

# Sawmills Elementary School

## Parent / Student Handbook

ses.caldwellschools.com

2023-2024



**Mission Statement:** The mission of Sawmills Elementary School is to provide quality instruction in a safe, caring environment.

**Vision:** Sawmills Elementary School will provide learning experiences that are challenging and nurturing to prepare globally competitive students for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

### Sawmills School Pledge

- W** We will work together.
- A** Accept responsibility.
- S** Show respect.
- P** Practice good manners.
- S** Shine with integrity.



## **Sawmills Elementary School Parent and Family Engagement Policy**

***“Together... We Make A Difference”***

Our goal is for each child to have a successful learning experience. For this to happen, it is important that the school staff, the community and families work together.

In order to build a strong partnership between home and school, we will provide the following:

- An annual Open House where parents will meet teachers, learn about the Title 1 program requirements, and be given opportunities to become involved in their child’s education.
- Additional meetings throughout the year to provide assistance to parents in understanding the State’s academic assessments. Meetings will also focus on how parents and teachers can work together to monitor the child’s progress in order to improve student achievement. Particular topics and needs from parents will be addressed through timely meetings.
- Parent Nights with materials and specific training to help parents work with their children.
- Meetings scheduled at different times during the day to better accommodate parents’ schedules.
- At least one scheduled parent conference where the progress of the student will be discussed and explained, as well as the expectations for the grade level, school curriculum, academic assessment, state’s academic content and achievement standards, and any other concerns that the teacher or parent may have.
- Grade level/Teacher newsletters and weekly notes when applicable, informing the parents of activities and programs along with the outside school sign providing advanced notice of upcoming events.
- Blackboard Connect calling system as well as other means of communication including but not limited to, texts, Talking Points, Remind 101, Class Dojo, Class Tag, etc. will notify parents of important events at school
- A School-Parent Accountability Pledge to outline how parents, school staff, and students share the responsibility for improvement in learning.
- A minimum of two meetings during the school year where parents will have an opportunity to help review, plan for and make suggestions to improve the Title 1 program, as well as the Parent Involvement Policy, and the School-Parent Accountability Pledge.
- A survey for all parents to express opinions about the current Title 1 program as well as to list ideas and suggestions for improvement and topics for meetings to meet the needs of the parents in April.

Parents and community leaders are always welcome at Sawmills School. Every effort will be made to communicate with parents in an understandable format and language.

# Sawmills Elementary School



[ses.caldwellschools.com](http://ses.caldwellschools.com)



## General Information

### ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Caldwell County Schools will provide instruction based on the NC Standard Course of Study adopted by DPI of North Carolina.

### ACCELERATED READER

Accelerated Reader (AR) helps our students focus their attention on careful reading of books, improve critical-thinking skills, and build a love of reading. Our school has computer access to thousands of Accelerated Reader tests at all reading levels and interest areas. Students read a book of their choice on their level and then take a comprehension test on the computer.

Recorded voice tests are available for beginning readers. We encourage AR to be an at-home reading assignment. Students may read during their spare time during class, but time will not be designated for the sole purpose of completing AR reading in the classroom. Students should not expect to spend extra class time to read and or test to meet deadlines for mid-year or end of year goal attainment.

Several times each year, students take a STAR reading test to determine their level of reading. Students will be encouraged to choose books that will be challenging and yet allow them to be successful. Parents are encouraged to keep up with Mid-year and End-of-Year goals for their child so that they can be recognized throughout the year for their consistent reading efforts.

Your child's Reading Log will be used to record books read, test scores, and progress towards goals. Each grade level will set goals for mid-year and end-of-the-year recognition. The goals and other information for parents are included on the reading log. If teachers choose to use AR tests as a grade, by board policy, this cannot exceed 10% of the final reading grade.



### ACHIEVEMENT AND ATTENDANCE RECOGNITION

At the end of each grading period, students will be recognized for, "A Honor Roll," and "B Honor Roll". Students will be recognized as "Terrific Kids" once each month when the teacher recognizes them for exemplifying the character trait of the month. Students will be recognized daily for positive behavior with Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) tickets.

### ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARDS

North Carolina promotion standards for grades kindergarten through grade five shall be based on the following:



- North Carolina End-of-Grade Test Results
- Reading Assessments set forth by the state
- Classroom Performance through grades and formative assessment data
- Attendance requirements

The State Board of Education has identified these standards as the ones to be used in determining student promotion status in grades K - 5. Students in grades 3-5 shall demonstrate proficiency by scoring a Level III or

above on the reading and mathematics end-of-grade tests. Fifth grade students also participate in a general Science end of grade test.

### **AGENDAS – STUDENT ORGANIZERS**

Sawmills Elementary School students will be using Student Agendas throughout the school year in grades K-5. Using the agenda encourages students to start each week by setting goals, and it enables students and parents to keep up with daily activities in the classroom. This is an effective communication tool between the school and home. **Parents please check and sign your child's agenda on a daily basis.** Replacement cost is \$5 per child. This is an excellent tool for providing communication for student absences.

### **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

School begins promptly at 7:55 for all students. Car riders and walkers should not arrive at school before 7:30, unless they are attending before-school WrapAround. Staff members are not on duty before 7:30 to provide supervision and ensure student safety. ***Doors will remain locked until 7:30 a.m. each morning.*** Parents will be notified by classroom teachers if children consistently arrive before 7:30. As students arrive on campus, they should report directly to the cafeteria if eating breakfast. School is dismissed at 2:45. First load bus riders and after school Wrap Around students will be released from classrooms at 2:40. Car riders will be released at 2:45. ***All car riders should be picked up before 3:00 each day.*** Parents of children who consistently remain at school beyond 3:00 will be notified by their teacher or administration.

