

Eastern Elem/Middle School
Student Handbook – 2022-2023

PRINCIPAL’S MESSAGE

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students:

It is my pleasure to welcome you to Eastern Elementary/Middle School. The faculty and staff join me in saying we’re happy to have you as part of the Eastern family. We hope this will be a successful academic year for your child.

The pages of the handbook are filled with important information regarding school policy and procedures. I suggest that parents and students thoroughly review the contents together. If you have questions after reading through the handbook, please call the school office. Please keep this handbook in a convenient location to refer to throughout the school year. We feel that open and clear communication between school and home is important to the success of our educational program.

We welcome your participation and support during the school year and solicit your membership in the PTA. By working together, teachers, parents, and students can all celebrate the achievements of our students. We would like to make the following suggestions to help our parents become more involved and our students more successful:

PARENTS:

- Encourage your child to study and learn as much as possible.
- Visit Eastern and become a part of your child’s education.
- Work cooperatively with your child’s teachers.
- Become active in Eastern’s PTA program.
- Become familiar with Eastern’s program of studies.
- Maintain a positive attitude about your child’s education.
- School Board Policies are available on the School Board website: <http://sbo.gilesk12.org>

STUDENTS:

- Visit our school web-site at: <http://eems.gilesk12.org>
- Get involved with your school by becoming familiar with the classroom locations, school office, library, cafeteria, gym, playground, etc.
- Seek assistance from faculty and staff when needed. They are all here to help you.
- Follow all school and classroom rules and directions and display good character at all times.
- Start the year out right with good classroom and study habits. Remember we are here to help you and by working together we can make this a successful and enjoyable school year.

We are proud of our school, faculty, students, and staff. We hope you are just as proud of Eastern and you will let us help you with your educational process. We are looking forward to a great and exciting year at Eastern Elementary/Middle School. Best wishes to everyone connected with Eastern for an excellent school year.

Directory

Office Staff

Principal	Jason Mills
Assistant Principal	Sarah Woods
Bookkeeper/Secretary	Dottie Meredith
Office Clerk	Norma Lester
Resource Officer	John Bowman
Guidance	Amanda Mountain
Nurse	Tammy Barnett

Instructional Support Staff:

Reading Specialist	
Librarian	Kristen Corboy
Band	Dawn Sechrist
Title 1	Sherry Wall & Catherine Slusser
Music	Kevin Riley
Physical Education	Seth Davis
Speech/Language Impaired	Cynthia Deighan
Computer Technology Administrator	Michelle Lucas
Computer Technology Specialist	Denise Davis
Instructional Technology Teacher	Chris Mitchell
PALS	Debbie Poff

Special Education:

Anna Vaughn
Kristi Gordon
Karen Wood

School Board Personnel:

Division Superintendent	Dr. Terry Arbogast,II
Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum	Lisa Mustain
Gifted Education Coordinator	Paula Tibbs
Data Management/Testing Coord.	Jason Campbell
School Health Coordinator	Jessie Glover
School Psychologist	Shannon Douthat
Special Education Coordinator	Jessica Morris
Special Education Secretary	
Vocational Education Director	Kevin White

School Board Members

Western District Representative	
Central District Representative	Mark Wilburn
Eastern District Representative	Stevie Steele, Chariman
At-Large Representative	Phillip Pennington
At-Large Representative	Melissa Guynn

Classroom Teachers:

Kindergarten:	Jessie Lowery – Toni Robertson – Lori Evans
First Grade:	Venessa Davis – Jenny Hogan – Tara Mullins
Second Grade:	Suzanne Williams – Heather Munsey – Christy Jones
Third Grade:	Lauren Reed- Amber Romanello – Alexis Brown
Fourth Grade	Crystal Ramos-McCall – Katherine Ponzio – Ashley Bales
Fifth Grade:	Margy Journell – Jane Lowe - Hannah Gardner
Sixth Grade:	Beth Sparks - Brogan Erns t- Lauren Lehman
Seventh Grade:	Cortney Tuggle – Melissa Blankenship

Teacher Assistants:

Sharon Wilson, Dee Meredith, Renee Law, Christina Collins
Rebecca Hurt, Teresa Link, Darlene Powell

Cafeteria Staff:

Teresa Santolla, Mgr.
Robin Hundley
Teresa Austin
Lundie Williams
Donna Sanderson

Cafeteria Monitors:

Kevin Jones

PURPOSE OF EASTERN'S STUDENT HANDBOOK

To help parents and students to become familiar with school rules, regulations, policies, services, and the school's programs, this handbook was developed for your use. Through an understanding of the regulations that keep the school functioning efficiently and an awareness of the opportunities that are offered, a good working relationship will be established among the school administration, staff, parents, and students. We ask that you please read the handbook carefully and if you have any questions or concerns about any part, please feel to call or come by for a visit.

