



2007-2008

**GOUGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
HANDBOOK**

Phone: 688-2141
Fax: 688-9344
Colby T. Calhoun—Principal

Welcome

We would like to welcome each and every student and parent for the 2007-2008 academic school year. There have been so many great accomplishments made here at Gouge Elementary School. We look forward to continuous growth in all areas of our school and will constantly maintain high standards for all of our students.

Beliefs

We believe at Gouge Elementary that:

1. Children are our most important resource.
2. All children can learn
3. Each student learns differently, and we must value and understand those differences.
4. Minds and hearts are the focus of education.
5. High expectations result in high achievement.
6. A positive school climate encourages achievement and productivity.
7. All educators, students, and parents deserve respect.
8. Reaching our goals is a result of partnerships among student, families, school personnel, and the community.

School Hours

School hours are from 7:10 AM until 2:20 PM. We dismiss car riders at 2:25 PM. Students must be picked up at the lunchroom door. Please do not pick-up your child in the lobby. This will help us to ensure the safety of all our students. Students will report to the lunchroom upon arrival to Gouge School. Classes will begin promptly at 7:30AM. Children should not arrive earlier than 7:00 AM or remain on campus later than 2:45PM unless they are participating in a supervised activity. ***If a student is checked out before 2:20 PM he/she must be signed out in the office.***

Telephone

Students should only ask to use the telephone in the case of an emergency. The classroom teacher and the office must grant permission. Arrangement for after-school activities, early dismissal, etc. should be arranged the morning before school begins. Parents are encouraged to call their child's teacher at a time when classes are not in session.

Attendance

Attendance in school and participation in class are integral parts of academic achievement and the teaching-learning process. Regular attendance develops patterns of behavior essential to professional and personal success in life. Regular attendance by every student is mandatory: the State of North Carolina requires that every child in the State between ages of 7 and 16 years attend school. Parents or legal guardians have the responsibility for ensuring that students attend and remain at school daily. **Any student in elementary school who misses more than twenty (20) of the school days in which Mitchell County Schools are in session shall not be eligible for promotion unless exempted pursuant to the appeals procedure. Ten unexcused absences will result in notification to the District Attorney.** *(Public School Law 115C-378 and Local Policy Code 4400).*

When a student must miss school, a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian must be presented to the teacher on the day returning after an absence. An absence may be excused for the following reasons:

1. personal illness or injury which makes the student physically unable to attend school;
2. isolation ordered by the State Board of Health;
3. death in the immediate family;
4. emergency medical or dental appointment or such an appointment which has been approved in advance by the principal;
5. participation under subpoena as a witness in a court proceeding;
6. observance of an event required or suggested by the religion of the student or the student's parent(s) with prior approval by the principal; or
7. participation in a valid educational opportunity, such as travel, with prior approval by the principal.

Students with excessive absences and/or tardies will be required to attend summer school in order to be considered promotion to the next grade.

Arrange family vacations etc. when school is not in session. Good attendance is a necessity for all students.

Excessive tardies results in the missing of valuable class time.

Inclement Weather

During the winter months, as we all know, weather can take its toll on the academic school day. The decision to either cancel or dismiss school is made at the Mitchell County Schools Administrative Offices and then forwarded to individual schools. We will always try to get information out to each home via the Mitchell County MAC Calling System. Please provide the office and your child's teacher with all important telephone numbers. We ask that all families have a plan for where students are to go in case of earlier dismissal.

Student Dress Code

We believe that the dress and personal appearance of students greatly affects their academic performance and interaction with other students. Children should wear clothing that will be conducive to learning. Any clothing that is inappropriate or disrupts the educational environment is unacceptable.

Inappropriate dress includes (but is not limited to):

Clothing with language or images that are vulgar, obscene, of discriminatory;

Clothing that promotes illegal or violent conduct.

Clothing that depicts or displays the use of any controlled substance (tobacco., alcohol, of drugs) or paraphernalia.

Clothing that contains threats or gang symbols.

Clothing that exposes underwear or underwear worn as outerwear.

Tube tops, strapless tops or spaghetti strap tops/dresses.

Clothing that is see-through or that exposes the midriff or chest.

Headwear (caps/hats, scarves, stocking caps, etc) may not be worn indoors at any time unless necessary for safety requirement in some classes.

Wallet chains and pocket chains are not allowed on school campus.

Students may wear shorts or skirts of an appropriate length. When students stand with their hands extended by their side shorts or skirts must reach their fingertips or below. Pants, shorts, and skirts must be worn appropriately at the waist. Pants should be of appropriate length (should not drag on floor surface).

Sleeveless tops may be worn provided the fabric at the shoulder is the width of the student's palm.

Shoes must be worn at all times.

Students not in compliance with this dress code will be asked to cover noncompliant clothing, change clothes, or wait for parents to bring a change of clothing, or go home. Repeated infractions will result in disciplinary action.

Field Trips

Students will have field trips scheduled during the school year. Students will be asked to pay a \$1 or \$2 fee for buses, depending on the length of the trip. We have a right to withhold these field trips due to behavior. An alternative educational experience will be provided for these students.

School Food Service

The Mitchell County Nutrition Service operates the Gouge Elementary School cafeteria, and provides both breakfast and lunch each day. All students are encouraged to participate in the student meal program. Good eating habits are essential for both personal growth and academic success. The cafeteria understands the importance of child nutrition and provides two healthy meals each day. Applications for free and/or reduced meals are available and will be distributed at the beginning of each school year. Meal prices are as follows:

Breakfast	\$0.75	Reduced Breakfast	\$0.30
Lunch(K-5)	\$1.50	Reduced Lunch	\$0.40
Adults	\$2.75		

Students charge limit is \$7.00.

School Transportation

Riding the bus is a privilege offered to the students of Mitchell County Schools, and as such, requires certain behavior standards. Our drivers do a great job and drive some of the toughest roads in North Carolina, thus making it that much more important that all riders help support them doing their job. Students demonstrating inappropriate behavior may be suspended from riding the bus. We need everyone's help to make the buses safe for all students and drivers.

Students will be assigned to a particular bus. Bowman Middle School and Gouge Elementary School share the same buses. Unless the child has a note from home, he/she will not be permitted to ride a different bus or get off at a different residence other than the normal one.

Visiting the School

We invite parents to visit their child's classroom often. There is no better way to ensure the education of our children than by communicating with each other. Gouge Elementary is always open to parents who feel the need to discuss their child's academic and/or social progress.

All visitors must report the office each time they enter the building.

Teacher conferences should be arranged in advance. Parents are encouraged to call their child's teacher at a time when classes are not in session.

County-wide Parent / Teacher Conference Days have been scheduled for Mitchell County Schools and are on the county-wide schedule. Please make plans to attend.

PARENTAL SIGNATURE FOR GOUGE HANDBOOK

I have read the student handbook. I am aware of the attendance policy stating that a student must be in attendance 160 of the 180 school days and perform at grade level to be eligible for promotion.

Signed _____

Student's Name: _____

Date: _____

(Please tear this page off and have your child return it to the teacher)