When a student needs to leave school early, the parent or guardian must come to the school office and provide a valid picture ID. The student must be signed out in the office. Teachers are asked not to release students until the office notifies them. If students are dismissed early for doctor appointments, a doctor's note must be brought when the student returns in order to record this as an excused absence or excused early dismissal.

**Please avoid picking up students early unless it is absolutely necessary.** Students should not be picked up early for the convenience of avoiding the traffic. Ten (10) early dismissals and/or tardies (combined) will equal one school absence when determining perfect attendance awards at the end of the year.

**Parents are asked to drop their children off at the curb and not to escort them into the building. Even kindergarten students quickly learn how to get to their classrooms, "Kiss & Go."** Staff are also located throughout the building to help ensure your child gets to their classroom. **We ask that you limit walking your child to class after the first ten days of school.** Teachers begin working with students upon entering the classroom and this will help eliminate distractions. This also ensures the safety of our students. You are more than welcome to schedule a conference with your child's teacher at a time that is convenient for all involved. However, if you choose to come into the building, please park your vehicle in a designated parking place. Traffic lanes must be kept open, so please do not park next to the curb near the building or in the circular drop-off/pick-up area. **All visitors must sign in at the office upon entering the building. PreK parents must wear their badge.**

### **ATTENDANCE**

Regular attendance and prompt arrival at school are important every day of the school year. **Excessive absences or tardies interfere with a student's progress.** A student must be present for 1/2 of the school day to be counted present for the day (11:20 am). **Students who are not present for at least 1/2 day will not be allowed to attend after school events and functions (such as school dances) unless there is an extenuating circumstance with administrative approval.**

Administrative Policy- 4400 provide guidelines relating to excessive tardies, absences and early dismissals. Ten or more tardies and/or early dismissals make children ineligible for perfect attendance recognition.

The classroom teacher will mark students who arrive at school after 7:55 tardy. Students who arrive at school after 7:55 must report to the office for a tardy slip. Students will not be admitted to the classroom without this slip after 7:55. **Parents must accompany students to the office to sign students in and record the reason for the tardy on the computer system at the front desk. Please do not send your child in alone.** You may

be called back in to sign your child in properly if he/she comes in alone. Office staff should not have to interrupt their duties to sign in students who arrive late. This also ensures the safety of your child.

When a student is absent, please contact the school to provide the reason for the absence to avoid unexcused absences. This may be by phone or written excuse. Excuses received more than 3 days after the absence will not be accepted, unless provided by a doctor. Under the compulsory attendance statute, an excessive number of unexcused absences or tardies may lead to court action against the parent or guardian. Missed class work may be picked up if requested in advance.

Lawful absences (excused) are identified by the State of North Carolina as those involving personal illness or injury, quarantine, death in the immediate family, medical or dental appointments, court or administrative proceedings where the child's attendance is required, religious observance, or educational opportunities. Educational Opportunities Absence Forms are available in the school office and should be returned to the school principal. In order to be excused, the form must be turned in at least one week in advance, with educational opportunities explained fully on the form. Conditions for approval will be that students are required to report to the class, with pictures, the learning experiences gained while away, in order to be excused for the trip, within two weeks of the return to class. Family vacations are not necessarily considered educational. Repeated yearly vacations will not be approved multiple times. Educational trips to the same locations from year to year will not be approved. Please be specific about the opportunities gained in vacation/educational requests in relation to the child's grade level and course of study.



### **AWARDS and CELEBRATIONS**

At the end of each school year, student success and academic achievement are celebrated. Each class/grade level will determine the specific celebration activities.

### **BAD WEATHER PROCEDURES**

In the event of bad weather, the Caldwell County School System will make announcements concerning school closings or delays by the Alert Now phone system, on the local radio and television stations, and the school website, [ses.caldwellschools.com](http://ses.caldwellschools.com). If school is called off during the day, it will be announced to radio and television stations immediately, with a Blackboard Connect call placed to primary home phones. Please listen for these announcements and inform your child, ahead of time, what to do in case of early dismissal. Early release procedures are now on the student information forms submitted at the beginning of the school year for parents to indicate after school procedures for children to follow if school is dismissed early. Please refrain from calling the school office to check on school closings. In the event of early dismissal due to bad weather, the Caldwell County Schools WrapAround Program will not operate. The cafeteria will not serve breakfast on 3 hour delay days.

### **BIRTHDAYS**

Birthdays are important events to elementary school children. If you wish to provide a small snack for the students in your child's classroom, please discuss it with the teacher ahead of time. He or she will let you know what is appropriate to send and what time of day is best. Please remember that students may not receive deliveries of balloons, flowers, etc. at school. Snacks or meals may not interfere with cafeteria service between 10:30-1:00.

## **BUS TRANSPORTATION**

Students who ride the bus are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner described in a county brochure about school bus safety. Bus transportation is a privilege available for all students in the Sawmills Elementary School district during their 169 school days. Bus times may vary occasionally, but should be very stable after the first week of school, barring mechanical trouble. Please encourage your child to follow the bus driver's instructions and to obey all safety rules.

### **Bus Safety Rules include:**

1. Wait in a safe spot away from the street, until the bus comes to a complete stop and wait on the driver's signal before loading the bus.
2. Be at the bus stop waiting at least 5-10 minutes before the regular pick up time to account for differences in driving time in the mornings. Any number of absences may speed up the routes in the morning, so be prepared.
3. Stay in your seat until the bus comes to a complete stop before moving or standing when unloading.
4. Sit flat on the seat with your back against the seat, facing the front of the bus.
5. Obey the driver.
6. Keep all arms, hands, objects, etc. inside the bus.
7. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself and out of the aisles.
8. Talk quietly with your friends.
9. No food or drinks on the school bus.
10. Notify the driver of students who are misbehaving.
11. Drivers should not be expected to wait for children who are not at the designated bus stop. They are not expected to check for students waiting on porches or inside the home rather than at the designated location. Students will be dropped off regardless of whether or not someone is at home to meet them.