GILES COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS' MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Giles County Public Schools is to continue the improvement of instruction in a positive manner and to create a welcome climate for students, parents, and employees, while achieving the mandates of the Virginia Department of Education.

This mission is to be accomplished in a team setting where the team shall include students, parents, employees, residents, industry, and local merchants.

HISTORY OF EASTERN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Eastern Elementary/Middle School was formed by action of the Giles County School Board in 1981. A committee appointed by the Board selected the name for the school.

The school serves pupils in grades Pre-K-7 from the former Pembroke, Eggleston and Newport Elementary School attendance areas.

The first school day at Eastern Elementary Middle School was August 30, 1982, under the Principalship of James E. Wheeler, Jr. and Glenn Cruise, Assistant Principal.

The Eastern Elementary/Middle School is constructed on a forty-acre tract of land that once was part of the Brewer Farm. The school is located in the Hoges Chapel Community, approximately three miles east of the old Pembroke Elementary School, five miles from Eggleston, and six miles from Newport. The beautiful surroundings, mountainous background and rolling valley frontages, and accessibility, just off U.S. Route 460, depict a perfect setting for Eastern Elementary/Middle School. As one might expect, the natural beauty is complemented by the architectural design which houses a physical environment conducive to a sound educational program.

Eastern Elementary/Middle School also contains provisions for serving the handicapped student, including a lift and ramps. There is a large gymnasium with collapsible seating and dressing facilities. The cafeteria area serves as multi-purpose room and is used for assemblies and public meetings. Adjacent to the multi-purpose room there is an area for music instruction which also serves as the stage. This area has a sliding partition that is closed while being used for music classes.

This facility represents the efforts of the people of Giles County and their determination to meet the needs of today's children and youth, while ensuring quality educational facilities for the future.

The dedication of Eastern Elementary School was held on May 15, 1983.

EASTERN'S MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to provide a safe and challenging learning environment that will encourage all students to reach their fullest potential and contribute positively to their community.

EASTERN ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

The Eastern Elementary/Middle staff believes that education is a continuous developmental process based on achievement. The school shares the responsibility for the process with the home, the church, and other community agencies; every educational program must be related to the democratic society, which it serves. Through this process and instruction in career awareness, and character education, students learn to be productive members of society and function as family members and citizens. They also learn to protect the community and environment in which they live.

This process involves the development of competence in the basic learning skills as defined by the Virginia Standards of Learning. It also helps develop the total child, i.e., intellectually, socially, emotionally, physically, creatively, and aesthetically. This process includes respect for learning and rational attitudes toward order and change. It further involves the cultivation of an inquiring mind, the desire for knowledge, and the adoption of values, which insist that each individual have merit among all free people.

The Eastern Elementary/Middle staff provides an opportunity for each child to develop, to the greatest possible extent, a positive view of himself and his fellow men; to provide opportunity for each individual to develop as a responsible, trustworthy, compassionate member of society who contributes to the advancement of mankind according to his own individual gifts.

The administration, faculty, and staff at Eastern are dedicated to providing the best possible education for each and every student. Curriculum and programs are based on sound educational concepts and child development theories. Students work and play in an environment, which fosters curiosity, creative expression, and sound health habits.

Through the philosophy and objectives set forth at Eastern, a sense of pride and unity are experienced by students, administration, faculty, staff, parents, and community. These feelings of pride and unity make teaching and learning enjoyable for all.

EEMS Student Responsibilities:

- Treat everyone with respect
- Remain in assigned area
- Walk quietly and safely
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself
- Follow directions

Potential Consequences When A Student Breaks A Rule:

1. Warning
2. Written assignment (with parent signature and return to school)
3. Removal from group (with teacher phone call to parent)
4. Go to Principal's office (appropriate consequences with phone call to parent)

Severe clause: Parent conference with teacher and principal.

Rewards When Students Follow Rules: (assigned by individual teachers)

TYPICAL SCHOOL DAY

**Supervision IS NOT provided for students who arrive before
8:00 AM or remain later than 3:30.**

(unless they are participating in a supervised activity).

Children should NOT arrive earlier than 8:00 a.m. or remain on campus later than 3:30 p.m.

