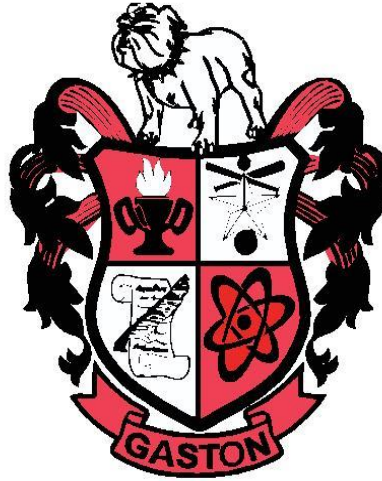


Gaston High School



2019-2020

“Home of the Bulldogs”

STUDENT HANDBOOK

4550 US HIGHWAY 411

GADSDEN, ALABAMA 35901

(256) 547-8828

<http://www.gaston.ecboe.org>

🐾 Tammy George - Principal

🐾 Richard Tant - Assistant Principal



Message from the Principal

"Dream, Believe and Achieve"

I would like to welcome all our students back for an exciting new school year. As always our school expectations and goals are set to the highest standards. We encourage you to communicate with the counselor or teachers if you have any needs or concerns. For this year to be successful, you must take pride and ownership in your school. This handbook is a guide to help you reach that goal. We, at Gaston High School, adhere to the Code of Conduct from the Etowah County Board of Education and the policies and procedures set forth to the highest degree. Please take the time to read it and understand it. If you have questions, please feel free to contact me at the school.

I look forward to another great school year!

GO BULLDOGS

Tammy George
Principal

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The Mission of Gaston School is to be great and graduate as a respectful, resourceful, and responsible citizen who is college and career ready.

**GASTON HIGH SCHOOL
ALMA MATER**

*At the foothills of the mountain
Stands our school so dear.
These are thoughts we'll always cherish
Through the coming years.*

*Truthful, honest, we pledge to you,
United we'll stand with thee.
As the years pass swiftly onward,
We true friends will be.*

*Hail to thee, oh Mother Gaston,
We'll be true to thee.
To thee we owe our loyal devotion,
For the years gone by.*

*Loyal in our hearts forever,
Devoted we'll stand with thee.
For to us there is no other,
We'll be true to thee.*

School Colors: Red and White

Mascot: Bulldogs

IT'S THE LAW

Parental Notification of Civil Liabilities and Criminal Penalties: The following laws relate to civil liabilities and criminal penalties for violence or other misbehavior by students on school property or against school employees.

Attendance and Conduct (Act 94-782): Alabama law requires all children between the ages of six (6) and seventeen (17) to attend school. The law further provides that a parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of a school-age child is responsible for that child's regular attendance and proper conduct. Parents and guardians are responsible for enrolling their children in school and ensuring that the children attend school and obey behavior policies adopted by the Board. Parents failing to enroll students and ensuring their proper behavior and attendance are subject to fines and imprisonment under state law.

Excused/Unexcused Absences

If any child fails to attend school without a legal or doctor's excuse for more than five (5) days, that child and the person having custody of that child, shall be referred to Early Warning. The child and the person having custody of that child will be referred to juvenile court if the problem is not resolved in Early Warning.

Absences are excused for the following reasons:

1. Illness
 2. Death in the immediate family
 3. Inclement weather which would be dangerous to the life and health of the child as determined by the principal and/or Superintendent
 4. Legal quarantine
 5. Emergency conditions as determined by the principal and/or Superintendent
 6. Prior permission of the principal with the consent of the parent or legal guardian
- Schoolwork missed due to excused absences may be made up, and a grade shall be awarded. Students shall have three (3) days for each day of excused absence to complete and return make-up work. It is the responsibility of the student to request and return make-up work.

Early Warning Program

The Early Warning Program has been adopted by the Etowah County School System for dealing with students who are truant. Students having unexcused tardies or absences shall be referred to the Early Warning Program in accordance with its established guidelines. Additional information about the Early Warning Program is provided in Policy 5.43 Truancy

Drug Dealing (Act 94-783): A person who unlawfully sells, furnishes or gives a controlled substance to a minor may be liable for injury or damage or both suffered by the third person caused by or resulting from the use of the controlled substance by the minor if the sale, furnishing or giving of the controlled substance is the proximate cause of the injury or damage.

