

WELCOME!

Dear Students:

Welcome! The administration of Gretna Middle School looks forward to working with you during the school year. Our entire staff extends greetings and assurances that we will help you in striving for positive experiences and success throughout the school year.

Thanks to the total efforts of everyone involved at GMS—students, teachers, staff, and parents—we are committed to continuing our program of excellence. This will be possible only if each of us continues to set high goals and seeks to maintain self-discipline and academic achievement.

All schools have basic standards and procedures. These guidelines are designed to foster order and maintain a safe environment so that students may develop in a nurturing and organized climate. Our handbook is designed to assist you and your parents in becoming familiar with our procedures and methods of discipline and order. It is intended to serve as a guide for the operation of our school and to inform you and your parents about school policies. We encourage you to take the time to review this handbook thoroughly and discuss the contents with your parents.

It is great to have you here, and we are excited for another successful school year at Gretna Middle School!

Warm regards,

Dr. Thomas W. Takacs

Principal

Mrs. Cassandra Pittman

Assistant Principal

This agenda belongs to:

Student Name _____

Grade _____ **Homeroom Teacher** _____

Gretna Middle School

201 Coffey Street

Gretna, VA 24557

“Rise above it All. It’s time to SOAR!”

****PLEASE RETURN AGENDA IF FOUND****

HISTORY OF GRETNA MIDDLE SCHOOL

The land deed for the original school was written on October 5, 1903. It was purchased from T. C. Creasy and E. L. Creasy. The school, Pittsylvania Industrial Normal and Collegiate Institute, was a private boarding school with grades 1-11. It was supported by black Baptist churches in the county. Dr. G. W. Goode was the principal from 1903 to 1933. In 1925 the school became a joint private and public school. The county paid the salary of one elementary teacher, Mrs. Mattie Jones. The school enrollment was small. Graduating classes never exceeded five students until the year 1931. The class of 1931 produced nine graduates. Mr. R. L. Jones, a graduate of one of the earlier classes and a teacher at the school, became principal in 1933 and remained in that position until 1948. The Pittsylvania County School Board purchased the land from the churches in 1936 and made it a public school. Pittsylvania County Training School became the new name of the school. In 1947 the school adopted the twelve-year program. In 1949 the school's name was changed to Northside High School. Mr. Albert Tippitt was principal from 1948 until 1968. Mr. James H. Harris, Sr., became principal in 1968. In 1969 the school was integrated, and the name was changed to Gretna Junior High School. Mr. Paul L. Martin became principal in 1986. In the fall of 1988, the name was changed to Gretna Middle School. Mr. Clarke C. Scott was appointed principal in 1992 and served until 1996. Mrs. Sandra McKenzie was appointed principal on July 1, 1996 and remained principal until 2000. In 2000 Mr. York Pinckney became principal and served until spring of 2003.

In 2003, the present Gretna Middle School building was opened under the leadership of Mrs. Vera F. Glass. Mrs. Glass served as Principal until her retirement in 2017. Mr. Carter W. Lowry was named Principal in 2017 and began serving in July 2017 until October 2019. Mr. Eric Moon was named Principal on October 14, 2019 and served in that position until June 2022, when he was appointed Principal of Gretna High School.

A list of prior Assistant Principals that served at the new Gretna Middle includes Mrs. Kim Haymore, Ms. FreAnda Glass, Mr. Carter Lowry, Mrs. Kirsten Harper was named Assistant Principal of Gretna Middle in 2017 and served until 2018. Mrs. Christie Dawson was named Assistant Principal in 2018 and served until 2019. Dr. Thomas Takacs was named Assistant Principal in 2019 and served in that position until June 2022, when he was appointed Principal of Gretna Middle School.

As the school year begins, we are very excited to celebrate each success and overcome every challenge. The teachers and staff are committed to achieving excellence in all instructional and student endeavors. Although there have been many changes over the years, the mission of Gretna Middle school remains the same: "To use life experiences and acquired knowledge, to promote higher order thinking to become lifelong learners, and to be successful in an ever changing world." The vision of allowing each child to reach his/her full potential continues to be shared by the faculty, staff, and administration.



GENERAL OPERATION PROCEDURES AND EXPECTATIONS

We have awesome students, parents, faculty, and staff at Gretna Middle School. Our motto is **“Rise above it all. It’s time to SOAR!”** Together, we will work to ensure that each and every student at Gretna Middle School achieves academic and social success! Every child is capable of succeeding when we work together as a family. It is our expectation that academic success is fostered in an organized and safe environment; therefore, the GMS family has provided you with a planner for this school year. This planner is a tool that will help you with your organizational skills as we prepare you for success at the high school and college level. **You are expected to keep your planner with you at all times.** Your home practice assignments should be written down daily in your planner. **Hall passes (located at the bottom of each day in your planner) are to be signed by your teacher if you leave your classroom for any reason during the course of the school day.** Parents are encouraged to use your student’s planner as a tool for communication between the home and school. It is the desire of Gretna Middle School that we all work together to ensure the success of **ALL** students.

It is your responsibility to bring your planner to class each day. If your planner is misplaced or lost you will be required to pay \$5.00 to replace the planner.

Gretna Middle School has zero tolerance for Bullying. We value the unique qualities of every person and seek to foster the understanding of differences among people. In order to ensure a safe, nurturing learning environment, we encourage everyone to take a stand for what is right and to report all instances of bullying immediately to an adult.



MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of Gretna Middle School is to provide opportunities for each student to think, learn, and achieve for a technological society.

Rise above it All. It’s time to SOAR!

BELL SCHEDULE

7:54 a.m.	Entry Bell
8:10 a.m.	Warning Bell
8:15 a.m.	Tardy Bell
3:05 p.m.	Student Dismissal Begins

ARRIVING AT SCHOOL BEFORE 7:54 A.M.

Students are not to be at school before 7:54 in the morning. There will not be any teachers on duty before 7:54 a.m. Students may not be dropped off prior to this time. It is very important that students be in their classroom no later than 8:14 to avoid being marked tardy.

ATTENDANCE / ABSENCES

All students are expected to attend school 180 days in order to receive maximum benefit from the instructional program and to develop habits of punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility. When a student is absent from class or school, the student will normally be excused when the reason for the absence is consistent with the guidelines listed below. If the number of absences becomes excessive, the principal will require further proof or verification of the reason before excusing the absence. When a student attends an educational excursion or out of town trip, a "Request for Approval of Excused Absence for Educational Opportunity" form must be filled out in advance for the absence to be excused. If the reason for an absence does not fall within the guidelines, the absence will generally be unexcused. Any exceptions to these guidelines must be approved in advance. When a student is absent due to suspension, the absence will be unexcused. Upon returning to school following an absence, a student must bring a written note signed by his/her parent explaining his/her absence to the office. If for some reason this is not done, the student will have until the next school day to bring his/her signed note. Absences not cleared in this time frame will remain unexcused. (*See paragraph below.)

Reasons that will normally be excused, except when excessive:

Illness (Parent must contact the school each day of an absence. A doctor's note will be required when absences have become excessive), Quarantine, Death in family, Medical appointments (must be confirmed with note from doctor), Court proceedings (statement from court required), Religious observances, Educational opportunities or out of town trips of an educational nature (must be approved in advance). Students will have three days to complete work that was missed during their absence from school. Students who have unexcused absences will not be given an opportunity to make up the work missed. This includes tests, labs and any work done in class on the day of the absence. Work done outside of the classroom by all students can be accepted. OSS is an unexcused absence. Once a student reaches 10 days of absence, for any reason, a professional note will be required in order for the absence to be excused.

*The 1999 Virginia General Assembly enacted new amendments to the current legislation regarding unexcused absences for students. Students, who reach a total of five (5) unexcused absences, whose parents have not given the school a reason for their absences, and the school has made reasonable effort to notify the parents of their child's absence, will be reported to the Attendance Officer. The officer will meet with the student and parents and develop a Corrective Action Plan for school attendance. If the unexcused absences reach seven (7) days, with no indication from parents pertaining to the reason for the absences, the Attendance Officer must initiate court proceedings in J & D Court. These amendments will be strictly enforced.

When an absence is judged to be unexcused, the student and/or parent may request an appeal before the school attendance committee. This request for an appeal must be made in writing and must be received before the end of the school day following notification of an unexcused absence. If an appeal is successful, the absence will be excused and make-up work will be allowed. Make-up work will not be given prior to the decision of the attendance committee. The appeal process does not apply to suspensions. The school attendance committee will be composed of three persons; the principal, school counselor and the student's homeroom teacher. This committee will meet within two school days, and, upon meeting, render an immediate decision. The decision of the committee will be final. Application of this policy to students with disabilities shall be consistent with federal and state laws and regulations as well as School Board policy regarding students with disabilities.

CHECKING IN TO SCHOOL

Tardies to School/Class - Students who report to school after the tardy bell **MUST** report to the main office. He/she must sign in and have his/her name removed from the absentee list before going to class. Upon receiving the fifth tardy to school/class, the student will be assigned to **After-School-Detention**. Additional tardies to school will result in further disciplinary action by administration.

Unexcused Tardies - Traffic congestion, car trouble, oversleeping, missing the bus, late. **Excused Tardies** - Doctor or Dentist appointment with a note, sick with a note from the parent. If a bus is late and the student rode the bus, the student's tardy will be excused.

CHECKING OUT OF SCHOOL

If a student must be checked out from class during the school day, parents must follow these procedures. A note must be sent to school with the student, stating the date, time student will leave, reason for leaving and a telephone number where a parent can be reached to answer questions that may arise. The student should bring the note to the main office when he/she arrives at school. Parents, guardians or designees must produce a photo ID and sign their student out in the office when picking up students. Positively no student is to leave the school grounds at any time without permission from the principal's office. Early check-out is discouraged due to missing instructional time in the classroom. Excused/Unexcused policy will apply to early check-outs. The school should be notified in writing by 2:00 p.m. if you wish for your child to change his/her normal means of transportation at the end of the school day. We cannot guarantee messages will be delivered to your child if notified after 2:00 p.m.

HALL PASSES

Students are not permitted to leave class without a hall pass from their planner signed and timed by their teacher. The student should go directly to the designated location written on the hall pass. Before returning to class, the student must have his/her pass signed and timed by the authorized person to give back to his/her teacher.

FEES

There is a \$5.00 fee for all Science classes. There is a \$2.00 graphing calculator fee for all Algebra I students. CTE and Art fees are as follows: 6th grade students \$5.00, 7th grade students \$8.00 for Keyboarding, Agriculture, and Family and Consumer Sciences, \$10.00 for Art, 8th grade students \$10.00 for Keyboarding, Agriculture, Art, and Family and Consumer Sciences, \$5.00 for Band and Chorus.

