenings your child will receive throughout the school year:

- VISION: Initially for Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten (DIAL), 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th grades will be screened.
- HEARING: Initially for Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten (DIAL), 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th grades will be screened.
- DENTAL: Will be conducted as per the Registered Dental Hygienist with the NC Oral Health Section.
- Color blindness for kindergarten boys
- Additional screenings could be completed on all students including but not limited to:
 - New to school
 - In Exceptional Children's Program
 - Failure of a screening during the previous year
 - Academic difficulties/referral to School Assistance Team
 - Any student who presents with complaints, or teacher referral

Medicine: Medication, prescription or non-prescription, will not be given at school without written permission from a physician. Form SH100 must be signed by a doctor and parent with specific instructions in order for school personnel to administer medication.

Students needing Medications: In order to ensure the health and well-being of all students, we feel you should be advised of the school's policy on administering medications to students by school personnel. If your child must have ANY medication (prescription OR over-the-counter) during school hours, you have the following options:

1. You may come to school and give the medication to your child at the appropriate time.
2. If you would like for school personnel to administer medication to your child, you must obtain a *Parent Consent/Physician Consent Form* from the school. This form must be completed by your child's physician indicating drug, dosage, time to be given, and side effects. A prescription labeled bottle containing the medication and instructions must be provided.
 - A. Children are not allowed to self-carry medications, and do not give your child a pill from home to put in his/her pocket to take at school.
 - **Exceptions to Self-Carry:** Children are allowed to self-carry emergency medicines such as INHALERS, EPI-PENS, AND GLUCAGON with proper authorization and documentation.
 - B. The parent or guardian must bring the medication to the school. It must be brought to the health room, checked in, counted, and signature of parent/guardian is obtained.
 - C. *****DO NOT SEND MEDICATIONS TO SCHOOL WITH YOUR CHILD*****
 - D. If other arrangements for transporting medications must be made, this must be approved in advance by the school nurse and the principal.
 - E. It is preferable to administer medication to your child at home and not at school. You may wish to discuss an alternate schedule for giving medication with your child's physician.

F. NO MEDICATION CAN BE ACCEPTED UNLESS IT IS IN THE ORIGINAL CONTAINER AND PROPERLY LABELED.

HOMEWORK POLICY: Homework is given at the discretion of each teacher and will reinforce skills that have been taught. Parents should monitor and encourage the child as he/she does the work, but should not do the work for the child. **Make-up work:** It is the responsibility of the parent and student to see that all work is made up according to limits set by the teacher.

Tips for helping with your child's homework

1. Be sure to let your child know that you are interested in his schoolwork.
2. The best time for your child to do his work is early in the evening.
3. A child should do his work at the same place and time each evening.
4. The kitchen table or living room floor is a good place because a parent or other family member can more easily monitor progress and give help if needed.
5. During the time work is being done the TV set should remain off.
6. Primary age children should be encouraged to read with a parent or older brother or sister every evening.
7. Time set aside for a reading activity for a primary child should be brief, 10-20 minutes.
8. Helping your child with his assignments can be very rewarding for both of you. Please remember to be patient and positive, play down mistakes, and praise the things that are done correctly.
9. Please review your child's daily work in order to keep up to date with classroom assignments.
10. Whenever you have a question regarding homework or other assignments, please call or send a note to your child's teacher.
11. If you elect to reward your child for his/her academic performance, grades, homework completion, etc. it is usually best for parent and child to agree on the kinds of rewards that may be earned and the period of time involved. Young children will generally be more successful if they are working toward a reward that can be earned within a week or a few days.
12. If you find it necessary to withhold a privilege, be sure that you and your child have discussed beforehand exactly what behaviors will result in loss of a privilege and exactly what that privilege will be (such as not being allowed to watch TV for two nights, not being allowed to ride his/her bicycle for one week, etc.).