TARDINESS: Classes begin at 8:30 (Students should be in their homerooms)

Any student who arrives in their class room after 8:30 a.m. is considered tardy. Continued tardiness may become a matter for the school resource officer and/or court system to address.

STUDENT DRESS CODE
Eastern Elementary/Middle School

Student Dress:

A Student's dress and appearance shall not be such that it causes disruption, distracts others from the educational process or creates a health or safety problem. Students must comply with specific building dress regulations and of which students will be given prior notice.

- Shoes must be worn at all times in and around the building. This applies to **grades K-7.**
- Flips-flops and other insecure footwear are not permitted. This applies to **grades K-7.**
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The Following are Specific to Grades 4-7:

- Shorts, skirts, and dresses must be at least mid-thigh. (end of fingertips will be used as a measure guide)
- No tank tops, unless layered with a sleeved top or strap measures 3 fingers across.
- Upper and lower garments should meet at all times.
- Neither undergarments nor nightclothes are to be worn as outer garments.
- Sheer or excessively tight garments are not acceptable.
- Hats and other head coverings are not to be worn in the school building.
- Apparel that is considered lewd, suggestive, supportive of illegal substances, (including drugs, alcohol, and tobacco products) and of culturally/sexually offensive topics are not permitted.
- Pants may **not** be worn with the waistband below the hips.
- Metal accessories or anything that could harm persons or property will not be allowed.
- Pants/shorts should not have advertising or wording across the back of the garment.
(This does not apply to manufacturer's brand label.)

*******Students may be referred for Dress Code disciplinary action at any time during the day.**

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS:

The possession, sale, or use of alcohol, drugs, or any other controlled substance, on the school grounds or buses, is strictly forbidden. Violation of this rule will cause immediate disciplinary action according to GCPS policy and will be reported to appropriate law enforcement agencies.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Each morning at 8:25, we will have morning announcements over the intercom. If you have announcements, **please give a written copy to the secretary** for approval from administration.

ASSEMBLIES:

Assemblies are planned periodically as special events on the school calendar. Some typical assembly themes include athletics, cultural presentations, and professional speakers. There is often a significant investment in time in preparation for an assembly program. Students will be notified in advance of each assembly. Special attention to etiquette and good citizenship is expected of all students.

FIRE DRILLS, INTRUDER DRILLS, AND TORONADO DRILLS:

Every precaution is taken to insure the safety of your child during normal school hours. Periodic fire and tornado drills are executed during the school year to make certain students learn proper safety procedures and adhere to all safety guidelines. It is impossible to know whether the students will be in their class, the library, lunchroom, playground, gym, or in the music room. For this reason, the teacher carefully instructs the students on what to do and exactly where to go when an alarm is sounded.

FUND-RAISING:

Occasionally, fund raising projects are a necessary part of our school operation. All fund raising projects must have the approval of the Giles County School Board. Elementary/ Middle students may not go door to door for solicitation purposes. When a fund raising project is approved, parents are encouraged to help their child(ren) by contacting relatives and friends in support of the project.

School pictures are a means of raising funds for school supplies. Fall and spring pictures will be taken and parents will be given the opportunity to purchase these pictures. Eastern receives a percentage of monies collected for pictures. Buying school pictures is a voluntary program for parents.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

The faculty and staff of Eastern Elementary/Middle School are interested in involving the community in our program.

Parents have many special talents and jobs that our students would benefit from hearing about. If you would be willing to talk to a class at your convenience, please call the office or send your name, phone number, and area of interest in writing by your child. Perhaps you know someone with a special hobby or talent; please list his/her name, area of interest, and phone number. We will keep this information on file for future use. It is important that we receive this information to help enrich our curriculum.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM:

Principal Jason Mills is Eastern Elem/Middle School's Volunteer Coordinator. We encourage anyone who enjoys working with students and teachers to become involved and offer your support. Anyone who wishes to volunteer must complete a volunteer packet (which includes a thorough background check) to be submitted to the Giles Co. School Board for final approval.

PTA **PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION**

The Parent Teacher Association, PTA, is an organization designed for parents and teachers where they may work together to gain a better understanding of the needs and achievements of the children.

Notices will be sent home by the students with information concerning meeting dates, time, and programs.

PTA Board Members 2021-2022

Presidents:

Treasurer: Brittani Ratcliffe
Secretary: Tracey Link

ILLNESSES DURING THE SCHOOL DAY:

If students should become ill during the school day, every effort will be made to notify the parents.
We ask your cooperation in providing us with appropriate emergency contact numbers and people authorized to pick up students who are ill.