FIRE/TORNADO/LOCK-DOWN DRILLS

Fire drills are held four times during the first month of school and once a month during the remainder of the year. Remember these basic rules:

1. Follow the directions of all adults during a drill.
2. Walk. No talking. Move quickly and quietly to designated areas.

Tornado drills are held in February and March to prepare for the coming spring. Instructions and directions are given to each student to prepare him/her in the proper procedure to follow in the event of a tornado. Lock-Down drills are held monthly throughout the year. Instructions and directions are given to students to help them in the proper procedures to follow. This is part of our Crisis Management Plan.

GRADING SYSTEM

The purpose of the grading system should be to assess the progress of students and inform parents of this evaluation. Evaluation of each individual is to be done in such a manner that the teacher creates an atmosphere conducive to improving the quality of work. Students should fully understand the methods of evaluation and what they can do in order to bring about improvement in the quality of their work. The parent-teacher conference is an important method utilized to improve the quality of a student's work. A report card will be sent home at the end of each six weeks grading period. Grades shall be recorded on the appropriate report card each six weeks. **A student must achieve a 3.0 or better to be considered an Honor Roll student.**

Teachers in grades 6 – 8 will use number grades in the grade book. Number grades will be used to determine letter grades to be placed on report cards and cumulative records. Each student's grades shall be based on his/her achievement. Listed below is the numerical grading scale for determining letter grades in middle schools.

All subjects will be graded using the following code:

A = Excellent (94 – 100)

B = Good (86 – 93)

C = Average (78 – 85)

D = Having Difficulty (70 – 77)

F = Failing (0 – 69)

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Promotion or retention of students is based on the teacher's and principal's judgment of what best serves the educational welfare of the child. Although many factors are considered when making the decision, the responsibility and authority for student placement legally belongs to the school. **Parents are informed every three weeks of student progress**, but parents will be informed early in the second semester if there is a possibility that placement will result in retention. This information will be conveyed to the parent in writing. Absenteeism from school is one factor used to determine if a student may be promoted or retained. If a student is retained, promotion in some cases could be reconsidered if the student successfully attends and passes course work in Summer School.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an important part of the educational experience, serving to:

- strengthen skills already taught
- increase learning time
- provide enrichment opportunities
- promote creativity, responsibility, and independence
- develop good work and study habits

It is also important that teachers, parents, and students know their responsibilities concerning home practice.

Responsibilities of Teachers

- assign homework appropriate for all students which focuses on quality - not quantity, and on the reinforcement and strengthening of skills
- review and correct home work to provide feedback to students in a timely manner
- provide written guidelines for long-range assignments and projects to help students in organizing their work, and to benefit parents in working with their children

Responsibilities of Parents

- ensure adequate study time
- provide an atmosphere free from disruptions; turn off the T.V.
- listen, show interest and give support, but avoid doing the assignments
- communicate regularly with the child's teacher
- model behavior to stress the importance of an education and provide a home environment that will encourage learning
- review and sign your student's planner each day

Responsibilities of Students

- write all homework assignments in your planner daily
- ask questions in class if unsure of an assignment
- complete home work as neatly and accurately as possible
- schedule study time so that projects and long-term assignments are completed over a period of time

Request for Homework Assignments

Students and parents are urged to request home work from the school office only in cases where the student will be out of school for long extended periods of time (more than 3 days). In these cases, every effort will be made to make homework available in the office after 3:00 P.M. on the day of the request, if the request is made by 9:00 A.M. Please bring with you the student's locker number and locker combination in order to obtain materials. When an absence is judged to be unexcused, the student will not be given an opportunity to make up the work missed. This includes tests, labs, and any work done in class on the day of the absence. Work done outside of the classroom by all other students can be accepted. (Homework or projects assigned in advance.)

LIBRARY SERVICES

The library will be opened at 8:00 A.M. and remain open throughout the day until 3:00 P.M. You are encouraged to use the library as much as possible. From time to time it is necessary to use the library during class time to do research. In such cases, the student must have his/her teacher work out a time with the librarian. Students are solely responsible for any library books issued. Books are to be returned in a timely fashion and students will be assessed fines for any lost or damaged books.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

When inclement weather forces schools to close early, please listen to your local radio and TV stations for information. School closings are also posted on the Pittsylvania County Web Page found at www.pcs.k12.va.us and the School Messenger Notification system will be used.

LOCKERS

Each student will be issued a locker by his/her homeroom teacher for storing school materials. All book-bags, purses, and coats must be kept in the lockers for safety reasons. The lockers are the property of Gretna Middle School. **Therefore, there should be no expectation of privacy by the student. For the safety of the school community, lockers may be searched at any time by the administration.** Rolling book-bags are prohibited since they will not fit in the lockers. In order to ensure the security of a student's belongings, locker combinations are not to be shared with other students.

LOST AND FOUND

Articles found in and around the school should be returned to the office. The owner may claim his/her property by identifying it. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity at the end of each semester. **We are not responsible for lost or stolen items.**

EARLY DISMISSALS & TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

Students are expected to remain at school for the entire day. Students who require an early dismissal must have a note from their parent or guardian. Individual student circumstances require discussion between the parent or guardian and the principal.