Drugs, Alcohol, Weapons, Physical Harm or Threatened Physical Harm (Act 94-784): The school principal shall notify appropriate law enforcement officials when a person violates local school board of education policies concerning drugs, alcohol, weapons, physical harm to a person threatened or physical harm to a person. If any criminal charge is warranted, the principal is authorized to sign the appropriate warrant. If that person is a student, the local school system shall immediately suspend that person from attending regular classes and schedule a hearing within 5 school days. If a person is found to have violated a local board of education policy concerning drugs, alcohol, weapons, physical harm to a person or threatened physical harm to a person, the person may not be readmitted to the public schools until criminal charges, if any, have been disposed of by appropriate authorities and the person has satisfied all other requirements imposed by the local board of education as a condition for readmission.

Immunity from Prosecution for Paddling Students (Act 95-539): Teachers following local Board of Education policies on corporal punishment are immune from prosecution.

Defacing Public Property (Act 96-425): Holds parents responsible for the damage of school or other public property by their children.

Assault on Education Employees (Act 96-533): Makes assault on education employees a second degree felony.

Juvenile Delinquents' Attendance at Alternative Schools (Act 96-769): A juvenile who is found to be a delinquent or tried as an adult in circuit court may be assigned to an alternative school program under certain conditions.

Copy of Juvenile Records (Act 96-524): Juvenile court records may be copied by principals of a school under certain conditions to protect the safety and welfare of the school, its students or personnel.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting (§26-14-1)

Certain persons and institutions are required by law to report known or suspected child abuse or neglect under a penalty of a misdemeanor, fine or sentence.

Those who are required by law to report are: hospitals, clinics, sanitariums, doctors, physicians, surgeons, medical examiners, coroners, dentists, osteopaths, optometrists, chiropractors, podiatrists, nurses, school teachers and officials, peace officers, law enforcement officials, pharmacists, social workers, day care workers or employees, mental health professionals, or any other person called upon to render aid of medical assistance to a known or suspected victim of child abuse or neglect. Besides those persons who are required by law to report child abuse and neglect, any person may make such report, if such person has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is being abused or neglected.

Tobacco Possession (§28-11-13)

It is unlawful for any minor to purchase, use, possess, or transport tobacco or tobacco products within this state... (See Alabama Law §28-11-14 for additional reference.)

Vandalism (Act 94-819): The parents, guardian or other person having control of a minor under the age of 18 with whom the minor is living and who have custody of the minor shall be liable for the actual damages sustained to school property, plus the court cost, caused by intentional, willful or malicious act of the minor.

Pistol Possession/Driver's License (Act 94-820): Any person over the age of 14 who is convicted of a crime of possession of a pistol on the premises of a public school, or a public school bus, shall be denied issuance of a driver's permit or license to operate a motor vehicle for 180 days from the date the person is eligible and applies for a permit or license. If a person over the age of 14 possesses a driver's license on the date of the conviction the driver's license will be suspended for 180 days.

Weapons in Schools (Act 94-817): No person shall knowingly with intent to do bodily harm carry or possess a deadly weapon on the premises of a public school. Possession of a deadly weapon with the intent to do bodily harm on the premises of a public school or school bus is a Class C felony. (Note: The term "deadly weapon" means a firearm or anything manifestly designed, made or adapted for the purpose of inflicting death or serious physical injury, and such term includes, but is not limited to a bazooka, hand grenade, missile or explosive or incendiary device: a pistol, rifle, or shotgun; or a switchblade knife, gravity knife, stiletto, sword or dagger; or any club, baton, billy, blackjack, bludgeon, or metal knuckles.

Drop-Out/Driver's License (Act 94-820 which amended Act 93-368 as codified in 16-28-40, Ala. Code, 1975): The Department of Public Safety shall deny a driver's license or learner's permit to any person under 19 who is not enrolled or has not received a diploma or certificate of graduation. Exceptions are students who: are enrolled in a GED program, are enrolled in a secondary school, are participating in an approved job training program, are gainfully employed, are a parent of a minor or unborn child or are the sole source of transportation for the parent.

Teacher Assault (Act 94-794): A person commits the crime of assault in the second degree (Class C felony) if the person assaults with intent to cause serious physical injury to a teacher or to an employee of a public educational institution during or as a result of the performance of his or her duty.

GRADUATION

In order for students to go through the graduation ceremony and receive a diploma from Gaston High School, he or she must be attending Gaston and fulfill the requirements set forth by the state and county boards of education. Any outstanding debts must be taken care of prior to graduation (Pre K-12).