These rules are in place to help make our bus rides safe for the students and drivers. Any violation of a rule or rules may result in disciplinary action, including suspension from the bus. Bus Drivers are responsible for the discipline of students. Report all incidents to the child's bus driver first. If the problem persists, it is the driver's responsibility to report it to the principal for further disciplinary action. The principal and teachers are not on the bus to observe misbehaviors, so it is the responsibility of the driver to discipline students.

Any changes in bus routes or student assignment to buses should be made through the office in writing. If your child is to ride home on a different bus to visit a friend, etc., please send a note to the child's teacher. Once a student is assigned to a bus, he/she will be directed to that bus each day, unless a note from a parent or guardian states otherwise. Except in a true emergency, please refrain from calling the school office for changes in transportation. **We will not accept transportation changes by phone for the safety of our students except for extenuating circumstances. Parents will be asked to email or send a talking points message to the teacher. Changes must be made prior to 2:00 pm!**

## **CAFETERIA**



Our school cafeteria serves a nutritious breakfast and lunch daily. The cafeteria is a place for enjoyment, using good table manners and demonstrating healthy eating habits. **Beginning in September and continuing through April, family members may bring/eat lunch with their student(s) during the last week of the month.** Please do not bring soft drinks into the cafeteria. Parents/visitors should sign in at the office and get a Lunch Pass before meeting your child. Students are asked to remain quiet and eat during the first 10 minutes of lunch to ensure safety and "full tummies." After this time, students are encouraged to visit quietly with their peers. Parents are asked to observe the same rules during lunch visits to keep procedures consistent. Please do not ask teachers to release students early for lunch or to remain in the cafeteria after the class is finished. Important learning time is interrupted when this happens. Students who owe more than \$7.00 will be notified to make immediate payment to the cafeteria to avoid build-up of excessive amounts.



## **Breakfast**

Breakfast is offered each day from 7:30 – 7:50. Students pay as they go through the line or pay in advance. In the event that school is delayed due to bad weather, breakfast will be served, except on a three hour delay. If car riders arrive at school after 7:50, please know that your child will not have time to eat breakfast and get to class on time, therefore should be provided breakfast at home before arrival at school.

## **Lunch**

**Breakfast and lunch are free to all students during the 23-24 school year.**

Children may pack their lunch, but *may not bring soft drinks*. Refrigerator space is not available, so please send food that will not spoil, or use a thermos. Microwaves are for adult use only. This is a safety issue. Please provide a thermos for warm lunches sent with your child. Ice cream, juice, milk and other extra food items are available for students to buy during lunch. Students can purchase only one snack item and one drink item unless there is a note from the parent stating otherwise. Checks should be made payable to Sawmills Elementary School with the child's lunch number at the bottom. Checks are only to be written for the amount of the lunch payment, and cannot be cashed for other activities. Money should be sent in an envelope labeled with the child's name, teacher name, and lunch number. Charging of supplemental sales or a la carte items is not permitted. Students should not charge more than \$7.00 in the cafeteria. Please be prompt with paying overdue amounts. Staff and visitor costs are based on a la carte.

## **CALENDAR AND NEWSLETTER**

A monthly cafeteria calendar menu is provided online and in local newspapers. Classroom teachers will be sending home regular written communications about classroom activities and your child's progress.



## **CHANGE OF ADDRESS AND / OR TELEPHONE NUMBER**

**It is very important that the school always have the correct address and telephone number for each student for use in an emergency.** It is also important that the school have a current work address and telephone number for each parent or guardian. **Please notify the school immediately of any changes in telephone number and address information.** This can now be accessed by parents online through the Parent Portal in PowerSchool.

## **CHARACTER EDUCATION**

Character Education and encouraging positive character traits is a yearlong, school-wide emphasis at Sawmills Elementary School. Students will be recognized on a monthly basis through the Terrific Kids program for outstanding character traits displayed during the month.

Our school counselor leads classroom activities that stress the importance of each month's character trait. Teachers and staff are actively involved in integrating Character Education into the curriculum, climate and culture of the school. Our goal is that our students will apply the messages of "good character" into their everyday lives... at home and at school. Sawmills Elementary School will also support the district initiative for recognizing students who exemplify the Character Trait of the Month by selecting one student as our overall student representative for our school and district.

## **CRISIS MANAGEMENT**

School Safety is a top priority for school administrators and teachers. Our school has developed a Crisis Management Plan that addresses major crises, such as bad weather, armed intruder on campus, chemical spill, etc., and defines the steps that should be taken to ensure the safety of all children. Law enforcement and emergency agencies work closely with our school to prevent and prepare for incidents that would threaten our safety. As our culture and environment continue to change, crisis response is modified to meet the most current demands of our society.

## **CURRICULUM**

All teachers use the NC Standard Course of Study to determine the curriculum they teach. While textbooks are selected to match with the curriculum, individual textbooks may not strictly follow the state curriculum. Teachers use textbooks as only one resource in teaching a subject, and may skip around in the textbook or not use parts of it at all. Teachers will use other approved instructional materials and equipment during instruction. Our goal is to provide a rigorous, well-rounded curriculum to help our students' academic and social growth.

## **CUSTODY**

When one parent has exclusive custodial rights granted by the court, a copy of the court documents must be filed in the office. Beyond the court order, if you have specific concerns that we need to be aware of regarding your child(ren), that are consistent with the court order, please put them in writing and deliver them to the office. Please inform your child(ren)'s teachers of custody issues during the orientation meeting or a parent conference. Sawmills School staff cannot legally prohibit the biological parent from picking up their child from school unless specified in legal court or DSS documents. Per School Board Policy, for transfer purposes, a primary residence must be established for parents who have joint custody and who may live in different school districts. Please file appropriate transfer documents if you are the primary custodial parent and you do not live in Sawmills' School district.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Our school is participating in an important initiative called Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS).