LOST AND FOUND: All lost and found articles should be turned in to the office. They will be stored in the back of the auditorium. Parents should label clothing and encourage children to be responsible for their belongings. The school will not be responsible for lost valuables or money.

OTHER SCHOOL PROGRAMS/PERSONNEL: Additional school programs/personnel are provided to enhance the total education of your child. These include: Art, Computer Science, English Language Learner, Music, Literacy, Exceptional Children's Program, Academically and Intellectually Gifted Program, Guidance and an After School Program. Our school also has a Nurse and a School Psychologist to assist with students' needs.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO): Westwood Elementary School welcomes you to join and participate in this worthwhile opportunity with teachers and parents. Our plan is to meet at least four times this school year. These meetings are usually the second Tuesday of the month and they begin at 6:00 p.m..

PERSONAL PROPERTY: Only those items necessary for the school day should be brought to school. Students' personal items such as toys, games, MP3 players, iPods, iPads, cell phones, etc. should be left at home. Additionally, if a teacher deems electronic device use by students as instructional tool in their class, the student may utilize the device; however, the teacher will ensure the device is powered back off and stored properly at the conclusion of the lesson. If one of these items is seen outside the allowed class

during the school day, they will be stored in the office until a parent can pick it up. The school will not be responsible for lost valuables, lost personal property, or money.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION: Physical Education is an integral part of our curriculum and participation is required. **Tennis shoes must be worn for PE activities in the gymnasium.** If the student is unable to participate due to illness or injury, a note from the parent/guardian is necessary.

REPORT CARDS: Good communication between the school and the home set the groundwork for successful teaching and learning. The better the communication, the more successful parents and educators may be in educating children. Report cards are issued at the end of each nine weeks.

REPORTING & INVESTIGATING COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, or BULLYING:

It is the policy of the Ashe County Board of Education to maintain learning environments that are free from discrimination, harassment or bullying. This freedom includes...freedom from harassment or bullying based on an individual's real or perceived race, color, sex, religion, creed, political belief, age, national origin, linguistic or language differences, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, socioeconomic status, height, weight, physical characteristics, marital status, parental status, or physical, mental, or sensory disability.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student, teacher, administrator, other school personnel, or any third party...to harass or bully any person based upon any differences of status including, but not limited to, those listed above. It shall also be a violation of this policy for any teacher, administrator or other school personnel to tolerate such discrimination, harassment or bullying. Employees are required to report any actual or suspected violations of this policy. Students, parents, volunteers, visitors or others are also strongly encouraged to report any actual or suspected incidents of discrimination, harassment or bullying.

All reports should be made in accordance with policy 1710/4021/7232, Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Compliant Procedure, and reported to one of the school officials identified in that policy. Reports may be made anonymously, and all reports shall be investigated in accordance with that policy. Students, parents, and school personnel may refer to Ashe County Board Policy 1720 at <http://www.ashe.k12.nc.us/board/index.html> or pick up a copy of the policy at the Ashe County Board of Education or in any school office.

Employees are required to report any actual or suspected violations of this policy. Students, parents, volunteers, visitors, or others are also strongly encouraged to report any actual or suspected incidents of discrimination, harassment, or bullying. All reports should be made in accordance with policy 1710/4021/7232, Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Complaint Procedure, and reported to one of the school officials identified in that policy. Reports may be made anonymously, and all reports shall be investigated in accordance with that policy. Parents and students may refer to Ashe County School Board Policy 1720 to read the entire policy.

SAFE SCHOOLS PLAN:

FIRE DRILLS: School officials are required to conduct fire drills at least once each month during the school year. Students are required to follow this procedure when the bell sounds to signal a fire drill:

1. Move quickly from the building to the area designated by the teacher.

2. Do not run, but walk rapidly from the building.
3. Absolutely no talking during a fire drill.
4. Do not take books.
5. The exit to use from each classroom is posted in the room.
6. The teacher must have an alternate exit if the one designated is blocked during the fire drill for any reason.
7. Discuss building evacuations and safety procedures with each class during the first week of school.