<p>**STUDENTS: *ALL TRANSPORTATION CHANGES TO REGULAR DISMISSAL ROUTINE MUST BE DOCUMENTED IN WRITING OR PHONE CALL PRIOR TO 2PM. <u>ANY REQUEST AFTER THIS TIME WILL NOT BE GUARANTEED.</u></p>

PICKING UP STUDENTS

Car riders may load and unload from the entrance on the right side of the canopy in front of the school. Loading and unloading may take place along the sidewalk where the canopy is located. When picking up students, parents should refrain from picking up students in any other area on school grounds other than the assigned loading and unloading area. Students will not be allowed to cross to the parking lot for pick up from the car rider loading area. Parents should follow the designated traffic pattern marked for car riders. Vehicles should not be left unattended in the loading and unloading zone between 7:30 - 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

Teachers, school personnel, and visitors will park in the right parking lot in front of the school. It is important that we receive full cooperation from everyone to make our plan for a safe traffic pattern workable. We need to make this area of our school as safe as possible. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

BUS NOTES

Students riding a different bus must bring a note from home giving the full name of the student, the date, and where they are to be dropped off. Due to overcrowding concerns on some buses, there may be instances where bus notes will not be approved. **Bus notes are to be turned in to the main office immediately upon arriving to school each morning.** Students will not normally be allowed to call home to ask permission to go home with another student.

ILLNESS AT SCHOOL

SCHOOL CLINIC PROCEDURES

In case of illness, a student must get permission from his/her teacher to come to the Medical Clinic. If illness occurs during class change, students should get permission from the teacher of the class he/she is going too. The student will see the school nurse and if it is determined that the student is too ill to remain at school, the school nurse will contact parents to pick up the student. Parents, guardians or designees must sign the student out on the computer when picking up a student. Positively no student is to leave the school grounds at any time without permission from the principal's office.

FEVER

Student must be fever free for 24 hours without medication before they can return to school.

MEDICATIONS

Any student, who needs to take medication during school hours, including cough drops, must adhere to the following medication procedure. All medication must be brought to the school by the parent or guardian in its original container labeled with the student's name, date, name of medication, and dosage instructions. Medication not in its original container will not be accepted. The parent or guardian must complete a medical permission form and return the form to the office before any medication can be given to the student. Prescription medication also requires a medical permission form, which includes a doctor's signature, returned to the office before the medication can be given to the student. Please call the school if you have any questions or need medical forms.

OFFICE HOURS AND TELEPHONE

The office will be open during the day between the hours of **8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.** Visitors must report to the office when visiting the school. Messages and deliveries from home should be left in the office. Students will not be called out of class. The office telephone (434) 630-1804 is to be used strictly for school business. Only in case of emergencies will students or teachers be called from class to answer the telephone. No personal telephone calls will be allowed to request items left at home. All club meetings are announced several days in advance. Students are to make arrangements for transportation in advance and not come to the office on club meeting days to use the telephone to make arrangements.

SCHOOL STORE

All children are expected to arrive at school with proper materials, including pencils and paper. Paper, pencils and other items will be for sale in the school store. Students will be allowed to buy supplies from the school store from 7:54 a.m. until 8:14 a.m. each day.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are issued to each student and the book number is recorded. Students are solely responsible for their books and must return them at the end of the school year. There is no charge for textbooks. However, students will be charged a fee for any damage to the books or for any lost books. In the event a book is lost, the replacement cost will be that of a new book.

VISITORS

All visitors to the school are to report to the office immediately upon entering the building. Parents are considered visitors. Under no circumstances are parents to go to the classroom without first reporting to the office. This is for the protection of all students. Unauthorized individuals may be prosecuted for trespassing. Students are never to bring children or visitors with them to school.

VOLUNTEERS

The Pittsylvania County School Board has approved the two (2) classifications for volunteers in the schools. In order to volunteer within the school, a person must clear the Level I volunteer certification. Volunteers will be responsible to complete all necessary information and paper work prior to beginning services in the schools. Interested parents may pick-up forms in the main office. Parents and Guardians are encouraged to be volunteers at the school. Interested persons may call the school office to offer their services. Volunteers are used in the workroom, computer lab, library, cafeteria, as classroom helpers with PTO projects, and other school activities.

CAFETERIA PROCEDURES & EXPECTATIONS

The school cafeteria is maintained as a vital part of the school health program. To encourage good nutrition, a well-balanced lunch is offered at no cost. No student is to go without lunch. **No student will be allowed to charge for additional lunches and the office cannot loan lunch money.** This is a policy of the Pittsylvania County School Board. **If there are any questions or concerns, please call the Cafeteria Manager at 630-1804 Ext. 2910.**

Fast-Food or Soft Drinks for lunch are not allowed due to State and Federal regulations. However, students may bring a bag lunch from home. Menus will be sent home on the first of each month. Students may pay for their lunch daily, weekly, by the month, by the semester or by the year. The cafeteria is open to parents who would like to visit the school and have lunch. Lunch is usually served from 11:00 a.m. until 1:15 p.m. Remember a hot lunch is more nutritious. All children are encouraged to drink milk during lunch. Chocolate and low-fat milk is also available. If your child is not allowed to have certain foods because of health reasons, notify the cafeteria manager, school nurse, and your child's homeroom teacher. A form is available in the office concerning protocol for students with special dietary needs. This communication is vitally important to ensure the safety of students with food allergies.