### *What is PBIS?*

PBIS is a process for creating a safer and more effective school. It is a school-wide and classroom behavior support systems. PBIS focuses on improving a school's ability to teach and support positive behavior for all students. Rather than a prescribed program, PBIS provides systems for schools to design, implement, and evaluate effective school-wide, classroom, non-classroom, and student specific plans. PBIS includes school-wide procedures and processes for problem solving, planning, and evaluating. It will help to create a safe and productive learning environment where teachers can teach and all students can learn.

### *What is PBIS at Sawmills Elementary School?*

We have adopted a unified set of school rules. These rules define our expectations for behavior in our school. You will see these rules posted throughout the school and your child will be learning them during the first week of school.

**Our unified rules, found in both classroom and non-classroom settings in the school are as follows:**



	Hallway	Classrooms	Restrooms	Cafeteria	Library	Playground	Buses	Assemblies	Emergency Situations
Work Together	Stay right	Work co-operatively	Help keep restrooms clean	Follow Direction and Procedures	Maintain calm environment	Take turns and include everyone	Follow Drivers Directions	Be an active participant	Safely get to assigned area
Accept Responsibility	Walk Quietly	Be Prepared	Respect Personal space and property	Pick up clean up	Follow check in and check out procedures	Safety First	Safety First	Be a positive role model for others	Move carefully
Show Respect	Respect Personal space and property	Respect Personal space and property	Keep hands, feet and object to myself	Silence coming through the line	Respect Personal space and property	Respect nature, yourself and others	Respect Personal space and property	Respect Personal space and property	Stay calm and silent
Practice Good Manners	Leave no trace	Treat others the way you want to be treated	Use restroom for intended purpose	Use appropriate table manners	Be courteous and helpful	Respect Personal space and property	Seat to seat and back to back	Keep eyes and ears on presenter and clap when appropriate	Follow Adult Directions
Shine with Integrity	Set a good example	Be kind and shine	Use restroom properly. Respect the privacy of others	Be a role model	Stay on Task	Share and play fair	Follow bus procedures	Be alert for signals	Be alert for signals

As part of our PBIS process, teachers and other staff members use strategies to increase student learning and decrease classroom disruptions. To keep students on the rules in a positive manner, we do the following when teaching academics and behavior:

- ✓ Constantly teach and refer to our school-wide expectations
- ✓ Provide students with more praise than correction
- ✓ Talk to students with respect using positive voice tone
- ✓ Actively engage everyone in the class during instruction
- ✓ Use pre-correcting, prompting, and redirecting as we teach
- ✓ Look for the positive first and provide positive, immediate, frequent, and explicit feedback

We are very excited about the positive changes PBIS will bring to our school. If you have any questions about PBIS, please feel free to contact your child's teacher. We look forward to a wonderful year of teaching your child.

The cooperation and support of parents with PBIS will eliminate most behavior problems that might occur. The teacher will contact the parent when the behavior becomes repetitious or dangerous, so that parents can use this opportunity to assist with the discipline of their child. More information regarding student conduct may be found in the Caldwell County School Board Policy Student Conduct 4309. You may access the complete policy at [www.caldwellschools.com](http://www.caldwellschools.com) under Board of Education/Board Policy Manual.

By policy and state statute, disciplinary measures may include, but are not limited to:

- Student warnings
- Removal of privileges
- Parent notification
- Time out
- Referral to student support services
- Parent conference



- Restitution
- In School Suspension
- Out-of-School Suspension
- Long-term Suspension / Expulsion

Horizons Elementary School, an elementary alternate school, is available to serve students in grades K-5 who are not being successful in the classroom due to a pattern of disruptive behavior or lack of academic progress.

### **DRESS CODE**

Student dress and appearance are the responsibility of the parents. Student dress often establishes a pattern for classroom behavior. It also determines how children feel about themselves. Students enrolled in Caldwell County Schools should come appropriately dressed for learning activities, weather conditions, and safety. A student's appearance, mode of dress, or condition of personal hygiene shall not distract or disrupt the learning environment or constitute a threat to the safety, health, or well being of students and staff. Clothing should fit appropriately and not expose too much of the body. Short shorts and skirts should come to at least mid-thigh. No strapless or spaghetti strap tops should be worn (without another top covering it) and no crop top exposing the stomach.



Clothing and accessories that contain obscene, threatening, or suggestive writing/pictures are not permitted. The display of alcoholic beverages, drugs, or tobacco products is also prohibited.

Shoes must be worn at school at all times. Students should wear safe and comfortable shoes. Tennis shoes are encouraged to allow students safe participation in daily activities and may be required for specific activities such as Physical Education. Shoes with rollers in the heels (“heelies”) are not allowed at school, for safety purposes. Hats, hoods, or other headgear should not be worn in school except for special occasions.

### **EARLY DISMISSALS – SIGNING OUT**

Any child leaving school early must be checked out through the office. Early dismissals are recorded in the office, and parents will be contacted if the number becomes excessive.

When picking your child up for an early dismissal, do not go directly to your child's class. All school visitors should check in with the office and provide identification. The secretary will contact your child's teacher and have him/her sent to the office ready for dismissal. This method is used to assure the safety of our students at all times. If leaving for a medical/dental appointment, a note from the medical office must be returned in order to be recorded “excused.”

After-school arrangements should be clearly understood before your child leaves home. Notes to teachers are required if any change in afternoon routines are requested. If your child needs to ride another bus home, the note should be sent to the teacher in a note or in the agenda. Changes in transportation will not be taken by phone. Emails, faxes, or written notification are acceptable.

### **EMERGENCY DRILLS – FIRE, TORNADO AND LOCKDOWN**

Monthly fire drills are held in order to help students understand and practice the proper method of evacuating the building. We also participate in state and local tornado alerts during Tornado Awareness Week each year. Lockdown procedures will be conducted two to five times each year to practice appropriate procedures. This practice will help ensure the safety of children and staff, if an emergency situation should arise.

