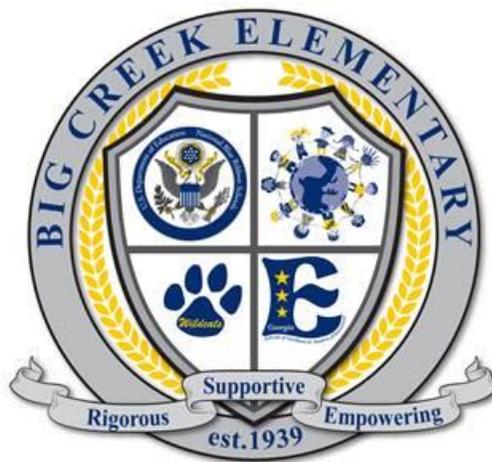


Welcome to Big Creek Elementary School

Georgia School of Excellence

National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence



Parent/Student Handbook

2018-2019

Principal, Laura Webb

Assistant Principal, Kelly Fuchs

Administrator Assistant, Jennifer Parker

1994 Peachtree Parkway

Cumming, GA, 30041

Phone: 770-887-4584

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2018-2019 Elementary School Parent/Student Handbook District Information

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Forsyth County Board of Education
Ann Crow, Chairperson
Wes McCall (District 1)
Kristin Morrissey (District 2)
Tom Cleveland (District 3)
Darla Light (District 4)
Nancy Roche (District 5), Vice Chairperson

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Index

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

ATTENDANCE

Absences

Consequences

Excuse Notes

Make-Up Work

Tardies or Early Check-Out

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

BUILDING HOURS

CAR RIDERS

CHANGES IN STUDENT INFORMATION/PARENT PORTAL

CLASS PLACEMENT

CLINIC AND STUDENT HEALTH

CODE OF CONDUCT

COMMUNICATION

COUNSELING SERVICE

CURRICULUM

DISCIPLINE

DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT REPORTING

DISMISSAL

DRESS CODE

DROPPING OFF FORGOTTEN ITEMS FOR STUDENTS

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

EQUITY

EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM

FEDERAL PROGRAMS

FERPA AND PPRA NOTICES

FIELD TRIPS

GRADING AND REPORTING

GUM

GUN FREE SCHOOLS ACT

HARASSMENT

HOMEWORK

LOCAL SCHOOL COUNCIL

LOST & FOUND

MAKE-UP WORK

MEDIA CENTER

OUT OF DISTRICT POLICY

OUTSIDE FOOD POLICY & LUNCH VISITORS

PARENT NOTICE OF TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

PARENT PORTAL

PTO-PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

PARTIES

PETS

PICTURES

PLACEMENT & PROMOTION

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS AND ADDRESS CHANGES

RESPONSIBLE USE GUIDELINES FOR FCS COMMUNITY

SAFETY AND HEALTH

- Campus Crime Stoppers
- Discipline Records
- Emergency Evacuation of Campus
- Emergency Notification to Parents/Guardians
 - School Closing and Delayed Opening Information
 - Early Dismissal Information
 - On-line Learning for School closures
- Emergency Response to Life Threatening Asthma or Allergic Reactions
- False Public Alarms
- Fitness Assessment
- Gang Related Activity
- Hospital-Homebound Services
- Infectious Disease
- Medications
- Possession of Weapon
- Progressive Discipline Procedures
- Student Searches
- Vision, Hearing and Dental Screening

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

- Students with Disabilities
- Section 504
 - Georgia Special Needs Scholarship
 - Public School Choice
 - Private School Choice Option

STANDARDIZED TESTING

STUDENT EVENTS

STUDENT MEALS

- Automated Meal Account
- Pre-Payment by Debit or Credit Card via the Internet
- Meal Charge Policy
- Returned Check Policy
- Cash Payments at Register
- Free and Reduced Price Meals Availability
- Proposed Meal Prices

STUDENT SEARCHES

TEXTBOOKS

TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION CHANGES (AFTER SCHOOL)

VISITATION

VOLUNTEERS

WITHDRAWAL

- Extended Travel
-

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM:

There is an on-site after-school program for childcare at Big Creek, which is operated by The Learning Bridge. Registration information can be obtained at Open House, from the receptionist at Big Creek, or by calling the Director of Learning Bridge (Shelia Lanier) at 404-661-1925.

ATTENDANCE:

Regular attendance is essential to success in school. As permitted under the State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.10, the Georgia Compulsory Education Law O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.1, and Forsyth County Board of Education policy, students may be excused for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness or attendance in school that endangers a student's health or the health of others.
2. A serious illness or death in a student's immediate family necessitating absence from school.
3. A court order or an order by a governmental agency, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces, mandating absence from school.
4. The observance of religious holidays, necessitating absence from school.
5. Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety.
6. A scheduled medical, dental or eye examination of the student.
7. Registering to vote or voting.
8. Visiting with a parent or legal guardian who is in the military service in the armed forces and has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support post. The student may be excused for a maximum of five (5) days per school year.

Students shall be counted present when they are serving as a page in the Georgia General Assembly. Students who are on foster care are to be counted present at school when attending court proceedings related to their care and placement.

Non-school related activities and vacations are considered unexcused.

Absences:

The parent/guardian should contact the teacher on the day the student's absence and must submit a note, fax or email to the teacher and attendance clerk within five (5) school days for the absence to be considered excused. Attendance Fax Number: **770-781-2247** or Attendance e-mail: bknoup@forsyth.k12.ga.us. The note must include the student's name, the date(s) of absence(s), and the reason for the absence. It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to be in communication with the student's teacher(s) and/or office staff when a student is absent, especially when it is for more than one day. The principal may require students to present appropriate medical or other documentation upon return to school for the purpose of validating that absences are excused.

In case of extended illness, hospitalization or injury, the parent should apply for hospital homebound service. Hospital homebound service should be applied for immediately when absences of ten (10) days or more are anticipated for the student.

- Student must be present more than half the day in order to participate in after school activities.

Consequences:

If a student has excessive absences, early check-outs, and/or late check-ins, the student and/or the parent may be referred to the School Social Worker, Juvenile Court, State Court, and/or Department of Family and Children Services. A parent/guardian who violates the compulsory attendance law shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof, shall be subject to a fine not less than \$25.00 and not greater than \$100.00, imprisonment not to exceed 30 days, community service, or any combination of such penalties at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction. Each day's absence from school is considered a violation.

Excuse Notes:

Parents are allowed to write notes excusing a total of 10 illnesses for which their child checked in late, out early or was absent. After 10 parent notes have been received, all other absences must have a doctor note to be excused. If a doctor's note is not received within 5 school days, the attendance event will be recorded as unexcused.

Make-up Work:

It is the student's responsibility to turn in make-up work when he/she is absent from school. Parents/guardians and students are encouraged to retrieve missed lessons and work from itslearning. The student has five (5) school days to complete make-up work. The teacher has the discretion to grant a longer period to make up work if there are extenuating circumstances.

Late Check-in or Early Check-out:

An unexcused late check-in or early check-out is defined as any time a student arrives late to school or leaves school early for a reason other than those defined by the State Board of Education as an excused absence. A combination of three unexcused late check-ins and /or early check-outs will be considered one unexcused absence. Students who miss more than half of the time in any class will be considered absent for that class period. When possible, medical and dental appointments should be made outside of school hours. If a student is being checked in or checked out for a doctor's appointment, a parent note, physician's note or appointment card is required within 5 school days to be considered excused. After the tenth late check-in or early check-out, a physician's note or appointment card is required within 5 school days to be considered excused.

Check-in: Parents must always accompany their child into the building and sign their child in upon late arrival after 7:40 a.m. For safety reasons parents should **not** drop a late student off in the parking lot and allow them to walk into school and check in by themselves. If the late check-in is due to illness or doctor appointment, a note must be submitted in order for it to be excused.

Check-out: If it is necessary for a student to check-out early due to illness, **the student must be assessed by the school nurse and meet assessment criteria for the school to excuse the absence.** Parents may submit a note to excuse an early check-out due to illness. Students who are frequently absent, tardy, or check out early from

school may be required by the school administration to provide medical documentation to validate any absence, tardy or early check-out as excused.

Only parents or individuals designated in Infinite Campus/Parent Portal will be permitted to check-out a student. Identification is required for safety purposes. **Students must be checked out prior to 1:45 p.m. After 1:45 p.m., students will be dismissed at 2:20pm through their regular way home. Changes in transportation may only be made by a hand written note that must be received no later than 1:00 on the day of the change.**

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS:

Based on the Forsyth County Food and Wellness Policy no outside food can be brought into the school. We do not allow students or parents to bring in outside treats, goodie bags, or party invitations (unless the invitations are for the entire class) to celebrate birthdays. If you would like to do something special in the classroom for your child on their birthday, you can check with the teacher to see if they would allow you to purchase ice cream from our school cafeteria for the entire class. The teacher will make that decision based on the dietary needs of the classroom. Another great way to celebrate your child at school is to purchase a book in our Media Center in their honor; a gift that will last for years to come. Our Media Specialist would be glad to help you with this process.

BUILDING HOURS:

To ensure safety, students should not arrive at school before 7:10 a.m. as no supervision is provided before this time. Should a student arrive before 7:10 a.m., a call will be placed to the parent. Students are to remain after school only for supervised extracurricular activities which have been approved by the administration. **Students will be placed in the Learning Bridge Afterschool Program if they are not picked up by 2:30 p.m. It will be the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to pay for this afterschool care.**

Office Hours: 7:10 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

School Hours: 7:40 a.m. – 2:20 p.m.