To participate in a graduation ceremony the student must attend graduation practice. Doctor's or Pre-Approved Excuses accepted on a case by case basis in advance. Out of respect for Graduates, Parents, and Guest, all graduating seniors are expected to be on time for the graduation ceremony in order to participate. In the case of an emergency situation, the graduate or guardian must contact administration or senior sponsors prior to the graduation ceremony for any accommodation's to be made.

VALEDICTORIAN / SALUTATORIAN

The students receiving the honor of Valedictorian and Salutatorian must have been a student at Gaston by the beginning of their senior year and must have been in attendance for the entire academic year. The student with the highest academic average in the advanced academic diploma program at the end of the third nine week grading period of their senior year shall be the Valedictorian, and the student with the second highest academic average in the advanced academic diploma program shall be the Salutatorian. Determination of the grade average is based on the Etowah County Board of Education policy.

PERFECT ATTENDANCE

In order for a student to receive recognition for Perfect Attendance at the annual awards program, he/she must have had Perfect Attendance the entire school year. To have Perfect Attendance, a student CANNOT have been tardy to school, CANNOT have checked in late (this is tardy), and CANNOT have checked out of school before the end of the day. Perfect Attendance is defined as being in school the entire school day for the entire year. Whether or not the absence, tardy, check-in or check-out is excused or unexcused is not applicable.

CAMPUS SURVEILLANCE

The campus and buildings of Gaston High School are under constant video and audio surveillance. The actions of any student, faculty, staff member, or visitor are subject to be recorded at the discretion of the school administration. Students are hereby forewarned that surveillance of the parking lots, hallways, entrance ways and classrooms, when necessary, will be carried out. Any person found to be tampering with surveillance equipment or in any way disrupt the surveillance of the campus shall be dealt with severely in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct. In addition, any person intentionally evading surveillance will fall under suspicion and may be questioned by the school administration. The surveillance equipment shall be used as a tool to ensure the safety and well being of its faculty and student body as well as maintaining a sound educational environment. **No LOITERING on campus after school hours. Students must leave campus immediately after school is dismissed.**

DISCIPLINE

Teachers have the right to discipline students in their classroom to maintain an environment conducive to learning. Disciplinary notices will be sent home by teachers and documented with the corrective actions taken allowing for parent notification. All major discipline infractions will be referred immediately to the assistant principal. Students will be disciplined according to the guidelines set forth in the Etowah County Code of Student Conduct and the Gaston School Student Handbook.

Etowah County Schools 2019-2020 Calendar

Preparing Our Students for Their Future



July 2019						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
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28	29	30	31			

August 2019						
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September 2019						
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29	30					

October 2019						
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November 2019						
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December 2019						
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January 2020						
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February 2020						
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March 2020						
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29	30	31				

April 2020						
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26	27	28	29	30		

May 2020						
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31						

June 2020						
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
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28	29	30				

1st Semester

Aug 1-6	Professional Development Days
Aug 7	First Day of School for Students
Sep 2	Labor Day
Oct 14	Fall Break
Nov 11	Veterans Day
Nov 25-29	Thanksgiving Break
Dec 23-Jan 3	Winter Break

2nd Semester

Jan 3	Professional Development Day
Jan 6	First Student Day Second Semester
Jan 20	Martin Luther King
Feb 17	Presidents' Day
Mar 23- Mar 30	Spring Break
Mar 30	Professional Development/Variance Day
Mar 31	Students Return
Apr 10	Good Friday
May 21	Last Student Day
May 22	Professional Development/Variance Day
May 25	Memorial Day

Progress Report Dates	Report Card Dates
Sept 11 - 13	Oct 18
Nov 13 - 15	Jan 10
Feb 5 - 7	Mar 13
Apr 15 - 17	May 21

Grading Period Dates	
Aug 7 - Oct 11	Jan 6 - Mar 6
Oct 15 - Dec 20	Mar 9 - May 21

Graduation Dates	
May 21 4:00pm	May 22 3:30pm
May 21 6:00pm	May 22 6:00pm
May 21 8:00pm	May 22 8:00pm

Student Days Per Month 180	
Aug - 18 days	Jan - 19 days
Sept - 20 days	Feb - 19 days
Oct - 22 days	Mar - 16 days
Nov - 15 days	Apr - 21 days
Dec - 15 days	May - 15 days
Student Days 1st Semester	80
Student Days 2nd Semester	80

Teacher Days Per Month 187	
Aug - 22 days	Jan - 20 days
Sept - 20 days	Feb - 19 days
Oct - 22 days	Mar - 17 days
Nov - 15 days	Apr - 21 days
Dec - 15 days	May - 16 days
Teacher Days 1st Semester	84
Teacher Days 2nd Semester	83