MEDICATION:

Students must have written permission to take medication. Directions for administering the medication must be kept on file in the office. All medication, prescription and over the counter must be kept in the office. **The school policy prohibits employees from administering any drug without the written permission from parents.** For complete details about proper disbursement of medication.
Refer to: Policy JHCD.

LOST AND FOUND:

Articles found should be taken to the office, and library books to the librarian.
PLEASE MARK ITEMS WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME SO THEY CAN BE RETURNED WITHOUT DELAY.
This also discourages unauthorized borrowing.

CELL PHONES:

Eastern Elem/Middle School respects the usefulness of cell phones in relation to the after-school activities for which our students are involved. However, these cell phones can be a disruption in the classroom. Cell phones are to be used only when allowed by classroom teachers in accordance with Giles County BYOD policy. **When not in use as directed by the teacher, cell phones are to be powered off and not carried on your person during the school day.**

PLEASE LEAVE AT HOME:

In order to minimize disruptions and to increase instructional activity, students should not bring the following items to school:

Any items which may disrupt the instructional process

- Animals, except on the invitation of the teacher
- Toys
- Athletic equipment and supplies, except on the request of the teacher
- Chewing gum
- Hair spray, perfume, and make-up (chapstick is permitted)
- Knives, sharp objects, or weapons
- Tobacco and alcohol in any form
- Younger brothers, sisters, and visiting friends or relatives (except on the invitation of the principal).

The teacher will take harmful or objectionable objects brought to school. These items may be picked up by the parent/guardian after school hours. If these items are brought back to school again, the school personnel reserve the right to keep the article(s) in order to insure the protection of all students within the school.

PICTURES:

Fall individual school pictures are scheduled for September 16th

Make up pictures TBA

Spring pictures are TBA

Every student will be photographed; however, you are under no obligation to purchase these pictures. Proceeds from the sale of pictures are used to purchase additional school supplies for Eastern.

SCHOOL CLOSING OR DELAYED SCHEDULES:

Inclement Weather Situations

SCHOOL CLOSING OR DELAYED SCHEDULES:

The Superintendent and his staff make the decision to close schools due to inclement weather from the School Board Office. Schools shall be open for instructional purposes as often as possible, taking into consideration, first, the safety of the students. Schools will operate on a regular schedule every day the roads are judged to be safe for bus travel. School officials will make decisions concerning the operation of school on the basis of the best information available at the right time. Early announcements concerning closing schools for the day or operating ONE/TWO HOUR late will be broadcast by the following stations:

When Giles County Public Schools have a schedule change (closing or delay) due to inclement weather or other emergencies, the information is communicated as soon as the decision is made in these ways:

- [Posted on Giles County Homepage \(http://eems.gilesk12.org\) Select School Board then Closing and Delays\)](http://eems.gilesk12.org)
- Sent via School Messenger to the phone numbers as recorded in your child's school records: Home Phone, Mother's Day Phone and Father's Day Phone. **Please ensure that the number at which you want to be contacted, and can be reached at any time, is listed with the front office under parent/guardian day phone.** Please contact your student's school if any changes to these numbers are required.
- Called in to area radio and television stations.
- A recording placed on the School Board Office's phone line at: 540-921-1421 ext. 4

Normally, when schools have been closed for one day or more, it will be announced by 4:00 P.M. whether or not schools will reopen the following day.

STUDENT COUNCIL ASSOCIATION (SCA):

A Student Council Association will be organized each school year. Students in sixth and seventh grade, under the supervision of a classroom teacher, meet on a regular basis to discuss and implement projects and activities for the entire student body. Other purposes of the organization shall be to promote the general welfare of the school, develop good citizenship, promote harmonious relations throughout the school, improve student-teacher relationships, improve school morale, provide a forum of student expression, and assist in the management of the school.

TELEPHONE:

The telephones in the office are for school business only. Students will not be called to the office to receive a telephone call except in cases of emergency. Also, students will not be allowed to place calls in the office except in cases of emergency.

USE OF MEDIA CENTER:

The library is a place for study and recreational reading. Your child's teacher and the librarian will give some specific rules and regulations to be followed when a class goes to the library. Failure to abide by library rules will result in LOSS OF LIBRARY PRIVILEGES.