CAR RIDERS:

Morning Drop-off:

Students should **not** be dropped off **before 7:10 a.m. for any reason.** Staff will be on-duty to receive students at the sidewalk at 7:10 a.m. No one is assigned to monitor students before this time. Students should be ready to exit the car on the right side quickly. Book bags and other materials should be on hand for the child to pick up as they exit the car, not in the trunk. If your child needs assistance, please park your car in a designated parking space and walk with your child into the building. **Parents or guardians must sign in students who arrive after 7:40 a.m.** For safety reasons, the morning car rider drop-off line is one lane. Please do not go around cars in the car line. Parents are asked **not** to park behind cars in the parking lot and walk students across the lot. In the event that parents need to accompany students to class, they must park in a designated parking space, cross at the crosswalk and sign in at the main office.

Afternoon Pick-up:

If you must pick up your child early for an appointment, checkouts must occur before 1:45 p.m.; otherwise, pickups must occur through the car line. Please plan after-school activities accordingly. Please do not attempt to pick up students in the lobby or in the bus line. Anyone checking a child out of school must show a valid photo identification, and must be listed on the child's Parent Portal account. Parents will receive a car rider number which they should hang from the rear view mirror. Please stay in your car and move forward as the lines move. Students will come out of the building when their number is called.

CHANGES IN STUDENT INFORMATION:

In order to keep your child's records current, please notify the office immediately in writing of a change in address. With changes in address, proper proof of residency is required (i.e. mortgage settlement/lease agreement AND a utility bill). Changes in your home telephone number, cell phone number, other contacts, employer and work phone number must be made by the parent or guardian through Parent Portal (refer to the Parent Portal Section of this handbook). When we have an emergency, it is imperative that we are able to reach an adult caretaker immediately.

CLASS PLACEMENT:

Each year, the administration works collaboratively with teachers, test/assessment data and other relevant information to develop a balanced class placement for all students. This is a multiple-criterion decision that is based on a variety of research-based best practices as well as differentiated instructional considerations.

Should a parent have a concern regarding a student placement, the following procedure will begin after the first 15 days, allowing the student time to settle into the new environment. This class placement process generally lasts 3 to 4 weeks to allow a success plan to be developed and implemented with fidelity.

- A minimum of 2 teacher-parent conferences directly focused on the area of concern with administrative support and presence.
- At that initial and follow up conference, a written success plan to address concerns from that point forward will be drafted and agreed upon by all parties to protect the child from unnecessary transition.
- Follow up by administration via contact with both parents and teacher, to ensure the sustained efforts and success of the plan are moving forward.
- Final assessment of progress during this period regarding the area of concern by the principal.

Adjustments to any student's assigned classroom will be by extreme exception and only considered by the principal after it has been clearly determined that joint efforts were made by both parties to resolve any concern. Furthermore, there must be clear evidence that a move to another classroom will directly address the lingering concern after the above attempts have been made to resolve the issue.

CLINIC AND STUDENT HEALTH:

Big Creek's clinic is staffed during school hours by Ms. Gillian Sampson, a Registered Nurse. In case of illness or injury, a student will be cared for temporarily by the nurse or a designated member of the school staff. School personnel will render first aid treatment only. If emergency medical treatment is necessary, the parents will be contacted. If parents are not available, an ambulance may be called at the parents' expense. Remember, an emergency telephone number where parents can be reached must be on file at the school or in Parent Portal (the student's online information database).

All medication must be delivered **BY THE PARENT** to the clinic and administered in the clinic by the school nurse or a designated member of the staff. All medication must be in its original packaging. No medication will be given without written instructions from the parent and/or doctor. Please refer to the Medication Procedures available in the office if you have questions.

Illness:

All students must go through the school nurse if they are not feeling well and think they should go home. The nurse will contact the parents, and a decision will be reached based on the medical situation. Parents should notify the school nurse of any chronic health conditions. Students with chronic health issues need to have necessary medication, etc., available at school and need to take responsibility in managing the condition by working with the nurse. Medication forms are available at the Forsyth County website or at the school. A conference with the school nurse about the medical condition is encouraged. We want to keep our students well and in school.

In an effort to decrease our communicable diseases, students should be free from vomiting, diarrhea, and fever reducing medication for 24 hours before returning to school.

CODE OF CONDUCT:

Each student in Forsyth County Schools will be issued a *Code of Conduct*. The *Code of Conduct* covers rules for student behavior and dress as well as consequences for failure to comply. Parents should carefully review this document with their child. All parents must sign that they have received a copy of the *Code of Conduct* ([Forsyth County Schools Code of Conduct](#)).

COMMUNICATION

Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to regularly check each of their learning courses for information such as lessons, assessments, important dates, etc. Within each course, the teacher maintains a Planner where this information can be found. Student grades and attendance are available in ParentPortal, <http://www.campus.forsyth.k12.ga.us>, which is also used for school and district newsletters distribution lists. The district invites you to stay connected by visiting its website, www.forsyth.k12.ga.us (which includes language translation options), following on social media (@FCSchoolsGA on Twitter, @FCSchools on Facebook, and @ForsythCoSchoolsGA on Instagram), subscribing on YouTube (@ForsythCountySchools) and to download the updated mobile app, Forsyth County Schools GA.

Each classroom and special area teacher also has a telephone in the room. **Please do not expect the teacher to answer the telephone while students are in the room.** Please leave a voice mail

message and the teacher will return your call, if possible, within 24 hours.

COUNSELING SERVICE:

Big Creek has a full-time counselor available to provide individual or small group counseling to students and to conduct classroom guidance lessons on a regular schedule. The counselor works with school personnel to foster a positive learning environment. The counselor may also assist parents in obtaining special school and/or community services. In addition to other programs, the counselor conducts lessons on Good Touch, Bad Touch, Red Ribbon Week (drug awareness), and bullying prevention throughout the year. A large portion of the curriculum is delivered through our Think Lab special.

CURRICULUM:

Providing quality work for students every day in every classroom is the primary focus of all instructional programs in Forsyth County. Our system's Standards and Benchmarks provide a rigorous and challenging instructional program for all students at every level. To learn more about the variety of curriculum services available please visit the County website at www.forsyth.k12.ga.us. In addition, content curriculum and parent activities are also available on the teacher's itslearning page.

DISCIPLINE:

Big Creek Elementary believes that self-discipline is an important part of a child's development. Self-discipline underlies the whole educational structure and is the training that develops character, orderliness, efficiency, and self-control. Developing self-discipline occurs when students learn to follow common rules and make wise decisions. Proper behavior by each student allows all students the maximum opportunity to play, learn and grow in a school environment.

The following are expected behaviors at Big Creek Elementary by all students:

1. Use quiet voices inside the school building, including the lunchroom.
2. Take care of all school property and equipment by using it carefully.
3. Walk inside the school building.
4. Respect all citizens at Big Creek.
5. Keep the school clean and litter-free.
6. Sale or trade of items by students, including lunch items, is strictly forbidden.
7. Items such as toys, which distract from the educational environment, are not permitted including lunch and recess.
8. Use of appropriate language is required.

School behavior policies are implemented for the safety of students and the maintenance of an orderly learning environment. Administrators are directed to follow these policies. Students who disregard school rules are made aware of the consequences to their actions. Parents will be notified if the use of these consequences does not bring about a successful change in behavior. The Forsyth County *Code of Conduct* pamphlet is distributed to all students during Open House and contains details of school and system discipline procedures. Parents are expected to read this pamphlet and inform their child(ren) of the pertinent information. Student expectations are outlined below.

Big Creek Elementary School Student Expectations

A. We take responsibility for learning.

This means:

- We arrive to class on time
- We are prepared for class.
- We demonstrate a serious and responsible attitude in daily work.
- Homework is carefully and thoughtfully completed and on time.

B. We try to settle our differences in a peaceful manner.

This means:

- We respect other people's property and personal space.
- We do not physically or verbally fight with other children.
- We do not take anything that does not belong to us.

C. We follow the directions of adults in charge, the first time given.

This means:

- We look at the speaker.
- We are respectful to teachers or adults in charge, including substitutes and lunchroom supervisors.

D. We are sensitive to the needs and feelings of others.

This means:

- We use appropriate language at all times.
- We do not bully or tease other children.
- We never boo or whistle in the auditorium.
- We are willing to help each other.
- We are friendly and courteous.

E. We are expected to move safely through the school.

This means:

- No playing around in the bathrooms or hallways.
- No running in the lunchroom, hallways, or classrooms.

DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT REPORTING:

FCS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability or gender in employment decisions or educational programs and activities, including its athletic programs. Any student, employee, applicant for employment, parent or other individual who believes he or she has been subjected to harassment or discrimination by other students or employees of the school district based upon any of the factors listed above should promptly report the same to the principal of the school or the appropriate coordinator as listed below, who will implement the board's discriminatory complaints or harassment procedures. Students may also report harassment or discrimination to their school counselor. Equity coordinators for the school system are:

Title VI

Nathan Turner (Students)
Cindy Salloum (Personnel)

Title IX

Nathan Turner (Students)
Cindy Salloum (Personnel)

ADA and 504

Sarah Taylor (Students)
Cindy Salloum (Personnel)

Gender Equity

Cindy Salloum (Students)

Community Based Work Programs

Valery Lowe

Equity coordinators may be contacted at the Forsyth County Board of Education and Professional Development Center, 1120 Dahlenega Highway, Cumming, Georgia 30040, 770.887.2461. Students and employees will not be subjected to retaliation for reporting such harassment or discrimination. A copy of the discriminatory complaints procedure under Forsyth County School District Policy GAAA/JAA (Equal Opportunity/Discriminatory Complaints) or under Policy IDFA (Gender Equity in Sports) is located in the school district policy manual that is available at www.forsyth.k12.ga.us/boe > policies and procedures.