## EMERGENCY HEALTH NOTIFICATION

Parents/Guardians should inform the school of any existing health conditions such as allergies, severe reactions, or diabetes that may pose an emergency at school. In any emergency judged to be severe or life threatening, the school will call 911 and will notify the parents. The school will take any steps necessary to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the child.

## ENROLLING A STUDENT

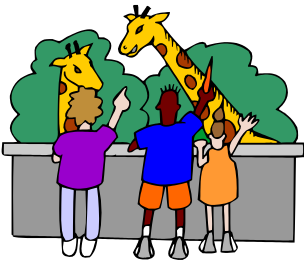
Basic requirements for enrolling a student in school for the first time (kindergarten) are:

1. Birth certificate
2. Immunization record
3. Physical form
4. Proof of residence (Contract or bill in your name)
5. Custody / Court documents as needed



If student of any age is enrolling for the first time in Caldwell County School District then all the above items are needed for enrollment.

## FIELD TRIPS



Field trips are valuable learning experiences that correlate with classroom instructional activities. Teachers will inform parents in advance of the field trip's itinerary, purpose, lunch arrangements, and the cost of the trip. Before the first school trip occurs, each student must have a signed permission slip filed at the school, which is located on the Student Information and Verification Form. This form will provide permission for all field trips throughout the school year. Transportation is by yellow school bus or white activity bus from the school system's bus fleet or on a commercial bus. A fee is necessary for each trip to help cover the cost of transportation. Field trip insurance is paid by the school system and covers all students while on a field trip. School rules apply to all field trip experiences. **Prices charged for travel or field trip related charges reflect payment equally divided by all students in the class; therefore, refunds will not be made after payment is obtained in order to be fair and equitable to those who pay unless there is an extenuating circumstance and the price charged is a minimum charge of \$10.00.**

Chaperones (parents or volunteers) will be invited by the teachers as needed to help supervise students. In some cases, parents will not be allowed to attend field trips due to the restrictions placed on us for group sizes in different locations. Teachers will not collect money for parents attending field trips. Parents will be expected to pay at the gate upon arrival to the field trip location. On all trips, chaperones focus should be on the safety and experiences of their school age child attending the field trip, as well as others assigned to the chaperone group. For this reason, we ask that other arrangements be made for siblings, so that parents can reinforce educational opportunities for the grade level child for which the field trip was planned. School age siblings will not be excused from school to attend field trips with another classroom, per school board policy. Scholarship funds are available for students who cannot afford trips. However, lunch/food items cannot be paid with scholarship funds. Students whose parents pay to go on a trip with a student are not eligible for scholarship funds. It is the feeling of the scholarship foundation, that if funding is available for parents, then the money should be applied to the student's educational experience rather than the parent. Certain field trips are not covered by scholarship forms. See the forms for more information. Parents should request a scholarship if you are not financially able to send your child. Teachers should not be expected to make a judgment about a family's financial status. Scholarship forms are due the first week of each month, prior to the field trip. Trips will not be paid for with scholarship funds after a trip has been taken.

## GRADES

Communication about student progress between the school and parents is essential for a productive school year. Progress reports will be sent home with your child providing you with feedback concerning effort, work accomplishment, and behavior. These will be sent home at 4 ½ weeks intervals. Parents will also be notified if a student's grades have declined 2 letter grades or if he/she is in jeopardy of failing for the reporting period. Report cards are issued every nine weeks and are sent home 10 days after the end of the grading period. Grading in kindergarten, first grade and second grade is based on the level of mastery of the curriculum exhibited by the student (4=Consistently exceeding grade level expectations, 3=Consistently meeting grade level expectations, 2= Performing below grade level expectations but demonstrating growth, 1-Performing below grade level expectations and having considerable difficulty). A traditional grading scale is used in grades 3-5. (A = 90-100, B = 80-89, C = 70-79, D = 60-69, F = 59 and below). Other curriculum areas are graded on the following (S= Satisfactory, N=Needs Improvement, and U=Unsatisfactory)



Grades are computed by the teacher using formulas designed by that teacher, based on district guidelines. Parents should contact the teacher when there is a question concerning grades and may schedule a conference with the teacher to discuss academic progress. Parents may now access student progress reports and attendance on the new Home Base/Power School System. Request your username and password from the school office if you have not done so already.

## HEAD LICE CONTROL

Students found to have nits are not to be excluded from school. Those students found to have head lice will be sent home until treated and all live bugs are removed from the hair. Parents must remove all nits. We will check the students head daily until all nits are gone. The absences accrued from exclusion due to lice infestation shall be excused for the day the lice were discovered and the following day ONLY. Students will not be isolated from the classroom nor shall they be required to miss educational time due to nits. **Parents are asked to accompany a child returning to school, so that the child can return home if live lice are found.**

## HEARING / SPEECH / LANGUAGE SCREENINGS

Individual screenings will be performed upon teacher referral, given parental permission, or upon parental request. Mass hearing screenings will be conducted on all 1st, 3rd and 5th graders. Parents who do not wish to have their child's hearing screened should indicate this in writing to the school's Speech Pathologist within the first 2 weeks of the school year. Hearing screenings are available for children in other grades upon referral to the Speech Pathologist, given parental permission.

## HOMEWORK

Reading is the key to success in education, and we encourage students to spend at least 20 minutes at home reading each evening. All students should bring home a book to read or to be read to every night. Please encourage your child to meet mid-year and annual goals to enrich reading skills.

Each teacher assigns homework as he/she feels it best benefits the students in his/her class. Homework is assigned to practice, reinforce, or enhance a skill learned in class. Since homework is considered to be meaningful, it is expected to be completed and turned in on time. We ask parents to provide support by questioning children about homework and by providing a suitable location and schedule for completing assignments.