Students' behavior in the cafeteria should be based on courtesy and cleanliness. Once seated, students must raise their hand and be recognized before getting up. Students are to remain in the cafeteria until their teacher's name is called for dismissal. Except for an emergency, students may not leave the cafeteria without permission. Students cannot take food or drink out of the cafeteria.

No child may receive free or reduced lunches until an application has been completed by his/her parent and processed by the Central Office. **If a child attended a Pittsylvania County school and received free or reduced lunch last year, he/she will be given a grace period of ten days to receive free or reduced lunch in order to process the application. (**Please note GMS provides free breakfast & lunch to all students.)**

COST OF LUNCH WITH MILK

Student Lunch	No Charge
Reduced Student Lunch	No Charge
Adult Lunch	\$3.50
Milk	\$.60

Prices are subject to change.

COST OF BREAKFAST WITH MILK

Student Breakfast	No Charge
Reduced Student Breakfast	No Charge
Adult Breakfast	\$2.05

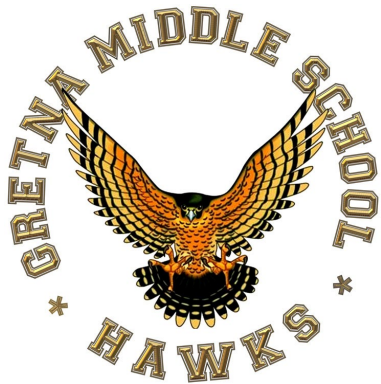
Prices are subject to change.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Gretna Middle School is committed to excellence and creating a positive behavioral environment for all of its students. There is a high level of expectation regarding student behavior; therefore, we strive to create a climate that is conducive to a successful educational experience. For the 2020-2021 school year, Gretna Middle School will continue to implement Positive Behavior Intervention and Support, a research-based approach to establishing a positive school climate. The Gretna Middle School Behavior Expectation Matrix clearly defines the appropriate and necessary actions of students in various settings throughout the school day. It is expected that students' behavior follow the ideals of *SOAR* – Supportive, Organized, Appropriate, and Responsible. Parents are asked to discuss this matrix and expectations with their child to ensure each student has a positive and successful social and academic experience at Gretna Middle School.

*Rise above it all. It's time
to SOAR!*





GREYNA MIDDLE SCHOOL
Rise above it all. It's time to SOAR!
GMS Behavior Expectations



EXPECTATIONS	EVERYWHERE	CLASSROOM	HALLWAY	RESTROOM	CAFETERIA	BUS
SUPPORTIVE	Smile and greet others	Encourage peers' learning	Be gentle with books and lockers	Report inappropriate behavior	Say please and thank you	Be a model for all other students
ORGANIZED	Have planner at all times	Bring all learning materials to class	Keep all materials contained	Use facilities and supplies for their intended purpose	Zone check: leave the area better than your found it	Keep aisle clear
APPROPRIATE	Keep hands and feet to yourself	Allow others to learn	Walk with purpose on the right side	Take care of your own business	Find a seat quickly and stay seated	Take your seat immediately and remain seated
RESPONSIBLE	Accept correction calmly and strive to improve	Complete all assignments on time	Minimize your noise level	Keep school property neat and clean	Listen for your account balance	Be ready when bus arrives

BUS REGULATIONS

The purpose of student transportation in Pittsylvania County is to transport children to and from school in a safe and efficient manner. In order to do this, we need the cooperation of parents, students, bus drivers, and all school personnel.

The following regulations will help everyone understand what is expected of the students, in an effort to ensure their safety while on the bus and while waiting for the bus:

1. Parents are requested to accompany their young children to and from the bus stop, or designate a responsible person to do so.
2. Students must wait off of the travel portion of the highway until the bus comes to a complete stop, at its regular bus stop. Students should never be on the hard part of a paved road or the traveled part of a dirt road.
3. Students should be at the bus stop at least five (5) minutes before the scheduled arrival of the school bus. Buses are scheduled so they **CANNOT** wait for students, and drivers are instructed **NOT** to wait.
4. Students should board the bus immediately and take a seat toward the back of the bus, three (3) to a seat, where possible. Drivers are instructed to give students a chance to take a seat before moving.
5. Students should remain seated during the trip, and until the bus comes to a complete stop to let them disembark.
6. Students should never throw objects on the bus or out of windows. They should keep arms, hands, and other parts of their body inside the bus, and never out of windows.
7. For sanitary as well as safety reasons, **food** and **drinks** will **NOT** be allowed on buses. Lunches in proper containers are permitted if they are not opened while on the bus.
8. Band instruments and class projects should not be taken on the bus unless students can hold them in their laps. These objects must not take up space on seats, or be placed in the front of the bus or aisle. Aisles and passageways cannot be blocked and student traffic flow must not be impeded in any way.
9. Students are permitted to talk in a normal conversational voice to the persons in the seat with them. Yelling and moving around on the bus are not permitted.
10. The use of profanity or obscene and suggestive language will not be tolerated from any student or driver while on school buses.
11. Students should always obey the instruction of the driver. The driver is in complete charge of the bus while on its route.
12. Drivers are not authorized to put a student off the bus or to refuse to pick one up, unless authorized to do so by the principal of the school, Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent for Support Services, or Director of Transportation. Students will be put off of bus either at their regular stop or at the school, not on the road.