DISMISSAL:

At dismissal time, bus riders are loaded onto their assigned buses by teachers, and car riders wait to be picked up at the designated car dismissal area. Dismissal begins at 2:20 p.m.; therefore, students signed out before 2:20 p.m. will be recorded as having an early checkout.

Parents picking up children in car pool are to remain in their cars and wait for their child to be escorted to their car by a teacher. To expedite the car pool process, please have your car pool sign hanging on the rear view mirror of your car. **If you do NOT have your car tag displayed, you will need to go to the office to show your ID or purchase another tag (\$5).** Parents are not to walk to the car dismissal area and take their children back across the crowded parking lot. This is for your child's safety, as well as yours. Once your child is loaded in the car, please pull the car tag down indicating you are ready to leave.

Elementary school administrators and transportation staff have determined that for safety reasons, changes in bus transportation WILL NOT be permitted in Forsyth County Elementary Schools except in cases of true emergency. If such an emergency occurs, a bus pass will be presented to the driver, but only after it is approved by the school administration.

Students who board a bus other than their assigned bus or request to get off the bus other than their assigned stop will be returned to school where the parent will be called to pick them up.

***If your child must be checked out of school early for an appointment, please be sure that s/he is checked out prior to 1:45 p.m. Students must go their regular way home. Please note this and plan afterschool activities accordingly. Please do not wait in the lobby or at the front of the building to pick up students after dismissal.**

DRESS CODE:

The school dress code is outlined in the Forsyth County *Code of Conduct*. Appropriate dress reduces distractions. Dress codes apply to students, teachers, and parents in the building. Please note that parents will be called to bring a change of clothes if a student is not appropriately dressed

by definitions in the Forsyth County *Code of Conduct*. We expect that all of our adult visitors will be models for our students in abiding by our dress code.

DROPPING OFF FORGOTTEN ITEMS FOR STUDENTS:

Please make every effort to establish a routine for bringing necessary items to school each morning. In the event that your child forgets an item that must be brought to school, please bring that item to the designated table in the main hallway outside the front office with your child's name and the teacher's name attached. The item must be logged in the notebook provided on the table. Teachers will be contacted via e-mail at 9:30am each day to pick up items when there is an instructional break. We will not interrupt the learning environment to take personal items to classrooms. This includes lunches and homework (we cannot guarantee teachers will receive messages regarding forgotten items). The front office will not be able to notify teachers of items dropped off after 9:30 a.m.

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS:

All students who are minors shall be admitted to schools of this system only upon being enrolled by (1) a parent of the student; (2) an adult who has been awarded legal custody of the student by the court in this state or any other state; or (3) an adult with whom the student actually resides and who is exercising parental control over the student pursuant to the consent of the parents (educational guardianship). Children who will be five years of age on or before September 1st will be admitted to Kindergarten. Those who are six years of age on or before September 1st may be admitted to first grade. Students entering any grade from private school or home school may be evaluated for appropriate instructional placement. **All registrations will take place only at the Hill Center located at 136 Elm Street, Cumming. You may call 678-947-0863 to make an appointment or by visiting the Forsyth County School website at www.forsyth.k12.ga.us and clicking on Registration.**

The following information is needed for registration of students in school for the first time:

1. **Certified copy of the student's birth certificate**
2. **Immunization form 3231 School Certificate of Immunization as proof of immunizations including Hepatitis B and Varicella (chicken pox)**
3. **Vision, Hearing, and Dental exam certificate (Health Department form 3300)**
4. **Copy of Social Security Card or notarized objection form**
5. **Proof of residency (utility bill/initiation of utility service and one of the following: lease agreement, deed, closing statement, mortgage statement, or property tax statement) in parent's name.**
OR
6. **Forsyth County Schools Affidavit of Residency with notarized signatures of landlord and parent. The landlord must also provide the documents listed above.**

EQUITY:

FCS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or sex in any of its employment practices, educational programs, child feeding program or any other service or activity. It is the policy of the Forsyth County Board of Education to comply fully with the requirements of Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973,

and the Americans with Disabilities Act and all accompanying regulations. Any student, employee, applicant for employment or other person alleging a violation shall promptly notify the principal or the designated school system coordinator.

EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM:

Students who are eligible for extra instruction in reading and math in grades 4-5 may be asked to attend school after regular dismissal time. The Extended Day Program is offered two days a week beginning in January or February. Parents will be notified if their child should attend. Student eligibility is based on teacher recommendation and current academic data.

FEDERAL PROGRAMS:

Forsyth County Schools Complaint Procedures:

Parents, students, staff, private schools, and the general public have the right to file a complaint regarding the following Federal Programs: Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies; Title I, Part B, Subpart 3: Even Start Family Literacy; Title I, Part C: Education of Migrant Children; Title I, Part D: Prevention and Intervention; Programs for Children and Youth Who Are Neglected, Delinquent, or At-Risk; Title II, Part A: Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund; Title II, Part D: Enhancing Education Through Technology; Title III, Part A: English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement; Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers; Title VI, Part A, Subpart 1, Section 6111: State Assessment Program; Title VI, Part A, Subpart 1, Section 6112: Enhanced Assessment Instruments Competitive Grant Program; Title VI, Part B, Subpart 2: Rural and Low-Income Schools; Title IX, Part E, Subpart 1, Section 9503: Complaint Process for Participation of Private School Children; Title X, Part C – McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

Any and all complaints should be addressed with local school staff and/or administrators. If no resolution is determined, a complaint may be made in writing and signed by the complainant. Therefore, for complaints originating at the local level, a complaint should not be filed with the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) until every effort has been made to resolve the issue through local written complaint procedures.

The complaint must include the following:

- (1) A statement that Forsyth County Schools has violated a requirement of a federal statute or regulation that applies to an applicable program.
- (2) The date on which the violation occurred.
- (3) The facts on which the statement is based and the specific requirement allegedly violated (include citation to the federal statute or regulation).
- (4) A list of the names and telephone numbers of individuals who can provide additional information.
- (5) Whether a complaint has been filed with any other government agency, and if so, which agency.
- (6) Copies of all applicable documents supporting the complainant's position.
- (7) The address of the complainant.

The complaint must be addressed to:

Federal Program Director (for program the complaint is filed against)

Forsyth County Schools
1120 Dahlonega Hwy.
Cumming, GA 30040

NOTICE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND ELIGIBLE STUDENT OF RIGHTS UNDER THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) AND THE PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA):

Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) (the “Act”), parents/guardians have a right to:

1. Inspect and review, within 45 days of a request, the education records of a student who is their child, or in the case of a student who is eighteen (18) years of age or older, or those who are emancipated, their own education records. Parents/guardians or eligible students should submit to their principal a written request identifying the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and provide notice of such arrangements.
2. Request the amendment of the student’s education records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy or other rights. To request the school district to amend a record, parent/guardian or eligible students should write the school principal, specify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy or other rights. If the district decides not to amend the record, it will notify the parent/guardian or eligible students of the decision and inform them of their right to a hearing. Additional information regarding the hearing procedure will be provided with the notification of the right to a hearing.
3. Consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that the Act and the regulations promulgated pursuant to the Act authorize disclosure without consent. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is to school officials with legitimate educational interest. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member; a member of the school board; a person with whom the district has contracted to perform a specific task (such as attorney, auditor, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee (such as a disciplinary or grievance committee). A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility. Upon request, the school district forwards educational records without prior consent to another school in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.
4. If you feel a violation of FERPA rights has occurred, visit www.forsyth.k12.ga.us/ferpa to submit a parent complaint form.

FERPA Directory Information Notice:

FCS has designated the following information as directory information:

- Name
- Address,
- Photograph
- Grade Level,

- Date of Birth,
- Mailing address,
- Email addresses specifically to school approved yearbook companies, photography companies, and graduation service companies
- Enrollment status
- Dates of Attendance,
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports,
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams,
- Degrees, honors and awards received,
- Major field of study, and
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended

In addition, two federal laws require school systems receiving federal financial assistance to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the name, address, and telephone numbers unless parents/guardians have advised the school system that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent. Parents/guardians have the right to refuse to allow the above information to be designated as directory information and to refuse to allow it to be disclosed to the public upon request without your prior written consent. If parents/guardians wish to exercise this right (Opt-Out), they must notify the principal of the school, in writing, within 10 days of the first day of school or of their enrollment date.

Parents/guardians are also notified that students may be photographed, videotaped, or interviewed by the news media at school or some school activity or event unless a parent/guardian notifies the principal of the school, in writing, to opt-out within 10 days of the first day of school or of their enrollment date. The principal will take reasonable steps to control the media's access to students. However, parent/guardian submission of a written objection does not constitute a guarantee that their student will not be interviewed in circumstances which are not within the knowledge or control of the principal.