## HONOR / MEMORY BOOKS



Families are encouraged to place books in the Sawmills School Media Center in honor of or in memory of loved ones. Library donations can honor your child's hard work, say thanks to a caring teacher, serve as a lasting memorial or honor other loved ones. Students read our library books repeatedly, so they are a lasting gift. Your \$10 donation will purchase one library-bound book. Your donation will be recognized with a label in the new book, on our school announcements, and in our school newsletter. A note about your donation will be sent to the honoree or family contact.

## HONOR ROLL

Students in grades 3-5 are eligible for the A Honor Roll and B Honor Roll at the end of each grading period. This achievement is submitted to the *News Topic* for publication.



- **A HONOR ROLL** - No grade less than A, no grade of Unsatisfactory for a subject, no grade of D, F or U on conduct.
- **B HONOR ROLL** - No grade less than B, no grade of Unsatisfactory for a subject, no grade of D, F or U on conduct.

## IMMUNIZATIONS

North Carolina state law requires that all students enrolling in public for the first time or coming from outside our school system present their birth certificate and immunization record when registering. A physical examination must also be completed for students entering school for the first time. Each child in North Carolina must be immunized against the following diseases by receiving the specified doses of vaccine by certain ages:

- 5 Tdap, DTP or DT doses (If 4<sup>th</sup> dose is after 4<sup>th</sup> birthday, 5<sup>th</sup> dose is not required; DT requires medical exemption.)
- 4 POLIO VACCINE doses (If 3<sup>rd</sup> dose is after 4<sup>th</sup> birthday, 4<sup>th</sup> dose is not required.)
- 1-4 Hib doses (Series complete if at least 1 dose given on/after 15 months and before 5 years of age; not required after age 5.)
- 3 Hep B doses (Children born on or after July 1, 1994 are required to have 3 doses.)
- 2 Measles doses (at least 30 days apart; 1<sup>st</sup> dose on/after 12 months of age)
- 1 Mumps dose (on/after 12 months of age)
- 1 Rubella dose (on/after 12 months of age)
- 2 Varicella dose (Children born on or after April 1, 2001 without documented history of disease)

Parents/guardians are given 30 days after enrollment to fulfill this requirement or the child must be suspended until records are in order.



### **INCLEMENT WEATHER INFORMATION:**

If inclement weather causes a change in the school operating schedule, an announcement will be made on the AlertNow rapid communication service to all parents and employees as well as broadcast on the following stations:

#### **Radio stations—**

WKVS (103.3 FM) LENOIR  
WKGX (1080 AM) LENOIR  
WMNC (92.1 FM) MORGANTON  
WYCV (900 AM) GRANITE FALLS  
WKBC (97.3 FM) WILKESBORO  
WJRI (1340 AM) LENOIR  
WATA (100.7 FM) BOONE  
WFAE (90.7 FM) CHARLOTTE

#### **Television stations--**

WBTB-3  
WSOC-9  
NBC-6  
MTN-12

Please do not call the school for weather delays or dismissals

### **INJURY OR ILLNESS**

Should your child become injured or sick while at school, the staff will use their *best judgment* concerning contacting the parent. If there are special requests pertaining to parental notification, please inform your teacher. **PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT THE SCHOOL ALWAYS HAS YOUR CURRENT WORK, CELL AND HOME TELEPHONE NUMBER IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY.**

Children should not be sent to school with significant untreated symptoms of illness. This request is made to protect the health of our other students. If your child is sick at home and running a fever, they must be fever free for at least 24 hours without medication before returning to school. When students miss school for illness or injury, please call the school office to report the absence, or write a note explaining the reason for the absence within 3 days of the days missed. After 3 days, only a doctor's note will be accepted for student absences to be recorded as excused. Agendas may be used for the purpose of documenting a child's absence.

### **INSURANCE**

**K-8, Middle, and High Schools:** Insurance is provided for students trying out for or participating in school athletics. Please contact the school office or the athletic director for information regarding coverage. If a student is injured, the school secretary must be notified in order to complete the school's portion of the claim form for processing.

### **INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT**

The Caldwell County School System utilizes an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach for controlling insects, rodents, and other pests. Parents have the right to be notified in advance of specific pesticide applications made at the school. To view Policy 4302 in its entirety and to download a notification request form, go to [www.caldwellschools.com/Parents](http://www.caldwellschools.com/Parents) and Students/Integrated Pest Management Policy.



### **INTERNET USE POLICY**

Use of the Internet is a privilege for students and all guidelines should be followed. Permission to use the Internet is located on the Student Information Verification Form. The Internet Use Policy is available at [www.caldwellschools.com](http://www.caldwellschools.com) Board Policy 3225/4312/7320-F1 or you may request a copy from the school office.



## **ITEMS TO LEAVE AT HOME**

1. Cell phones, radios, tape players, CD players, electronic games, fidget spinners, etc.
2. Cosmetics – make-up, fingernail polish, perfume, etc.
3. Expensive jewelry
4. Fireworks, Explosives, Smoke Bombs, Matches, Lighters, etc.
5. Glass containers
6. Hats, caps
7. Medication, *not prescribed by a doctor*
8. Money in excess of actual needs
9. Pets, except on the invitation of the teacher, and approved through the office
10. Tobacco, alcohol, drugs
11. Toys, *except on the invitation of the teacher*
12. Trading cards - *of any kind*
13. Weapons, knives, toy guns, sharp-pointed objects, etc
14. Gum



Items taken during the school day must be picked up by the parent. If the item is taken more than once from a child, the item will be held until the end of the school year for parents to pick up at that time.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

A Lost and Found area is located in room 26 on Creative Court Hall for any item found on the school grounds. Please label all items brought or worn to school with your child's name so that they might be returned to them if misplaced. The office will not be responsible for lost and found items.