ELIGIBILITY FOR HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS:

Seventh grade students may be eligible to participate in athletic activities at the secondary level. It will be the responsibility of the parents to direct a request for their child to participate to their district high school principal. It is also the responsibility of the child's parent to make arrangements for any classwork that may be missed with the child's school principal and provide transportation as may be required. The child's principal, the high school principal, and the parents must sign off for said child to be eligible

CAFETERIA RULES:

The staff at Eastern is genuinely interested in your child eating a well-balanced meal. Eastern has an excellent cafeteria staff that prepares nutritious meals daily. The cafeteria operates under the National School Lunch Program regulations. Breakfast and lunch are important to enhance your child's academic performance and achievement. We ask that you encourage your child to eat the breakfast and lunch provided and limit the number of extra items he/she buys. Students may not purchase any ala carte item unless they have a lunch from school or home. Students who choose to bring their own lunch may bring their own drink provided it is brought in a thermos bottle or an unbreakable container and is finished and disposed of in the cafeteria.

Students may not bring any soda as a drink for lunch.

Information and a confidential application for free and reduced meals will be sent home with students. **Please take time to consider this option.**

CAFETERIA BEHAVIOR:

The practice of appropriate table manners is expected of all students. No reaching across the tables, no food trading, no food throwing, and no playing with others' food (keep your hands to yourself).

- 1 Students are asked not to talk once they **enter the doors in the serving area** except for making choices of food items.
- 2 Students must get all food items as they go through the line.
- 3 Students are expected to sit in their class' designated area.
- 4 Students who have finished their lunch may make one trip to take up their tray/throw away trash. Voices should be kept at a moderate level.
- 5 There should never be horseplay in the cafeteria, picking, jumping, running, etc.
- 6 The last minutes of a lunch period will be designated as "quiet down time"—in preparation to go back to classes.

LUNCH / BREAKFAST MENUS:

Lunch/Breakfast menus are printed and distributed to all students at the beginning of each month. These menus are also posted in the Virginian Leader and on Eastern's Homepage on the Internet at <http://eems.gilesk12.org>

GILES COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2022-2023 FOOD SERVICE PRICES

Elementary/Middle Schools

Pre-k through 7

Student Full: Lunch: 2.35 Breakfast: 1.75

Reduced: Lunch: .40 Breakfast: .30

Adult meals will be sold as ala carte.

Milk .50 cents

Ice Cream \$1.00

Student Planners/ Trackers: \$5.00

Student Homework Envelopes (Grade 1): \$2.00

Virginia's School Quality Profiles provide information about student achievement, college and career readiness, program completion, school safety, teacher quality and other topics of interest to parents and the general public. Report cards are available for parents, schools, school divisions and for the commonwealth on our school website under Parent Resources. Giles County Schools report all schools are accredited for the 2022 school year.

School Quality Profiles may be accessed at:

<https://schoolquality.virginia.gov/schools/eastern-elementary-middle>

Right to Know

On December 10, 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed into law. Section 1112(e)(1)(A) states that as a parent of a student in [school name], receiving Title I funds, you have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers instructing your child. Federal law requires the school division to provide you this information in a timely manner if you request it. Specifically, you have the right to request the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers:

- Whether the teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status because of special circumstances.
- Whether the teacher is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification or degree he/she received
- Whether paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if so, their qualifications.

If you would like to receive any of this information, please contact Lisa Mustain, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, either by phone at 540-921-1421, ext 16 or in writing at Giles County Schools, 151 School Road, Pearisburg VA, 24134. 100% of Giles County Schools Title I personnel meet state qualification and licensing for the grade level and subject in which they provide instruction.

Opt Out Policy

On December 10, 2015, the *Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015* (ESSA) was signed into law. Section 1112(e)(2) of ESSA states that parents of students in Title I schools have a right to know about state or division policies regarding student participation in any assessments mandated by ESSA, including any policy, procedure, or parental right to opt students out of such assessments. If you would like to receive information about this topic, please contact Lisa Mustain, Assistant Superintendent, either by phone at (540)921-1421, or in writing at 151 School Rd., Pearisburg VA, 24134.

All students enrolled in Virginia public schools are expected to take the applicable state tests. The *Virginia Board of Education Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* state:

“In kindergarten through eighth grade, where the administration of Virginia assessment program tests are required by the Board of Education, each student shall be expected to take the tests” and “each student in middle and secondary schools shall take all applicable end-of-course SOL tests following course instruction” ([8VAC20-131-30](#)).

The Virginia regulations do not provide for what is sometimes referred to as an “opt out policy” for students regarding the Virginia assessments. If parents refuse to have their student participate in one or more of the required Virginia assessments, they should be aware that their student's state assessment score report will reflect a score of “0” for any test that is refused.