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) Notice:

No student shall be required to submit to a survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
- Sex behavior or attitudes;
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent; or
- Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program), without prior written consent of the parent or eligible student.

A parent/guardian of a student may, upon request, inspect any survey created by a third party containing one or more of the items listed as (1) through (8) above before the survey is administered or distributed by a school to a student and may choose to opt the student out of participation in the survey. The Superintendent shall develop procedures for: (1) granting a request by a parent/guardian for reasonable access to such survey within a reasonable period of time after the request is received, and (2) making arrangements to protect student privacy in the event of the administration or distribution of a survey to a student containing one or more of the items listed as (1) through (8). The requirements of PPRA do not apply to a survey administered to a student in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

A parent/guardian of a student may, upon request, inspect any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for the student. The Superintendent shall develop procedures for granting a request by a parent/guardian parent for reasonable access to instructional material within a reasonable period of time after the request is received.

Parents/guardians shall be notified prior to the administration of physical examinations or screenings that the school may administer to students. This notice shall offer the parent/guardian the opportunity to opt the student out of any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is (1) required as a condition of attendance; (2) administered by the school and scheduled by the school in advance; and (3) not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student, or of other students.

Parents/guardians shall be notified prior to the administration of physical examinations or screenings that the school may administer to students. This notice shall offer the parent/guardian the opportunity to opt the student out of any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is (1) required as a condition of attendance; (2) administered by the school and scheduled by the school in advance; and (3) not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student, or of other students.

At the discretion of the principal, schools may disclose student name, grade, mailing and email addresses for purposes of school photography, yearbook and graduation-related services. Parents/guardians may opt-out by notifying the principal of the school, in writing, within 10 days of the first day of school or of their enrollment date.

FIELD TRIPS:

Various field trips are scheduled throughout the year. Parents will be notified by the teacher of scheduled field trips. If a student is absent on the day of a field trip, reimbursement for cost of the field trip (if any) will not be possible.

GRADING AND REPORTING:

Students in grades K-5 are graded on a nine-week grading period. Report cards will be sent home at the end of each grading period.

Kindergarten - Third Grade:

Students in grades Kindergarten through Third Grade will be evaluated using a *standards-based* report card. In standards-based grading, student progress is measured by determining student progress toward achievement of grade level standards. Rather than receiving one grade per content

area, your child will receive a breakdown of performance by standard cluster enabling you to more readily identify areas of academic strength and opportunities for improvement. In addition, the reports include a three-point rubric defining work ethic and behaviors that impact student achievement.

4th Grade PLUS and 5th Grade PLUS:

Students in grades 4 and 5 will receive a report card that includes both a traditional numeric average and a standards-based grade for English/Language Arts and Math. The traditional numeric average will be determined by averaging the summative scores of assessments which are given at the end of each unit of study. The standards-based grades reflect formative scores that measure the progress of student learning during each unit of study. Science and Social Studies will only receive traditional numeric grades. In addition, the reports include a three-point rubric defining work ethic and behaviors that impact student achievement.

4th and 5th Grade PLUS Summative Retest Procedure:

Students will be given the option of a retest on any summative assessment, if their summative grade is not acceptable to the student, parent or teacher. There will be one opportunity for a summative retest and a required commitment by the student to attend reteaching sessions and/or complete assignments designed to ensure mastery of standards. The reteaching sessions and assignments will be determined by the teacher. The expectation is that any student that does not pass the initial summative test will attend reteaching sessions, complete assignments and retake the summative assessment.

To learn more about elementary grading and reporting, please visit the Forsyth County Schools website at www.forsyth.k12.ga.us.

GUM:

Big Creek has a NO gum policy.

HARASSMENT:

The school district forbids sexual, racial and other harassment of all employees and students while at school, in the work place or at any school event or activity. Any student, employee, applicant for employment or other person alleging a violation shall promptly notify the principal or the designated coordinator for the school system.

HOMEWORK:

The faculty and staff of Big Creek Elementary endorse and encourage the use of homework and reading practice to promote student learning. Students develop self-discipline by setting aside time after school hours to complete homework assignments. The purpose of homework includes increasing student achievement, involving parents in the learning process, and encouraging self-directed, independent learning. Assigning quality homework offers students opportunities for enrichment, practice of basic skills, and extension of instructional objectives.

Teachers have an obligation to assign homework, as necessary, to meet instructional objectives and to monitor student progress. Whether it is practice of skills and facts, research, or application activities, homework is valuable only when it connects with classroom activities and matches student's needs.

Homework will be purposeful. Through a strong home/school partnership homework has the potential to increase learning time and student achievement, which is our ultimate goal.

The following is a guideline for the amount of time that should be spent on homework each night plus 20 minutes of reading:

Kindergarten	5-10 minutes
First Grade	10-20 minutes
Second Grade	15-30 minutes
Third Grade	30-40 minutes
Fourth Grade	40-50 minutes
Fifth Grade	50-60 minutes

If your student is spending longer than this on a regular basis, please talk with the teacher about the excess. Unfinished class work assignments may be extending the time your child spends doing homework!

LOCAL SCHOOL COUNCIL:

The LSC was established by Georgia law to “bring communities and schools closer together in the spirit of cooperation to solve difficult education problems, improve academic achievement, provide support for teachers and administrators, and bring parents into the school-based decision-making process...to provide advice, recommendations, and assistance and represent the community of parents and businesses.” Elections will be held in the spring to select members of this council. The Local School Council replaces LSAC. Parents will still have a forum for their questions and for learning about school programs through parent representatives on LSC. Meetings will be announced and are open to the public. A parent will lead and moderate the group.

LOST & FOUND:

Found items of clothing and lunch boxes will be collected in a designated lost and found location. Items such as jewelry, car keys, etc. are given to the office. Unclaimed items are donated to charity on a quarterly basis. Everything brought to school should be **labeled** so that lost articles can easily be returned to the owner.

MAKE-UP WORK:

It is the student’s responsibility to turn in make-up work when he/she is absent from school. Parents and students are encouraged to use itslearning to retrieve make-up work daily. The student has five (5) school calendar days to make up work for every day missed. The teacher has the discretion to grant a longer period to make up work, if there are extenuating circumstances. It is the student’s responsibility to make arrangements with the teacher within two days of returning to school to make-up test(s). Students with unexcused absences will not be permitted to make up work unless extenuating circumstances exist as determined by the principal or the principal’s designee.

If your child is going to miss school because of a trip or other unexcused absence, the teacher likely will not have work available prior to the time of the absence. If this is the case, your child may be allowed to make up the work upon their return to school. ***However, the teacher is not***

required to provide make-up work for an unexcused absence. Most work cannot be made up with a book or paper-and-pencil assignment, and absences of any type impact student learning and/or grades.

Students suspended out-of-school are responsible for securing assignments and completing assignments by the time they return to school. Failure to do so will result in loss of credit for the assignments missed during the out-of-school suspension.

MEDIA CENTER:

The mission of the Big Creek Media Center is to serve our students, teachers and families by:

- Providing an environment that supports the curriculum and stimulates learning.
- Providing flexible scheduling that best meets student and staff needs.
- Providing up-to-date print and electronic resources that support the curriculum.
- Providing ongoing exposure to literature in a variety of formats that stimulate reading enrichment.
- Providing multiple opportunities for collaboration to strengthen information literacy skills and impact student achievement.
- Providing an atmosphere where students can create and publish their work using a variety of technologies.

Students may check out two print and digital resources for two weeks at a time. **Damaged or lost materials must be paid for before the student will be allowed to check out any further items.**

OUTSIDE FOOD POLICY & LUNCH VISITORS:

We welcome parents and visitors to eat lunch with students during their class' allotted lunch time. However, due to the Forsyth County Food and Wellness Policy, **no outside food from restaurants** is allowed in the building for either the student or lunch visitor. Visitors are allowed to bring lunches made at home for both the student and themselves. In order for our students to learn new schedules and daily routines, we ask lunch visitors please refrain from visiting for the first two weeks of school. For kindergarten, however, we ask that you wait until after the Labor Day Holiday to visit for lunch. Also, during Milestones Testing (usually in April), lunch visitors will be asked to reschedule their visits for after the testing period has ended. *Also, parents will not be allowed to eat outside with their children due to new security procedures.

PARENT NOTICE OF TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS:

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act, parents may request the following information:

Whether the student's teacher –

- Has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- Is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and,
- Is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.

Whether the child is provided service by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If parents/guardians wish to request information concerning their child's teacher's qualification, contact the Human Resources Department at 770.887.2461 [Section 1111(h)(6)]

PARENT PORTAL:

Forsyth County Schools requires all parents to sign up for a Parent Portal Account. Here you will find access to information about your children(s) school attendance, grades, class assignments and more. Changes to parent and student contact information such as, home phone, cell phone or work phone numbers must be updated by the parent in Parent Portal. Additionally, this is where other contacts designated by the parent or guardian must also be entered and updated. **No student check outs will be allowed to any person not listed on your Parent Portal account.**

First time users will need an Activation Code. Please come to the office at Big Creek and provide us with a picture ID in order to receive your activation code. Once you receive this you will be able to register for your Parent Portal Account.

1. Go to www.forsyth.k12.ga.us
2. Click on Parent Portal
3. Click on the orange help button
4. First time users enter Activation Code
5. Existing account holders log-in and enter your username and password.