## **MEDIA CENTER**

The Sawmills Elementary School Media Center operates on a flexible schedule. It is open every day for book checkout and individual and small group research. Classes are scheduled by classroom teachers to enhance the regular grade-level curriculum.

Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade students are allowed to have one book out at a time and 2<sup>nd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade students are allowed to have two books out at a time. These books are checked out for a period of 10 days. Parents are encouraged to visit the media center to check out additional books for their family before and after school. A small collection of "parenting" books is also available for families, which may be checked out during the school day. Reference books may be checked out to parents and to 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade students as well. Please sign in at the office and get a Media Center Pass when you enter the school. We encourage students to pick out their own books during the school day, so please do not interrupt class to visit the library with your child while instruction is going on.

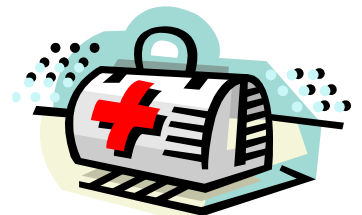
Fees will be charged for books that have been lost or damaged, in accordance with the disrepair. Fees are also charged for bar code damage or removal. If a lost book that has been paid for is found and returned in good condition, reimbursement can be made before July 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year.

A Book Fair will be scheduled for at least one week this year. Parents are welcome to come with their children to the Book Fair anytime that week. Some (but not all) of the books will be on our Accelerated Reader list.



## **MEDICATION**

Caldwell County School employees are not allowed to administer medicines to students except under direction of a physician. The Caldwell County Board of Education and the Caldwell County Health Department have established medication procedures to provide for the safe administration of medicines that cannot be scheduled outside of the school day. School Board Policy 3620 addresses student health issues, including administering medication. Policy 3310 (p.2) also addresses





handling prescription and over-the-counter drugs at school. Parent must complete the “Request for Medication to Be Given” form and return to school as needed, with a doctor’s signature for all medications required.

### **Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS)**

Our school works together with a goal that all students will perform at or above grade level. When a child begins to show a trend of working below grade level, our curriculum team will meet to design appropriate interventions for your student. You will be notified as to what skill your child’s teacher sees your student as performing below grade level.

As our school responds to the instructional needs of your child, we may need to review and/or collect more information. The process might include any of the following:

- Review of school records and student work samples
- Observations across multiple classroom settings
- Screenings and/or assessments to target specific skill proficiency
- Screenings for hearing, vision, and/or speech/language
- Consultation with specialists and/or support staff

As always, we hope you will continue your involvement with your child’s teacher as to how he/she progresses and grows. If you have any questions about your child’s academic growth, please contact your child’s teacher.

### **PARENT CONFERENCES**

Parents are encouraged to schedule parent conferences with teachers at any time during the school year. Both parents and teachers gain insight into a child by sharing their knowledge and observations. Parents may also call teachers. Please call after 2:45 or during the teacher’s planning time, so that instructional time is not interrupted. Teachers will plan parent conferences and/or parent meetings throughout the school year. Teachers will not be interrupted during instructional time for telephone messages or conversations. We will direct those calls to the voice mail so that teachers can contact you during planning, before, or after school hours. Please do not interrupt teachers during our morning announcements.

### **PARKING**

All cars should be parked in designated parking spaces in front of the school. Please do not leave vehicles in the traffic lanes or areas marked "No Parking" when entering the school. No cars are to be parked in the bus parking area at any time. Please do not park in the Fire Lane against the curb in front of the school. **Parking by the kindergarten hall is designated for STAFF ONLY.** Parking is not allowed in the circular drop-off/pick-up area of the school. Please adhere to our parking rules.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

State certified physical education instructors will teach all physical education classes. The school will provide a physical and social environment that encourages safe and enjoyable activity for all students. Physical activity will be integrated across the curriculum and throughout the school day. Movement will be made a part of all classes. Recess/physical activity will not be used as a punishment and cannot be withheld for behavioral purposes. The state requires a minimum of 30 minutes of physical activity a day. Students will only be excused from PE with a doctor’s note provided to the teacher.

### **PHOTOGRAPHIC RELEASE**

The Caldwell County Public School System uses photographs, slides or illustrations of students for many purposes. These photographs, videos, or other illustrating material may be used in newsletters, school web sites, publications produced by the school system, slide presentations, video productions aired on television, or

in other similar forms of communications. Permission for your child's picture to be used is located on the Student Information Verification form.

### **Parent Teacher Association (PTA)**

The PTA is an active and most important part of our school. We are looking forward to an exciting year in our PTA and encourage parents to support our various projects throughout the year. We encourage you to become PTA members during our annual membership drive and to take an active role in fund-raisers and the various volunteer opportunities. All funds raised by our PTA are spent for the benefit of all children and their educational needs. From educational supplies to technology needs, Sawmills Elementary School PTA strives to make our school better year after year. Please take an active role in making this the best year ever in our PTA. Your PTA leadership is excited about the coming year.

### **SCHEDULE FOR STUDENTS**

- 7:30..... Students may begin arriving at school, unless they are enrolled in WrapAround. *Do not leave children unattended before 7:30 a.m. Doors will be locked until 7:30 daily.*
- 7:30..... Breakfast begins
- 7:50..... Breakfast ends, students due in class
- 7:55..... Tardy bell rings. The instructional day begins.  
All students arriving should report to the office for tardy slip
- 2:40..... Bus riders, and after school WrapAround students dismissed.
- 2:45..... All car riders dismissed
- 3:00..... All children should be picked up by this time



### **SCHOOL PICTURES**

Photographers will be taking school pictures during the fall and again in the spring. All school pictures will be on a prepay basis only. A notice will be sent home prior to pictures being made. Pre-school children may come to school and have their pictures made on these dates also. A full color School Yearbook will be offered in the spring.