TORNADO DRILLS: Tornado drills must be practiced at least once a year. This will occur during the start of the tornado season in March. Students should follow this procedure when the solid blast signal sounds to signal a tornado drill:

1. Move quickly from the classroom to the hallway.
2. Do not run.
3. Absolutely no talking during a tornado drill.
4. Do not take books.
5. Assume the tornado position as requested by your teacher.

LOCKDOWN DRILLS - Lockdown drills are designed to keep students from being injured in case of an emergency. During these drills, a teacher should take all precautions to keep the room calm and keep students away from doors and windows. The students should follow this procedure in the case of a lockdown:

1. Remain calm.
2. Follow any instructions that the teacher gives to the class.
3. Stay away from doors and windows.

FIREARMS: North Carolina General Statute § 14-269.2 provides that it is a Class I Felony for any person to possess or carry, whether openly or concealed, any gun, rifle, pistol, or other firearm of any kind, on educational property or to a curricular or extra-curricular activity sponsored by a school. It is also a Class I Felony, for any person to cause, encourage, or aid a person who is less than 18 years old to possess or carry, whether openly or concealed, any gun, rifle, pistol, or other firearm of any kind, on educational property. This particular violation does not apply to BB guns, stun guns, air rifles, or air pistols. It is a Class G Felony for any person to possess or carry, whether openly or concealed any dynamite cartridge, bomb, grenade, mine, or powerful explosive, on educational property, or to a curricular or extra-curricular activity sponsored by a school. This particular prohibition does not apply to fireworks. It is also a violation, punishable as a Class G Felony, for any person to cause, encourage, or aid a person who is less than 18 years old to possess or carry, whether openly or concealed, any dynamite cartridge, bomb, grenade, mine, or powerful explosive, on educational property. Again, this particular violation does not apply to fireworks.

It is a Class 1 Misdemeanor for any person to possess or carry, whether openly or concealed, any BB gun, stun gun, air rifle, air pistol, Bowie Knife, dirk, dagger, slingshot, loaded cane, switchblade knife, blackjack, metallic knuckles, razors and razor blades (except solely for personal shaving), fireworks, or any sharp pointed or edged instrument (except instructional supplies, un-altered nail files and clips, and tools used solely for the preparation of food, instruction, and maintenance on educational property). It is also a Class 1 Misdemeanor for any person to cause, encourage, or aid a person who is less than 18 years old to possess or carry, whether openly or concealed, any of these items on educational property. These prohibitions will apply in/on any school building or bus, school campus, grounds, recreational area, athletic field, or other property owned, used, or operated by any board of education or school board of trustees, or directors for the administration of any school. It is a misdemeanor, rather than a Class I Felony, for any person to possess or carry, whether openly or concealed, any gun, rifle, pistol, or other

firearm of any kind, on educational property or to a curricular or extracurricular activity sponsored by a school if:

- a) The person is not a student attending school on the educational property, or an employee employed by the school working on the educational property; and
- b) The person is not a student attending a curricular or extra-curricular activity sponsored by the school at which the student is enrolled, or an employee attending a curricular or extracurricular activity sponsored by the school at which the employee is working; and
- c) The firearm is not loaded, is in a motor vehicle, and is in a locked container or a locked firearm rack.

The provisions of GS14-269.2 shall not apply to a person who has a concealed handgun permit that is valid under Article 54B of this Chapter, or who is exempt from obtaining a permit pursuant to that Article, who has a handgun in a closed compartment or container within the person's locked vehicle or in a locked container securely affixed to the person's vehicle. A person may unlock the vehicle to enter or exit the vehicle provided the firearm remains in the closed compartment at all times and the vehicle is locked immediately following the entrance or exit. This provision is in accordance to local Board Policy 5027/7275.

SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM: Our school counseling program is offered to all students, which provides individual and group counseling, parent and teacher consultations, and classroom guidance lessons. The school counselor serves as a resource to help remove barriers that may interfere with learning. Our school counselor, Amanda Bloomer, is available during the school day to students, teachers, and parents. Please contact the school counselor if you have concerns about your child's success and well-being.

SCHOOL LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER:

- **LIBRARY CARDS:** All students in Kindergarten through 6th grades will be issued a library card attached to a lanyard. Students are responsible for keeping up with their library card/lanyard and for storing it in a safe place in their classroom or in the place designated by their teacher. These cards should not be taken home. There will be a \$1 fee for a lost library card/lanyard.
- **CIRCULATION:** Students in 2nd through 6th grades are encouraged to check out two (2) books at a time. Students in kindergarten and first grade are allowed to have one book checked out at any time. All books checked out from our media center may be kept for up to two (2) weeks. After this time, students need to renew or return their books. We do not charge fees for overdue books, but we do charge fees for lost or damaged books.
 - Students in kindergarten and first grade are allowed to check out books in our Everybody Books section of the media center only, while students in 2nd through 6th grades may check out books in the Everybody Books, Fiction, and Non-Fiction sections.
 - Students in 4th through 6th grades will have the opportunity to check out Playaways (audiobooks). They may check out 1 (one) Playaway at a time. These Playaways are expensive, so parents and students will be asked to sign a contract before they can check one out.
- **BOOK CARE:** Please encourage your child to read at home (better yet, read together!) and to take good care of his/her books. Also, remind your child to return materials promptly. To protect the quality of our collection, a replacement cost will be charged for all books or other materials lost or damaged.

STUDENT INFORMATION: It is imperative that the school office be notified immediately of any change of address, home or office telephone number, emergency contacts, email address, or of any change in emergency information during the school year. Please contact our data manager for assistance.

STUDENT MATERIALS: Student workbooks, textbooks, library books, etc. are provided without charge. The school will provide a planner for students in 1st - 6th grades. There will be a fee of \$2.50 if your child misplaces his or her planner and has to replace it during the school year. Please encourage your child to take care of these books as they are used from one year to the next. Book bags are encouraged; however, book bags with rollers are not permitted.

STUDENT PLACEMENT: Parents may not request a teacher, nor request not to have a teacher for their child.

TARDY PROCEDURES

Policy Code: 4400

The Ashe County Board of Education recognizes that regular school attendance plays a significant role in the academic performance of all students. It is a reasonable expectation that in order for learning to occur, each student must arrive to school on time. Students who are tardy excessively fall behind in academic achievement. A student who is continually tardy not only places his/her own learning in jeopardy, but also interrupts the learning of other students. Teachers take roll each morning and students are considered tardy if they are not in the classroom when the bell rings **OR** if a student leaves before the end of the instructional day. Students will have three (3) school days to provide a written excuse for the tardy. Written excuses will be accepted up to six (6) unexcused tardies or ten (10) accumulated tardies. After six (6) unexcused tardies or ten (10) accumulated tardies, a medical excuse will be required. The following procedures will be followed for frequent and excessive tardiness in Ashe County Schools:

K-6

- After **three (3) unexcused tardies, 1 unexcused absence** will be assigned to the student. The classroom teacher will contact the parent or guardian of the student to address the tardies and provide possible solutions and educate parents or guardians of possible consequences of continued tardiness.
- After **six (6) unexcused tardies, an additional unexcused absence** will be assigned to the student. An administrative conference will be scheduled with both the parent/guardian and the student.
- After **nine (9) unexcused tardies, an additional unexcused absence** will be assigned to the student. Both the parent/guardian and the student will be referred to mediation to establish an agreement.

If the mediation agreement is not upheld, the parent/guardian will be referred to the Ashe County Schools' Student Services Department.