If you forget your user ID or password, please come to the front office with your government issued ID. The office staff will request that your account be reset from the county office.

PTO – PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION:

PTO is a group of parents, teachers, and other concerned adults who join together to support the school. The PTO plays an integral role in the success of the school. They sponsor programs for students such as Fall Movie Night, Father-Daughter Dance, Mother-Son Event, Bingo Night, cultural events and the Impressions art competition. In addition, the PTO supports teachers and staff by making grants available and by providing volunteer assistance. Major projects which otherwise might not have been possible have been funded through the efforts of the PTO.

As a parent/guardian at the school, you are already a member. We hope that every parent will become an involved PTO member by volunteering at any of the many events throughout the year. PTO meetings are held both during the day and in the evening. Many of our PTO programs include musical performances by our students. Meetings and special activities are announced through the school newsletter, website, and the PTO newsletter. The main PTO email address is president@bigcreekespto.com

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES:

The school system calendar schedules 2 dates in the fall for parent conferences. Students are released early on these days at 11:50 a.m. so that parents may schedule conference times with their child's teacher(s). Parents will be notified of conference times in advance. Additionally, parents may request a conference at any time during the school year by leaving a message on the teacher's voice mail or sending a request through email.

PARTIES:

Elementary classes may schedule two parties a year. The teacher may choose on which two occasions to have a class party. Please cooperate with the teacher by not expecting more than two parties. Some themes or units of study may have a culminating activity to celebrate achievements.

PETS:

No pets of any kind are allowed at school without permission. Teachers may give special permission for pets to be brought to school as part of a special display or activity with the principal's approval. Pets must be taken home immediately after the activity. However, under no circumstance is a potentially dangerous pet to be brought to school. Pets can never be transported on the school bus. We must be considerate of students who have allergies.

PICTURES:

Individual student pictures will be taken two times each year (fall and spring). One of the fall pictures will appear in the yearbook. Group pictures will be made in the spring. All questions regarding pictures should be directed to the photography company.

PLACEMENT & PROMOTION:

Grade placement is determined by the overall academic and social progress of the student, with emphasis placed on the mastery of reading and math skills. Placement decisions for third and fifth grade may also be determined by the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment. Students entering Forsyth County Schools from private or home study schools may be evaluated to determine appropriate placement. Initial placement is temporary until such assessment is completed. Placement of kindergarten students will be done according to state and county guidelines.

Conferences are held in late spring to discuss placement of students who are not meeting minimum promotion requirements. Local and state requirements for promotion are followed in deciding appropriate grade placement.

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS AND ADDRESS CHANGES:

Proof of residence is required when a student initially enrolls in a school and whenever indication of a change of residence occurs. Change of Address forms are available at the school or at www.forsyth.k12.ga.us/Page/48193

In the event of an address change, the Registration Center staff, principal or principal's designee shall accept the following records as proof of residency:

1. A current utility bill (gas, electric, water, telephone, or cable) *and* a current and valid lease or rental agreement signed by the owner of the residence. Records must include the name and address of the parent/guardian.

OR

2. A current utility bill (gas, electric, water, telephone, or cable) *and* one of the following documents establishing home ownership – deed, closing statement, mortgage statement,

or property tax statement. Records must include the name and address of the parent/guardian.

OR

3. A Forsyth County Schools Affidavit of Residency, if a parent/guardian is unable to provide the records listed above. The notarized affidavit shall be completed and signed by the parent/guardian, as well as the legal owner or landlord of the property where the student and parent/guardian reside. The affidavit will be in effect until the parent/guardian provides proof of residence as required by the Forsyth County Board of Education. The owner of the property must also provide a current utility bill (gas, electric, water, telephone, or cable) and one of the following documents establishing home ownership – deed, closing statement, mortgage statement, or property tax statement. Records must include the name and service address of the parent/guardian.

A school system representative may visit the address given by any parent/guardian to verify residency.

A family that rents a home in Forsyth County, while owning a home in another county or in a different school attendance zone within Forsyth County solely for the purpose of proving residence for their children to attend school in Forsyth County will be considered in violation of this policy. Students who are illegally enrolled shall be immediately withdrawn. Violations of this policy may be pursued in court.

In cases of separation or divorce, the student will be deemed a resident of the parent/guardian who is indicated in legal agreement or the court's final decree to have physical custody. In cases of joint physical custody by parents, the student will be deemed to be a resident with the parent/guardian with whom the student resides overnight during the majority of the school week.

RESPONSIBLE USE GUIDELINES FOR FORSYTH COUNTY SCHOOLS' COMMUNITY

The mission of Forsyth County Schools (FCS) is to prepare and inspire all students to contribute and excel. The district provides ongoing student instruction that develops graduated digital citizenship for using technology as a tool to achieve this mission. Information and Communication Technology is an integral part of FCS' curriculum across subjects and grades in developmentally appropriate ways, and it is aligned to the competencies listed in the district's Learner Profile which includes: seek knowledge and understanding; think critically and solve problems; listen, communicate and interact effectively; exhibit strong personal qualities; and engage and compete in a global environment.

I understand that using digital devices (whether personal or school owned) and the FCS network is a privilege, and when I use them according to the Responsible Use Guidelines I will keep that privilege.

All members of Forsyth County Schools' community agree to follow the Forsyth County Schools Code of Conduct, school rules and commit to the following responsible use guidelines.

I will:

- Use digital devices, networks and software in school for educational purposes and activities.
- Keep my personal information (including home/mobile phone number, mailing address, and user password) and that of others private.
- Show respect for myself and others when using technology including social media.
- Give acknowledgement to others for their ideas and work.
- Report inappropriate use of technology immediately.

The Responsible Use Procedure will be reviewed each school year together with students and teachers and will provide a springboard for teaching and learning around topics such as Internet safety, digital citizenship and ethical use of technology.

** Developed based on Responsible Use Procedures of Canyon County Schools and the Holy Spirit Roman Catholic Separate Regional Division.*

SAFETY AND HEALTH:

Campus Crime Stoppers: Students are encouraged to report information about weapons, drugs, threats of violence or other dangerous or harmful situations to the principal, an assistant principal, a teacher or another trusted adult. Anonymous TIPS can also be reported to FCS' Crime Stoppers by one of three ways.

- ANONYMOUS TEXT message to "crimes" (274637) and begin your message with "FCSS."
- ANONYMOUS Web tip at www.forsyth.k12.ga.us/crime
- Call the ANONYMOUS tip line at 770-888-3466 ext. 1 or 3.

Anonymous reports can also be made by calling the State of Georgia School Safety Hotline Number, 1-877-SAY-STOP (1-877-729-7867). Callers will not be asked to reveal their identity.

Discipline Records:

Forsyth County Schools will facilitate the transfer of discipline records to any public or private school in which a student is enrolled or seeks, intends, or is instructed to enroll on a full- or part-time basis in the school.

Emergency Evacuation of Campus:

In the event of a crisis situation that requires the evacuation of the school campus, students and staff will be transported to a safe, secured site. As soon as the safety and security of students is assured, traffic control is established and checkout preparations are made, parents/guardians will be notified as described above about family reunification procedures.

Emergency Notification to Parents:

Parents/guardians are requested to make arrangements in advance for taking care of their children when schools are closed for emergency reasons. The plans should include arrangements for school closings, delayed openings and early dismissals.

FCS closings will be announced on the local and metro media outlets, the school system website, www.forsyth.k12.ga.us, social media (www.facebook.com/FCSchools and www.twitter.com/FCSchoolsGA), and on the automated voice service at (770) 887-2461. Subscribers to Parent Portal and FCS newsletters will also receive an email notifying them on

closings or delays. Please note that you should verify the information by checking two sources, especially when relying on social media for information. Fake social media accounts with school and/or the district names and logos violate copyright laws but unfortunately are common. FCS' official social media accounts have been in existence for many years and therefore have a long list of tweets and followers, while fake accounts have significantly less.

- **School Closing and Delayed Opening Information:** School closings or delays will be announced as described above before 5:30 a.m. If school opening is delayed, please follow the same routine/schedule as normal, but push back the start time by two hours. On delayed days, breakfast is not served, lunch will be served and school will dismiss at the regular time.
- **Early Dismissal Information:** Early dismissals will be announced as described above. In the event of inclement weather, notification will be as soon as the decision is made. In the event of a school crisis, parents/guardians will be notified after the safety and security of students is assured.
- **Online Learning for School Closures:** In the event of a school closure, Forsyth County Schools will recover instructional time lost by utilizing asynchronous (not at the same time) online learning using itslearning. Each teacher will instruct students on where to find school closure activities in their itslearning course, and teachers will have lessons posted in itslearning no later than 9:00am on the day school is closed. Students should begin working on their lessons on the day school is closed when possible. If students have questions about their lessons, they may contact teachers during their posted office hours. Student work is due three school days upon returning to school.

Emergency Response to Life Threatening Asthma or Allergic Reactions:

FCS partners with District II Public Health to implement a program of the emergency response to life threatening asthma or systemic allergic reactions (anaphylaxis) or opioid overdose. School staff members are trained to assess the clinical signs, call 911 and administer the medications (Benadryl, epinephrine injection nebulized bronchodilator, or Naloxone). The student must be transported to the nearest emergency room for evaluation and treatment.