13. Students having to cross the road to catch their bus, or to get home from bus stop, will cross in front of the bus, under the direction of the driver. They should always cross about ten (10) feet in front of the front bumper of the bus.
14. Students are permitted to ride only the bus to which they are assigned, and will be picked up and released from the bus only at their regular stops. If it becomes necessary for students to ride another bus, they must have written statement to this effect, signed by their parents and by the school principal, and given to the driver.
15. Smoking by students or drivers on the bus **is unlawful in the State of Virginia.**
16. Pets, reptiles or any type of animal, are not to be carried on a school bus. This applies even if it is a science project assigned by a teacher.
17. Students suspended from one bus in Pittsylvania County cannot ride another bus, even if that bus comes directly by the student's home.
18. Students should accept a ride **ONLY** if parents or school officials have approved such an arrangement.
19. **NO ELECTRONIC DEVICES** will be permitted on the school buses at any time, either by the drivers or the students.
20. The local school is responsible for detecting and reporting any damage sustained to the bus by carelessness or vandalism. **The person causing damage shall be required to reimburse the school for any actual breakage or destruction of property done by such person.** Drivers shall inspect buses before and after each special trip and will report any damage to the school principal and the director of transportation as soon as possible. The drivers are responsible for the security of the bus while on a special trip.

THE FAILURE OF A STUDENT TO OBEY THE ABOVE REGULATIONS WILL SUBJECT HIM OR HER TO BE REFUSED THE PRIVILEGE OF RIDING A SCHOOL BUS IN PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY. THE SUSPENSION FROM A SCHOOL BUS DOES NOT RELIEVE THE PARENTS OF THEIR OBLIGATION TO SEE THAT THE STUDENT ATTENDS SCHOOL.

DRESS CODE

Pittsylvania County Schools adopted a division-wide middle school and high school dress code. The PCS dress code is the result of recommendations and conversations from our students, faculty, parents, and administrators. Our goal is to establish a dress code that focuses on an educational environment with student success clearly at the center. We want all of our students to make good choices when it comes to their appearance. Your support is greatly appreciated. The Administration reserves the right to determine appropriateness of dress.

The following dress code guidelines will apply to all students:

1. Shoes must be worn at all times on school grounds. Bedroom slippers are prohibited. Teachers may require a particular type of shoe for lab, shop, or gym activities.
2. Head coverings of all types should be placed in lockers upon arriving at school. Hoods cannot be worn.
3. Headbands or head wraps may not exceed a width of 2 inches.

4. Bandanas are prohibited.
5. Heavy chains, chains hanging from clothing, or spiked jewelry are prohibited.
6. Sunglasses cannot be worn in the building.
7. Headphones should be placed out of sight upon entering the building.
8. Pajamas or sleepwear, costumes, or blankets are prohibited in the school building or on buses.
9. Large or bulky coats/jackets are to be placed in lockers during the school day.
10. Tops and dresses with no straps or straps of fewer than 2 inches in width are prohibited unless covered by a jacket or top.
11. Tops or dresses that reveal bare midriffs or cleavage are not allowed.
12. Shirts and tops with the back cut out are not permitted.
13. Mesh or see-through clothing is prohibited.
14. Tops with large openings for the arms of that are split below the arms are not permitted.
15. Students are not to wear clothing with language, symbols or pictures that are offensive or suggestive, promote violence, are gang related, advertise illegal substances, or advertise tobacco or alcohol.
16. All visible tattoos must meet the dress code and cannot include any language, symbols or pictures that are offensive or suggestive, promote violence, are gang related, advertise illegal substances or advertise tobacco or alcohol.
17. Shorts, skirts, skorts and dresses can be no shorter than 4 inches above the knee, both in the front and back.
18. If tight-fitting pants, such as leggings are worn, a dress or lengthy shirt that is no shorter than 4 inches above the top of the knee, both in the front and back, must also be worn.
19. Pants must be worn at the waist. No undergarments should be visible at any time.
20. If holes are 4 inches above the knee in pants, leggings or shorts must be worn underneath with no visible skin.
21. Athletes should not be in full uniform during the school day; uniform tops meeting the dress code may be worn. The following uniform tops will be prohibited: tops with straps of fewer than 2 inches in width; tops that reveal bare midriffs or cleavage; tops with the back cut out; mesh or see-through tops; and tops with large openings for the arms or that are split below the arms.
22. Weapon-related attire is prohibited unless it is part of a school-sponsored club or activity.

CONSEQUENCES OF DRESS CODE VIOLATION

First offense parents are contacted and the dress code violation must be resolved. If a parent is unable to be reached or the dress code violation is not resolved, the student will not be allowed to return to the classroom and arrangements will be made for all work to be completed in an alternate setting. Any additional dress code infractions will result in further disciplinary action.

PERFUME/FRAGRANCE

Due to allergies and asthma, Gretna Middle School strongly discourages the use of perfume, cologne, hand lotion, or any other kind of fragrance in the school.

BULLYING

Gretna Middle School has zero-tolerance for bullying. Bullying is prohibited and will not be tolerated on school premises. Students who feel they are a victim of bullying are encouraged to report any incident of bullying to an adult immediately. Any student who is found to be involved in bullying another student will be punished to the fullest extent of school and school board policy.