TOBACCO/VAPE FREE SCHOOL: Ashe County Board of Education recognizes that it has a legal obligation pursuant to Title I of Public Law 103-227 to provide schools that are tobacco free and thus promote a healthy learning and working environment. Accordingly, the Board of Education enacted the following regulations:

Students may not possess, display, or use any tobacco product at any time, this includes vapes, on school premises. This applies to all school vehicles and while participating in school-sponsored events. **No**

student, employee, or visitor shall be permitted under any circumstances to use tobacco products/vapes in any indoor facility owned or leased or contracted for by the Ashe County Schools. Tobacco is defined to include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, snuff, and any other items containing or reasonably resembling tobacco or tobacco products. Tobacco use includes smoking, chewing, dipping, vapors, e-cigarettes or any other use of tobacco products. The use of vapes will result in the confiscation and destruction of the device and it will not be returned. Any student in possession of a vape on campus or on a school bus will be subject to an out of school suspension and/or a bus suspension.

TRANSPORTATION CHANGE: Please send a note to your child's teacher if there should be a change in your child's afternoon transportation plans. If your child is going home with a friend he/she must have a signed note or the school must have received a phone call from a parent/guardian granting permission. Also, parents are encouraged to call the office if a change of transportation is needed during school hours, please have these calls made no later than 1:30pm unless in emergency cases to give the school time to notify the student, teacher, and driver of the change in plans. If no notification is received, your child will follow his/her regular method of transportation.

If you plan to pick up your child before the school day has ended, please come by the office when you arrive. Send a note to school with your child that morning notifying the teacher when he/she is to be picked up. This gives the teacher time to prepare the student's assignments. Students may leave school only when a parent or guardian comes to pick him/her up. If someone other than a parent or guardian is coming to pick up your child, please let us know by phone or note. Let your child and his/her teacher know dismissal arrangements before coming to school. We need to limit telephone calls and keep the lines open for emergencies and school business.

VISITORS/VOLUNTEERS: Community/parent involvement enhances our school program. Visitors and volunteers are most welcome at Westwood Elementary School. We value your presence, but for safety purposes it is essential that we monitor all people entering and exiting the building.

EASY WASY TO SUPPORT WESTWOOD SCHOOL:

Box Tops for Education

Box Tops are an easy way to support your school. They are on tons of products such as Kleenex Tissues, cereal, frozen foods, Pillsbury Biscuits, binders and much more, just take a look! Our school collects ten cents for each and every box top collected and it adds up quickly! This easy program can be a community wide effort. Last year, we received over \$1,500 from the Box Tops program to help in purchasing books for our school library. Ingles also has a program in conjunction with the Box Tops for Education program that allows you to get bonus Box Tops just for purchasing certain items. Stop by the Ingles office or go online to find out more (Google: *Ingles and Box Tops*). Just ask friends, neighbors and loved ones to start collecting them today. They can be given to your child's teacher or dropped off at the Media Center at School! For your convenience, there is now an app Box Tops for Education.

Carolina West Wireless

Carolina West Wireless will also donate to Westwood School. Just have Carolina West Wireless link your cell phone account to Westwood School on your next bill, and they do the rest! It's that easy! Please remember that this has to be done each school year. To complete this process, call 1-800-235-5007.

Ingles Advantage Card

Each year Ingles donates a portion of the sales from each customer who links their card to Westwood School. Please fill in the form your child brings home at the beginning of the school year or stop by the office at Ingles to have your card linked to our school today! You must renew your link to Westwood School at the beginning of each school year for us to take advantage of this great program! For the past two years, our school has received over \$1,000 for the purchase of books & CD sets for the media center, construction paper, and other classroom items. Please register for the 2018-2019 school year today and encourage your family and friends to do the same!

2023-2024 Student Handbook

I, _____
(Parent Name)

along with my child, _____
(Student Name)

have read and reviewed the information provided in the

Westwood Elementary School 2023-2024 Student Handbook.

Student Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

After reading this with your child(ren), please return this form to your child's homeroom teacher.