False Public Alarms:

Bomb and other terroristic threats, fire alarms and prank 911 calls will not be tolerated. Consequences will include a parent/guardian conference, immediate suspension, referral to law enforcement, and referral to a disciplinary tribunal hearing. If found guilty by a tribunal, the student is also subject to expulsion, long term suspension and restitution. The tribunal will impose restitution for all expenses incurred for lost instructional time and the restoration of the instructional process. Restitution may include but will not be limited to costs for: salaries, transportation, food and water, care for the handicapped, phone and other communication, laboratory work and any other legitimate expense incurred in the restoration of the normal educational operation of the school and the school system.

Fitness Assessment:

As a component of Physical Education, a variety of fitness assessment activities and techniques will be used to measure different areas of health-related fitness. These may include but are not limited to 1. The PACER run or one mile run for cardiovascular fitness; 2. Push-Ups for upper body strength; 3. Curl-Ups for abdominal strength; 4. Back-Saver Sit and Reach for flexibility.

Lifelong fitness and wellness may be promoted through exposure to modern technology tools such as fitness trackers and apps.

Gang Related Activity:

Gang related activity will not be tolerated in FCS. Students engaging in gang related activities will be subject to disciplinary action as defined in the Forsyth County Board of Education Code of Conduct and Discipline Procedures. See the definitions of *Gang Member* and *Gang Related Activity* below.

In addition to those definitions, from time to time new types of gang communication methods or activities may be invented. In that event, the Principal is authorized to further define and prohibit those newly developed activities. Gang Member is defined as: A person who is part of an association of three or more people who form an allegiance for a common purpose and engage, individually or collectively in illegal behavior. Gang Related Activity is defined as: Any act or exhibition, individual or collective, which (1) communicates gang allegiance or affiliation; and / or (2) would be a criminal act if committed by an adult; and (3) is deemed to be gang related by the Principal. Gang related activity includes but is not limited to: communication of gang affiliation through hand sign flashing, wearing of clothing articles in a certain way or color scheme; jewelry, tattoos, gang symbols or graffiti on personal items; vandalism of public or private property, and acts of intimidation, threat, fighting and other forms of violence.

Hospital-Homebound Services:

If a student should need to be absent from school for more than 10 consecutive school days because of serious illness or an accident, arrangements may be made to provide instruction at home or in an alternative setting. In accordance with state rule 160-4-2.31 Hospital/Homebound Services, students with absences due to psychiatric/emotional disorders, as defined in the latest edition of the Diagnostic, and Statistical Manual (DSM), may be eligible for hospital-homebound instruction. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to request homebound instruction as soon as possible. An application for services supported by a doctor's recommendation will be required. The application and supporting documentation are submitted to the Principal of the school. Information and guidelines for Hospital-Homebound Services can be found at the Georgia Department of Education webpage – gadoe.org.

Infectious Disease:

A child is not to return to school until fever, diarrhea and/or vomiting have stopped **for a full 24 hours**, without the aid of medication. Prescribed antibiotic medications for infectious diseases are to be given for 24 hours prior to return.

Medications:

All medications (prescription and nonprescription) must be brought to school by the parent/guardian. No student will be allowed to bring medications to school. Students may not have medication in their possession, except with a physician's order for emergency situations only. Medications brought in bags or other unmarked containers will not be given. Prescription medication must be in the pharmacy container labeled with the child's name, date, name of medication, name of prescribing physician, time(s) the medication is to be given and name of pharmacy filling the prescription. Please ask the pharmacist to provide two labeled prescription bottles so that parents/guardians have one bottle at home and one at school. Do not send medication to the school that needs to be given only once daily or two/three times a day unless the physician

specifically states a time during the school day for the medication to be given. If medication can be given at home, please do so.

Parents/guardians must provide specific instructions (including drugs and related equipment) to the nurse. It will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the school of any changes in pertinent data. A "Request for Administration of Medication" form must be completed by the parent/guardian. **New medications will not be given unless a new form is completed.** The bottom portion of the form is to be completed by the physician for **ANY** long-term medication (more than two weeks.) The term "Physician" is used as defined in Article 2 of the Medical Practice Act of Georgia. The form may be brought to the school by the parent or faxed by the parent or physician. Due to the risk of Reye's syndrome in children under the age of 18, the school will require a physician's signature in order to give any aspirin-containing medications including Aspirin, Pepto-Bismol, and Excedrin. Due to the risk of choking, students may not bring cough drops. All Medications, herbals, and supplements must be approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and appear in the U.S. Pharmacopeia.

Possession of Weapon:

It shall be unlawful for any person to carry or possess or have under such person's control while within a school safety zone or at a school building, school function, or school property or on a bus or other transportation furnished by the school any weapon or explosive compound, other than fireworks. Board policy and state law (O.C.G.A. §20-2-751.1) require that any student determined to have brought a weapon to school will be expelled from school for a minimum of one calendar year, subject to modification on a case-by-case basis as required or authorized by state and federal law.

Progressive Discipline Procedures:

To the extent appropriate to the situation, school administrators and teachers will follow a progressive discipline process. The degree of discipline to be imposed by each school official should be in proportion to the severity of the behavior, while taking into account the totality of the situation, including the student's age, discipline history, and other relevant factors. Schools are not required to start at step one of progressive discipline if the behavior warrants a more severe punishment.

Student Searches:

Student cars brought on campus, student book bags, and school lockers, desks and other school property shall be subject to inspection and search by school authorities at all times without further notice to students or parents. FCS reserves the right to use "walk-through" and "hand-held" metal detectors and "drug or weapon sniffing" dogs at school and during any school function, including activities which occur outside normal school hours or off the school campus. Students are notified that these metal detectors will be used at the discretion of administrators.

Vision, Hearing and Dental Screening:

Vision, hearing and dental screenings are conducted for grades 1,3,5. Referral letters are sent home to those students who did not pass the screening. For assistance in regard to the referral, contact the school nurse.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES:

Students With Disabilities:

A teacher, principal, counselor, or parent/guardian may recommend students for referral for student support team interventions, 504 accommodations, and/or for special education eligibility. If the student support team determines that an evaluation needs to be completed to consider additional services, an initial evaluation for special education services is administered only with written parental consent. After an evaluation is completed, a meeting (including parent/guardians, teachers, administrator and school psychologist) will determine the student's special education eligibility; and if appropriate, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for special education services will be developed.

Section 504:

The teacher, educator, or parent/guardian may refer a student for consideration of a Section 504 Accommodation Plan based on medical or physical impairment by contacting the school's Section 504 Plan Chairperson.

Notice of Rights of Students and Parents Under Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, commonly referred to as "Section 504," is a nondiscrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. The purpose of Section 504 is to prohibit discrimination and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students.

The implementing regulations for Section 504 as set out in 34 CFR Part 104 provide parents and/or students with the following rights:

1. Your child has the right to an appropriate education designed to meet his or her individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.33.
2. Your child has the right to free educational services except for those fees that are imposed on non-disabled students or their parents. Insurers and similar third parties who provide services not operated by or provided by the recipient are not relieved from an otherwise valid obligation to provide or pay for services provided to a disabled student. 34 CFR 104.33.
3. Your child has a right to participate in an educational setting (academic and nonacademic) with non-disabled students to the maximum extent appropriate to his or her needs. 34 CFR 104.34.
4. Your child has a right to facilities, services, and activities that are comparable to those provided for non-disabled students. 34 CFR 104.34.
5. Your child has a right to an evaluation prior to a Section 504 determination of eligibility. 34 CFR 104.35.
6. You have the right to not consent to the school system's request to evaluate your child. 34 CFR 104.35.
7. You have the right to ensure that evaluation procedures, which may include testing, conform to the requirements of 34 CFR 104.35.
8. You have the right to ensure that the school system will consider information from a variety of sources as appropriate, which may include aptitude and achievement tests, grades, teacher recommendations and observations, physical conditions, social or cultural background, medical records, and parental recommendations. 34

CFR 104.35.

9. You have the right to ensure that placement decisions are made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about your child, the meaning of the evaluation data, the placement options, and the legal requirements for least restrictive environment and comparable facilities. 34 CFR 104.35.

10. If your child is eligible under Section 504, your child has a right to periodic reevaluations, including prior to any subsequent significant change of placement. 34 CFR 104.35.

11. You have the right to notice prior to any actions by the school system regarding the identification, evaluation, or placement of your child. 34 CFR 104.36.

12. You have the right to examine your child's educational records. 34 CFR 104.36.

13. You have the right to an impartial hearing with respect to the school system's actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement, with opportunity for parental participation in the hearing and representation by an attorney. 34 CFR 104.36.

14. You have the right to receive a copy of this notice and a copy of the school system's impartial hearing procedure upon request. 34 CFR 104.36.

15. If you disagree with the decision of the impartial hearing officer (school board members and other district employees are not considered impartial hearing officers), you have a right to a review of that decision according to the school system's impartial hearing procedure. 34 CFR 104.36.

16. You have the right to, at any time, file a complaint with the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

Revised by GaDOE 2-13-12

Section 504 Procedural Safeguards

1. Overview: Any student or parent or guardian ("grievant") may request an impartial hearing due to the school system's actions or inactions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, or educational placement under Section 504. Requests for an impartial hearing must be in writing to the school system's Section 504 Coordinator; however, a grievant's failure to request a hearing in writing does not alleviate the school system's obligation to provide an impartial hearing if the grievant orally requests an impartial hearing through the school system's Section 504 Coordinator. The school system's Section 504 Coordinator will assist the grievant in completing the written Request for Hearing.