CELL PHONE USE

Students may have cell phones on their person; however, cell phones cannot be seen, used, or turned on during the hours of school operation and cannot be visible on the campus until 3:30 p.m. or 1:30 p.m. on early dismissal days. Students may not use cell phones on the school bus traveling to and from school, and cell phones cannot be out or visible on the school bus. Violation of this policy will result in the cell phone being confiscated in every instance of infraction, and a parent must come to the school to pick up the phone. Phones will not be released to anyone other than the parent/guardian. Any electronic device with the ability to text will be treated with the same consequences as cell phones. On the first violation offense, the student will be given one (1) day of ISS; on the second offense, the student will be given three (3) days of ISS; and on the third offense, the student will be suspended for one (1) day. Subsequent infractions will result in out-of-school suspension, with the total number of days being determined by the principal.

PROFANITY

Use of profanity is not allowed at Gretna Middle School. Any student who uses profanity will receive Out of School Suspension (OSS).

AFTER SCHOOL DETENTION (ASD)

After School Detention will be on Thursdays from 3:25 p.m. until 4:25 p.m. Parents of students who are assigned to ASD will receive written notification prior to serving detention. This letter of notification will be given to the student to deliver to the parent. Students who fail to notify the principal of their not being able to stay or who fail to report to ASD will be given ISS. Students who misbehave during ASD will be suspended from school. Once students report to ASD, they will not be released from the room. Students should go to the restroom or get water before entering ASD. When detention is completed, the student will not be allowed to stay for any other after school program. It is required that students work on assignments for the duration of the detention period. Students should bring their textbooks, home practice assignments, and supplies with them to ASD. Parents are responsible for their child's transportation home promptly at 4:25 p.m.

IN SCHOOL SUSPENSION (ISS)

The education of students requires that students and teachers be provided with an environment that promotes a well-organized and orderly climate for instruction. Therefore, every effort is made to ensure that classroom disruptions and student misbehavior are dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner. In School Suspension is a classroom disciplinary program created to provide additional assistance in promoting self-discipline and decision-making skills. ISS will be used to provide time for students to reflect upon poor choices they made within the school setting and to focus on the consequences of their behavior. Assignment to ISS eliminates distractions in the classroom and school setting, ensuring that instruction can continue for other students. As a disciplinary measure, ISS is intended to provide in-school exclusion for students misbehaving in the school

setting. While assigned to ISS, students are expected to use their time to commit themselves to improving behavior and becoming a positive contributor to the school environment. Parents will be contacted concerning the student's conduct and reason for assignment. In lieu of suspension from school, students are required to complete one day of school work for each day assigned to ISS in isolation. Students will not have contact with other students during the day. **Any student who misbehaves in ISS will be suspended from school.**

BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION CLASSROOM (BMC)

The education of students requires that students and teachers be provided with an environment that promotes a well-organized and orderly climate for instruction. Therefore, every effort is made to ensure that classroom disruptions and student misbehavior are dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner. Students who fail to meet the behavior expectations of Gretna Middle will be sent to BMC with a referral from the classroom teacher.

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (AUP)

Students who violate this policy may suffer disciplinary action including but not limited to the loss of privileges relating to the use of technology in the schools as described in the Student Conduct Policy. The AUP is available on the PCS website.

CHEATING

Mastering course work without cheating is an achievement. When evaluating student work, teachers will not give credit when it has been determined that a student gave or received unauthorized assistance. Teachers should become aware of areas where cheating can occur and should do everything within their power to prevent any form of cheating in their classes. Students should do their own work and learn from their successes and failures. Cheating gives a false sense of achievement and denies students the basics for the next level of competency. Students, on occasion, work harder at cheating than would be necessary for them to study for the test or to do the work in the first place.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The Pittsylvania County School's Student Conduct Policy is intended to ensure that all students have fair access to an education. It is the Board's responsibility to seek to ensure respect for the dignity of each child. A learning environment that encourages the healthy growth and development of each individual must be free from conflict, threats of conflict or danger, and undue disruption. To that end, this code of student conduct seeks to direct student behavior based on clearly defined expectations, responsibilities and consequences. We ask that parents discuss with their children the importance of appropriate behavior and the consequences for inappropriate behavior while at school. We recognize that students are also youngsters in transition and they often act out or misbehave. We are devoted to working with students on changing their behavior. However, students and parents must know that we cannot allow one student's behavior to stop another student's learning.

Therefore, all students are expected to:

- follow the expectations for the SOAR Behavior Expectations Matrix at all times
- follow school board discipline policy and school rules at all times
- know the disciplinary actions for rule violations
- attend school regularly
- **eat only in the cafeteria**

- **only clear water bottles with water are allowed – no drink bottles or containers may be brought in from outside**
- remain on school grounds once arriving
- have a note from a parent explaining absences for the previous day
- **leave all electronic devices at home such as: video games, MP3s, iPods, iPads, etc., "nuisance items", playing cards, dice, or large sums of money to school – GMS will not be responsible for lost or stolen items. Students who bring prohibited items to school have the items confiscated and the parent/guardian will be required to pick up the prohibited item(s) from the main office.**
- use only their assigned locker
- ensure cell phones are turned off, not visible, and not used during school hours
- be expected to pay for any damage or loss to school property
- not smoke, use, or possess tobacco products on school property or buses

PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY SCHOOLS STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Class 1 Misconduct	Disciplinary Options*
<p>Misconduct that is mostly a nuisance, but if left unchecked can become a problem.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom disruption • Failing to follow rules and regulations, including the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) • Skipping school or class • Inappropriate, obscene, disruptive or unsafe dress • Sleeping • Tardiness • Unsafe driving practices 	<p>Penalties that may be applied by school administrators shall apply to all grade levels, unless otherwise stated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioral intervention • Conference with teacher or principal • Parent conference • Parent contact (phone call or letter) • Loss of privileges • After School Detention (ASD) • In-School Suspension (ISS) (if available) • Behavior Management Center (BMC) (if available) • Other disciplinary action (i.e. community service) • Upgrade to Class 2 Offense
Class 2 Misconduct	Disciplinary Options *
<p>Misconduct that must be corrected. A parent conference at school is the minimum response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggression • Cheating • Continued classroom disruption • Disobedience • Disorderly conduct • Disrespectful to teacher or peers • Forgery • Gambling • Inappropriate touching/kissing (inappropriate display of affection) • Incurable behavior (unwilling to correct inappropriate behavior) • Insubordination • Intimidation/harassment/bullying • Misbehavior on school bus • Possession of contraband (items other than alcohol, drugs, tobacco or weapons) such as matches, cigarette lighters, etc. • Possession of laser pointer • Profane, obscene, abusive language/materials/actions • Theft • Physical Altercation • Offsite conduct that results in a substantial material disruption or disruption of the learning environment • Violation of cellular/electronic/SMART devices protocol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent conference • Behavioral intervention • After School Detention (ASD) • In-School Suspension (ISS) (if available) • Behavior Management Center (BMC) (if available) • Suspension from school bus • Suspension from school (1 to 10 days) • Other disciplinary action (i.e. community service) • Upgrade to Class 3 offense

Class 3 Misconduct	Disciplinary Options*
Serious misconduct that disrupts the educational process, indicates incorrigible behavior or violates the law. Suspension from school is the minimum penalty.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol (possession, use or under the influence) • Assault and battery (including sexual assault) • Breaking and entering • Destruction of property/vandalism • Drug paraphernalia (possession) • Extortion or threats • Fighting (see discipline protocol for determining self-defense (page 5)) • Firecrackers/fireworks (possession or use) • Gang related activities • Gross insubordination/open defiance • Hazing (recklessly or intentionally endangering the health or safety of a student or students or to inflict bodily harm) • Inappropriate sexual behavior (nonverbal, verbal, written, graphic or physical behavior) • Inciting, leading or participating in student disorder • Tobacco products (possession or use), including electronic and e-cigarettes • Trespassing • Over the counter medication (unauthorized use, possession or under the influence) • Offsite conduct that results in a substantial material disruption, disruption of the learning environment or a felony charge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspension from school (1 to 10 days mandatory) • Mandatory 10 day suspension from school for alcohol • Mandatory 5 day suspension from school for tobacco related offense (grades 6-12) • Long-term suspension • Recommendation for expulsion • Prosecution in legal system • Upgrade to Class 4 offense
Class 4 Misconduct	Disciplinary Options*
Gross misconduct that requires removal of student from school.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol (distribution) • Any act which substantially disrupts the orderly conduct of school, a school function, extracurricular or co-curricular activity • Arson • Bomb threats or false fire alarms • Possession of controlled substance or illegal drugs, including marijuana and anabolic steroids • Possession of weapon or look-alike weapon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation for expulsion or long-term suspension and prosecution, when appropriate. • Recommendation for probation and corrective plan of action, suspension 1-10 days, long-term suspension or recommendation for expulsion (Grades K-5)

Upon returning from an expulsion, a student will be placed on probation for 180 student days. The probation will begin the first day of re-entry at a school. An identified handicapped student shall not be expelled for a school infringement which is related to an identified characteristic of his/her specific handicapping conditions.

WEAPONS IN SCHOOL

Any student who is determined to have brought or to have in his/her possession a weapon or look-alike weapon on any school property, including a school bus, or at any school-sponsored activity shall be expelled for at least 180 student days, unless determined on a case-by-case basis by the school board that other disciplinary action is appropriate. An identified student with a disability shall not be expelled for a school infringement which is related to an identified characteristic of his/her specific handicapping conditions.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL ABUSE

The expectation of the School Board is that all students have the right to an environment that is safe, drug-free and conducive to learning. Any student, who is determined to have brought, used, or have in his/her possession, a controlled substance, imitation controlled substance, or marijuana onto school property, including a school bus, or to any school-sponsored activity, will be expelled, unless determined on a case-by-case basis by the school board that other disciplinary action is appropriate. Any student who intentionally sells, gives, possesses, uses, or is under the influence of illicit drugs, narcotics, or alcohol in or on school property, including buses and bus stops, shall be suspended or expelled from school and reported to the appropriate law enforcement agencies for possible legal action. The Pittsylvania County Sherriff’s Department performs random drug sweeps at all Pittsylvania County middle and high schools, using drug detection dogs.

VANDALISM AND PROPERTY DAMAGE

The construction of our school building and the purchasing and maintaining of school equipment are paid for by the taxpayers. Students who destroy or vandalize school property will be required to pay for losses or damages. If students willfully destroy school property, suspension and possible expulsion may be necessary.