### **SCHOOL SAFETY**

School safety is a top priority for school administration and teachers. Each school has a Crisis Management Plan that addresses major crises, such as bad weather, armed intruder on campus, chemical spill, etc., and defines the steps that should be taken to ensure the safety of all children.

Law enforcement and emergency agencies work closely with school administration to prevent or prepare for these incidents that would threaten the safety of students. As our culture and environment continue to change, crisis response is modified to meet the most current demands in society. Each year, schools are required to conduct at least two lockdown drills in an effort to be prepared for an emergency. For more information, contact the School-Community Relations Office, 728-8407, ext. 140142.

Sawmills Elementary School is a school with many outside doors and is located on a large campus. Our School Safety Plan has been developed to deal with most emergency situations. The effectiveness of the plan depends on responsible adults within the school informing school officials of unusual, illegal or dangerous situations / conditions.



Staff members supervise and monitor areas around our school throughout the day, but cannot be at all places at all times. Many parents and others visit our campus daily. Parents are encouraged to inform school officials of situations or circumstances that may endanger students. Our plan requires that exterior doors be locked during the school day. All parents and other visitors must sign in with the office upon arrival at school and receive a "visitor's badge."

## SOCIAL SERVICES

The Caldwell County Department of Social Services is an institutional advocate for children. Allegations of abuse and neglect must be reported by citizens and investigated by the department. Sometimes those visits happen at school. Social workers sign in at our office, but are not supervised by us directly. Social workers have independent investigative authority which allows them to privately interview students while at school.

## STUDENT SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS

The state and county provide money each year to purchase instructional materials, supplies and equipment. Teachers may ask that students have specific supplies for projects or assignments. Parents are responsible for daily materials such as paper, pencils, crayons, etc.

## TARDIES

Students who arrive at school after 7:55 must report to the office for a tardy slip with a parent to sign them in. Students will not be admitted to the classroom without this slip. Ten or more tardies and/or early dismissals make children ineligible for perfect attendance certificates. Students who report to classes late from breakfast will be marked tardy, unless this is due to late arrival of one of our assigned buses.

## TELEPHONES

All classrooms at Sawmills Elementary School are equipped with a telephone. Parents are encouraged to make telephone calls to teachers before or after the regular school day, or during the teacher's planning period, so that instructional time is not interrupted. Teachers or other staff members will call parents when students are sick or if an injury has occurred. Students may use school telephones to contact parents for emergency situations only, with the teacher's approval.

Students who own cell phones should have them turned off and in a secure place during the school day, so as not to interfere with instruction. Cell phones that interrupt instruction will be taken and returned to parents.

## TRAFFIC

Because of crowded traffic lanes, parents should drop off and pick up children while remaining in their car in the usual traffic flow pattern. If you need to come inside the school, please park in a designated spot. Afternoon pick up should enter the parking area at the first entrance (Elementary Way) and form two lines, follow to a single line around trees/curbing. Proceed to the circular area and back out to exit the same way you entered. **Do not enter from Coral Drive or park in the faculty parking spaces off of Coral Drive to pick up your child. This is a public road that cannot be blocked by our car riders, and spaces are marked for employee use only.** State law prohibits parking for student pick-up in a bus-loading zone.

## TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

Transportation changes are very confusing for children. If student transportation needs to be changed, please tell your child in advance and send a note to your child's teacher (include date and parent signature). It is also impossible for office personnel to be certain of the identity of a person requesting a change in transportation on the telephone. For the safety of our students, our Safe Schools Plan requires that transportation changes be made in writing with a note to the teacher or in person by coming by the school office. You may email or send a talking points message to the teacher. **We understand that emergencies can occur. To ensure the safety of students, we ask that parents email/text or send a talking points message to the teacher for an emergency transportation change. Also, changes requested after 2:00 may NOT be granted as the afternoons can become hectic and we may not have time to ensure the transportation change occurs. This is for the safety of our students.**

## **VISITING/VOLUNTEERING AT SES**

Parents, friends and relatives are invited to visit school regularly to assist in the classroom with different activities. The school provides opportunities for visitation during and after school hours for special events. Volunteers must complete a volunteer background check on Volunteer Tracker located on the Caldwell County School Website. Approved volunteers should please sign in at the computer in the office upon your arrival if you are visiting during the school day. If you are volunteering, you should have a volunteer application on file with us, and then sign in to the classroom on the computer. In both cases, please take a Visitor or Volunteer Badge from the printer to display while in our school. Volunteers have an opportunity to enrich student lives and are encouraged to help in classrooms whenever possible. Volunteers should not report before 7:30 a.m. to work in classrooms and should be prepared to leave no later than 3:00 p.m. when teachers prepare to leave for the day. Please see our Volunteer Coordinator for more information concerning the application for volunteering in our school.

## **WEBSITE/FACEBOOK**

[ses.caldwellschools.com](http://ses.caldwellschools.com)

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100070590193514>

Our website and Facebook page provides current information and a monthly calendar highlighting exciting events at Sawmills Elementary School. Both also feature photos of our students recognizing special achievements and daily activities happening at our school and in the classroom. We encourage everyone to “check out” our website and/or Facebook page!

## **WRAPAROUND PROGRAM**

Our before and after school child care program, WrapAround, is offered Monday through Friday from 6:00 am until 7:50 am and from 2:40 pm until 6:00 pm on school days. WrapAround is also open from 6:00 am until 6:00 pm for childcare on teacher planning days and during the summer. Interested parents should see the Director of the WrapAround Program for details during normal operating hours. If school dismisses early, due to inclement weather, the Wrap Around program will also be closed.



All programs, activities and facilities of the Caldwell County School System are available to all on a non-discriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sex, age, handicap, or national origin. The school system is an equal access Equal Opportunity Employer. Questions pertaining to educational equity, equal opportunity, or equal access should be addressed to the Associate Superintendent of Human Resources.