2. Hearing Request: The Request for the Hearing must include the following:

- a. The name of the student.
- b. The address of the residence of the student.
- c. The name of the school the student is attending.
- d. The decision that is the subject of the hearing.
- e. The requested reasons for review.
- f. The proposed remedy sought by the grievant.
- g. The name and contact information of the grievant.

Within 10 business days from receiving the grievant's Request for Hearing, the Section 504 Coordinator will acknowledge the Request for Hearing in writing and schedule a time and place for a hearing. If the written Request for Hearing does not contain the necessary information noted above, the Section 504 Coordinator will inform the grievant of the specific information needed to complete the request. All timelines and processes will be stayed until the Request for

Hearing contains the necessary information noted above.

3. Mediation: The school system may offer mediation to resolve the issues detailed by the grievant in his or her Request for Hearing. Mediation is voluntary and both the grievant and school system must agree to participate. The grievant may terminate the mediation at any time. If the mediation is terminated without an agreement, the school system will follow the procedures for conducting an impartial hearing without an additional Request for Hearing.

4. Hearing Procedures:

a. The Section 504 Coordinator will obtain an impartial review official who will conduct a hearing within 45 calendar days from the receipt of the grievant's Request for Hearing unless agreed to otherwise by the grievant or a continuance is granted by the impartial review official.

b. Upon a showing of good cause by the grievant or school system, the impartial review official, at his or her discretion, may grant a continuance and set a new hearing date. The request for a continuance must be in writing and copied to the other party.

c. The grievant will have an opportunity to examine the child's educational records prior to the hearing.

d. The grievant will have the opportunity to be represented by legal counsel at his or her own expense at the hearing and participate, speak, examine witnesses, and present information at the hearing. If the grievant is to be represented by legal counsel at the hearing, he or she must inform the Section 504 Coordinator of that fact in writing at least 10 calendar days prior to the hearing. Failure to notify the Section 504 Coordinator in writing of representation by legal counsel shall constitute good cause for continuance of the hearing.

e. The grievant will have the burden of proving any claims he or she may assert. When warranted by circumstances or law, the impartial hearing officer may require the recipient to defend its position/decision regarding the claims (i.e. A recipient shall place a disabled student in the regular educational environment operated by the recipient unless it is demonstrated by the recipient that the education of the person in the regular environment with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. 34 C.F.R. §104.34). One or more representatives of the school system, who may be an attorney, will attend the hearing to present the evidence and witnesses, respond to the grievant testimony and answer questions posed by the review official.

f. The impartial review official shall not have the power to subpoena witnesses, and the strict rules of evidence shall not apply to hearings. The impartial review official shall have the authority to issue pre-hearing instructions, which may include requiring the parties to exchange documents and names of witnesses to be present.

g. The impartial review official shall determine the weight to be given any evidence based on its reliability and probative value.

h. The hearing shall be closed to the public.

i. The issues of the hearing will be limited to those raised in the written or oral request for the hearing.

j. Witnesses will be questioned directly by the party who calls them. Cross-examination of witnesses will be allowed. The impartial review official, at his or her discretion, may allow further examination of witnesses or ask questions of the witnesses.

k. Testimony shall be recorded by court reporting or audio recording at the expense of the recipient. All documentation related to the hearing shall be retained by the recipient.

l. Unless otherwise required by law, the impartial review official shall uphold the action of school system unless the grievant can prove that a preponderance of the evidence supports his or her claim.

m. Failure of the grievant to appear at a scheduled hearing unless prior notification of absence was provided and approved by the impartial review official or just cause is shown shall constitute a waiver of the right to a personal appearance before the impartial review official.

5. Decision: The impartial review official shall issue a written determination within 20 calendar days of the date the hearing concluded. The determination of the impartial review official shall not include any monetary damages or the award of any attorney's fees.

6. Review: If not satisfied with the decision of the impartial review official, any party may pursue any right of review, appeal, cause of action or claim available to them under the law or existing state or federal rules or regulations.

Georgia Special Needs Scholarship:

Parents/guardians of students who receive special education services in FCS have the option to exercise public and private school choice. Under a State law passed by the Georgia State Legislature in 2007, parents/guardians of students who receive special education may choose to transfer their child to another public school or private school in Georgia. Parents/guardians must be current residents of Georgia and have been residents for one year.

Special Needs Public School Choice Options:

A parent/guardian can request a transfer to another public school within their school system as long as there is available space at that school and the school has a program with the services agreed to in the student's existing individualized education program (IEP). If the parent/guardian chooses this option, then the parent/guardian shall be responsible for transportation to the school. All request for transfers to another in-system public school must be submitted by February 1st for approval for the upcoming school year.

The parent/guardian may request a transfer to a school in another school system if there is available space and the system and school have a program with the services agreed to in the student's existing individualized education program. **Note:** It is allowable for a school system to have a policy not to accept students that reside out of the school system. If a school system accepts the child, then the parent/guardian shall be responsible for transportation to the school in that system. If a school system approves an out of system transfer request, it can charge a parent/guardian for the costs of educating a student; also known as out of district tuition. **Note:** Funds received through the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship Program cannot be used to offset the costs of out of district tuition.

The parent/guardian may also request a transfer to one of the State schools for the deaf and /or blind operated by the State Board of Education. Once into a State school will depend on whether or not that setting is appropriate for the student's needs. If the parent/guardian chooses this option, then the parent/guardian shall be responsible for transportation to the State school. Please contact the Georgia Department of Education for more information about transferring to a State school.

Special Needs Private School Choice Option:

Parents/guardians interested in transferring their child to a private school in Georgia may be able to take advantage of a Georgia Special Needs Scholarship. These scholarships provide funding that can be used to offset tuition costs at participating private schools in the State of Georgia. For more information on the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship and the parent application process, visit the Georgia Department of Education's website at <http://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Policy/Pages/Special-Needs-Scholarship-Program.aspx>.

STANDARDIZED TESTING:

Students participate in the following state assessments:

- GKIDS – All Kindergarten students (August and April)
- ACCESS – All ESOL students including parent denials (January and February)
- EOG (Georgia Milestones) – Students in grades 3, 4, and 5 (April)
- Students in third, fourth and fifth grades will take the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessment in April.

Parents are asked to make every effort possible to have their children present on these days.

In addition, FCS will give Interim Assessments in August and February to assess the students' mastery of the standards being taught in grades 2-5. The results of these assessments will be used by teachers and staff to guide and focus instruction on key standards, as necessary. The results of these assessments will not be included on report cards or parent communication because they are not state-mandated testing, but are used for instructional guidance purposes only.

STUDENT EVENTS:

Activities to enhance extended learning opportunities are offered to Big Creek Elementary students at all grade levels. Examples are Spelling Bee, Oratorical Competition, Mathletes, Art contests, Technology Fair, afterschool clubs, etc. In addition to these events, the physical education teacher will coordinate a field day for all students in the spring on the campus of Big Creek. These activities are subject to available volunteers and funding that may vary from school year to school year.

STUDENT MEALS:

Automated Meal Account:

Each school has an automated system that is able to track the payment and purchasing activity of each individual student's account. Meals may be pre-paid for the week, month, or even the year by cash, check, or by using the on-line payment system (see below for details). Prepayment is encouraged because it eliminates the daily handling of money for the child, and reduces the time the student must stand in line waiting, providing them more time to enjoy their meal.

Students may purchase meals and extra foods sold through the School Nutrition Program with funds debited from their meal account. **If parents/guardians wish to limit the use of their child's account to meals only, each school year parents/guardians must send a written note to the school's cafeteria manager stating that their child will not be allowed to purchase extra items**

off of their meal account. If this restriction is applied to the account, all extra items selected will require cash at the time of purchase.

Parents/guardians or siblings having lunch with a student may not use the funds on the student meal account to pay for guest meals. Guests may cover their meals with a check or cash.

Pre-payment by Debit or Credit Card via the Internet:

To prepay for a child's meals online using a valid credit/check card, Parents/guardians must use the student identification number and school name to register and place money on their child's account. If parents/guardians do not know their child's student ID, contact the school's front office. To learn more about paying on-line, visit www.mypaymentsplus.com.

Meal Charge Policy:

Only students in elementary will be allowed to charge up to the equivalent of five (5) meals. No ala carte purchases may be charged to the student's meal account, except milk or carton juice when a meal is brought from home. A charge notice will be completed and sent home to the parent/guardian through the student. To assist parents, student account balances can be monitored any time via www.mypaymentsplus.com regard less of the payment method you use. If you notice that your child's account is low on funds, please consider sending cash or check for the day as an on-line payment may no post to your child's account in time for meal service. When the manager has sent home the third notification with no success in collection of outstanding charges, the principal or counselor will be asked to intervene to assist with collecting the delinquent payments and assessing if there is a need for free or reduced priced meals. After the fifth unpaid charge, the manager will offer the student a snack or partial meal such as a sandwich or crackers and milk. If a student continues to come to the cafeteria without a lunch from home or money and the student's account continues to be delinquent, the case will be considered for release to the Department of Family and Children's Services for neglect. Students who have unpaid meal charges will not be allowed to purchase any extra sale food items until the charges have been satisfied.

NOTE: In an effort to ensure that students in elementary schools do not carry over a negative account balance into the new school year, meal charges will not be accepted beginning the first school day in May.

Returned Check Policy:

The Food and Nutrition Services Program will accept checks for exact payment of meals or prepayments to the student's debit account. The program will not cash personal checks or give change back when a check is received for payment.

FCS uses a check company to collect checks that are returned unpaid. Without further notice, they will attempt to collect on the check electronically if it is returned unpaid by your bank for any reason. If a check is returned unpaid, the face amount and a state-authorized fee will be collected electronically from the parent's account when the money is available. If a parent writes a check to the district, they are consenting to allow the check recovery company to electronically collect the face amount and the fee if the check is returned unpaid by the banking institution to the recovery company. After the Board of Education, or any entity thereof, has received two (2) checks returned by a financial institution due to insufficient funds or closed accounts, all financial transactions thereafter will be on a cash only basis.

Cash payments at register:

Cash is gladly accepted at the cafeteria register for meal and a la carte item purchases, and to add funds on the student's account; however, cashiers do not have adequate funds to make change for customers with bills larger than \$20. Bills larger than \$20.00 will only be accepted for meal payment if the entire amount is deposited into their meal account.

Free and Reduced Priced Meals Availability:

The Free and Reduced Priced Meal Program is available to assist families during times of financial hardship. **The School Nutrition Program accepts free and reduced meal applications throughout the school year.** Students approved for free or reduced priced meals may eat both **breakfast and lunch** free or at a reduced cost. Parents can rest assured the information supplied on the form is strictly confidential and student identification is protected with the computer software used at the cashier's station.

- A current year application must be submitted. Prior year application forms cannot be accepted. The current school year application is available at each school, in the Registration Office at the Hill Center and on the system's website, www.forsyth.k12.ga.us.
- On-line applications make it faster and easier for families to apply for free or reduced priced meals. Visit the food and nutrition website at www.forsyth.k12.ga.us/nutrition for further information.
- **OR** you may complete and sign an application and submit it via one of the following methods:
 - scanned and emailed to aplant@forsyth.k12.ga.us
 - faxed to 770-888-3464
 - sent via US mail to: Food & Nutrition Services, 1140 Dahlonega Hwy, Cumming GA 30040
 - submitted to any school cafeteria.
- Applications will be processed within 10 school days of receipt at the central office. Eligibility for those approved for free or reduced benefits will be effective within an hour of being processed at the central office. Written notification of eligibility/denial will be sent to the household address via US mail the day the application is processed.
- Eligibility for Free or Reduced price meals is **not retroactive**; therefore the parent or guardian is responsible for payment of school meals until the F&R application is approved.

Meal Prices:

Our breakfast meal offers a choice of a breakfast entrée, milk and up to two choices of fruit. At lunch we offer an entrée, milk and up to 3 fruit or vegetable choices at the elementary and middle schools. Students may decline the milk but must include at least one serving of fruit or vegetable on their tray. Students may request a cup of water as an alternate beverage choice. Additional beverage selections, including bottled water, are available for purchase.

The meal prices at each school level are listed below. Students may purchase additional portions of the meal at an extra cost. We also provide Smart Snack compliant snacks and treats that can be purchased at an additional cost.

	Breakfast		Lunch	
	Paid	Reduced	Paid	Reduced
Elementary	\$1.50	\$0.30	\$2.60	\$0.40
Middle	\$1.60	\$0.30	\$2.70	\$0.40
High	\$1.70	\$0.30	\$2.70	\$0.40

TEXTBOOKS:

All basic textbooks are on loan to students for use during the school year. Each student is responsible for the textbooks issued to him or her. Replacement textbooks will not be issued until reimbursement fees have been paid in the office. All textbooks must be returned, and fees for any lost or damaged books must be paid by the last day of school.

TRANSPORTATION (BOARD POLICY EDC):

FCS provides school bus transportation for all eligible FCS students based on the student’s residence and school of enrollment, and in compliance with federal, state and/or local laws, rules, regulations and/or procedures. The Transportation Department is authorized to develop a framework and procedures that provide transportation services to eligible FCS students. The Forsyth County Board of Education encourages supervision appropriate to the age and/or maturity level(s) of students at bus stops by parents or guardians.

The Code of Conduct applies on the school bus and at the bus stop as each is considered an extension of the school and classroom. As such, behaviors are expected to be safe, orderly and respectful at the stop and on and around the school bus.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to become familiar with transportation practices and procedures specific to our service. You may find those at www.forsyth.k12.ga.us/transportation or you may request clarification and/or assistance from the appropriate staff member found at the “Who Should I Call” link on the department web page.

Safety is our number one priority in providing bus transportation, and the practice of routinely issuing bus passes causes inconsistency and confusion for everyone; the student, the school staff, the driver and even the parent. Students are expected to learn their stop, understand their driver’s expectations and practice safe riding, walking and respectful routines that include learning their students and developing positive relationships with them. Please cooperate with the school and make car transportation arrangements whenever your student(s) need to be taken to any location other than their regular assigned afternoon bus stop. We appreciate your support.

Bus information for this school year will be available at Open House and at <http://www.forsyth.k12.ga.us>. The transportation department can be reached by phone at 770-888-1234. All routing and schedule questions and driver complaints should be addressed to the contact person for Big Creek Elementary School, Gretchen Higgins at 678-965-5010, Ext. 381215.

Mike Satterfield, Director of Transportation (770) 888-1234 ext. 220106

Prohibited Items on School Buses

1. All items prohibited by the *Code of Conduct* at school.
2. Bats.
3. Hockey Sticks.
4. Golf Clubs.
5. Skateboards.
6. Glass Items.
7. Animals.
8. Any other item that, in the opinion of the driver, may threaten the safety or welfare of the student or other passengers. The driver's decision is subject to review by the principal and/or the transportation director.

TRANSPORTATION CHANGES (AFTER SCHOOL):

If you need to make a change to your child's usual mode of after school transportation, it MUST be done in the form of a handwritten or typed note sent in with your child (or dropped off in the front office by 1:00 p.m.). Email or faxed transportation changes are not permitted. Teachers and staff are busy during the day and may not be able to check their email inbox or a fax machine until the end of the school day and a note sent in this manner may be missed. This policy is to ensure the safe return of your child after school.

VISITATION:

We encourage parents and relatives to visit our school **by appointment**. For the protection of our children, all visitors **must make prior arrangements with the teacher**, and then on the day of the visit **must check-in** with the office upon entering the school building to receive a visitor badge after showing a government issued photo identification. At that time, you will be asked to share the reason for your visit. Parents are required to make an appointment for teacher conferences. Please do not bring preschool age children into the classrooms as this can be very disruptive to the instructional environment. **PLEASE DO NOT GO TO THE CLASSROOM TO SPEAK TO THE TEACHER.** It interrupts the instruction and supervision of the entire class.

Raptor Security System:

Raptor is a computerized visitor check-in system that is installed in all Forsyth County Schools. Raptor requires all first times guests to present their driver's license (or another form of government issued identification). For returning visits, guests will be allowed to use the Raptor Kiosk to check themselves in. A badge will then be printed, showing the visitor's photo, name, destination, and date. Each visitor will be asked to go through the Raptor System to enter the building. **No** exceptions to this will be made.

To visit Big Creek or any other Forsyth County School you will need: a valid driver's license or other form of government issued ID. For more information regarding the Safety Check System, please visit the Forsyth County Website, www.forsyth.k12.ga.us – >Select A Link Menu>District Department>School Safety>Safety Check link on the left.

VOLUNTEERS:

Parents, relatives, and friends of Big Creek Elementary students are encouraged to volunteer in the school and at school sponsored events. A form will be available at Open House for parents to indicate their interest in volunteering. Parents may also contact PTO for volunteer information. Volunteers must sign in and out in the office using the same procedures as other visitors. Please do not bring preschool age children into the classrooms as this can be very disruptive to the instructional environment. If you have small children, and would like to volunteer, please speak with your child's teacher about opportunities to prepare instructional materials at home. This is also a great service for our school. Due to safety issues, small children are not permitted in workrooms.

WITHDRAWAL:

Parents withdrawing students from Big Creek Elementary should contact the school office and their child's teacher at least a week in advance, if possible. The teacher will secure a withdrawal form from the school office. The student's teacher, media specialist, and the cafeteria manager must complete and sign the form before it is returned to the office for the principal's signature. Financial obligations, such as lost or damaged books and lunch charges, must be satisfied when the student withdraws. Records will be mailed to the new school upon receipt of a signed request. Under no circumstances are textbooks or other school owned materials to be taken from the building during any withdrawal time period from Big Creek.

Extended Vacations / Withdrawals

Students who miss school for more than 10 consecutive days (or absent for 10 consecutive days) must be withdrawn in Infinite Campus after the 10th day out. This is per local and state policy (JBC 160-5-1-.28(2)(e)3) and the district is held accountable for violations.

If families are taking extended vacations during the school year then students need to be enrolled in a program which can accommodate their needs. Parents should be encouraged to enroll their child in an online program of study (see below for options) or home school. A student out for 15 or 20 days will not receive the same quality instruction by trying to stay connected to itslearning. They should be made aware that there is no guarantee of the exact schedule upon return. When they arrive back in town they may provide a current utility bill to the data clerk and be reenrolled.

Possible online alternatives:

iAchieve Academy (6 – 12), GA Virtual School (6 – 12), GA Cyber Academy (K – 12), GA Connections Academy (K – 12)