12 Month Emp. Days Per Month 240	
July - 22 days	Jan - 20 days
Aug - 22 days	Feb - 19 days
Sept - 20 days	Mar - 17 days
Oct - 22 days	Apr - 21 days
Nov - 15 days	May - 20 days
Dec - 15 days	June - 22 days
1st Semester 118	2nd Semester 118
6 Additional Days Required for 240	

Schools Closed
 Professional Development Days (no school for students)
 First/Last Day for Students

CONFERENCES

Parents are encouraged to confer with teachers concerning the welfare of their child. Teacher conferences shall follow these guidelines:

1. Conferences will be limited to 30 minutes in length unless otherwise agreed upon by all parties.
2. Teachers will be available for conferences by appointment before or after school, or during their preparation period during school.
3. Appointments should be made at least one day in advance.
4. Problems concerning grades should be discussed with the teacher before making an appointment to talk with an administrator.

TEXTBOOKS

The State Textbook Law states that the parent, guardian, or person having custody of a child to whom textbooks are issued shall be held liable for any loss, abuse, or damage in excess of that which would result from the normal use of the textbooks.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Bus transportation to Gaston is a privilege afforded to students in the Gaston High School District. It is not a mandatory service, and students will lose this privilege due to severe or continual behavioral problems on the bus such as:

- * Throwing objects from the bus.
- * Changing seats while the bus is in motion.
- * Use of tobacco, drugs, matches, lighters, or opening knives.
- * Extending any part of the body from the bus windows.
- * Defacing or damaging the bus.
- * Vulgar language, loud noises or shouting.
- * Using emergency doors except during emergency.

Students are to obey the driver at all times. Talking back, refusing to comply, and other disrespectful actions will be dealt with by the administrators.

1. Parents or guardians will be held responsible for damage a pupil does to a school bus or other school property.
2. If an offense is serious enough to justify immediate action, the driver may refuse an unruly student admittance to the bus and/or the administration can recommend full bus suspension.
3. Students may be assigned certain seats by the driver or administrators.
4. The bus operates on a definite schedule. The driver will not blow the horn or wait for students who are late to the bus stop.
5. Students are to observe the following:
 - a. Have a regular place to meet the bus.
 - b. Do not stand in the roadway while waiting for the bus.
 - c. Wait until the bus has come to a complete stop before attempting to enter or exit the bus.
 - d. Avoid unnecessary conversation with the driver while the bus is in motion.
 - e. Keep the bus clean of all trash.
 - f. Always cross in front of the bus after looking both ways down the street.
 - g. Students must stay seated while bus is in motion.
6. Students who drive to school and parents who bring their children should not enter the bus zones in front of the school.
7. Student drop off /pick up is in the designated area behind lunchroom.
8. Students should report to their designated building or morning bus assembly to be monitored by a teacher.
9. **Students should not be dropped off before 7:20 A.M.**

BUS REFERRALS

- #1 - warning/ notification sent to parents
- #2 - detention
- #3 - 1 day bus suspension
- #4 - 3 day bus suspension
- #5 - 5 day bus suspension
- #6 - 2 week bus suspension
- #7 - 1 month bus suspension
- #8 - remainder of school year bus suspension

MEDICATION

Gaston High School follows the Alabama State Department of Education Guidelines for medication administration. The school office personnel, nurse, and teachers are not allowed to furnish any type of medicine to students. If a student needs medicine at school, **parents must bring the medicine to school and state approved forms**

filled out with the nurse and parent signatures. The doctor signature is required for prescription medication. All prescription medication must be in the pharmacy bottle with the student's information for that medication. Over the counter medication must be in the original container with the seal intact.

Additional information:

Students are not to bring any medication to school, whether it is over the counter or prescription.

- * If an asthma inhaler, EpiPen, or other emergency medication is required to be kept "on person", the medication form must be filled out and left with the nurse.
- * All medication should be picked up by a parent at the end of the school year.
- * Medication left at school will be destroyed; no medication will be kept at school over the summer.

LUNCHROOM BEHAVIOR

1. Students are expected to sit at their assigned tables and leave their area clean upon exiting the lunchroom.
2. No food or drink should be taken out of the lunchroom at any time.
3. According to Alabama state regulations, no one may take carbonated drinks or fast food into the lunchroom.

NO STUDENT IS TO LEAVE THE LUNCHROOM WITHOUT PERMISSION FROM THEIR TEACHER, THIS IS CONSIDERED CUTTING CLASS / LEAVING SCHOOL WITHOUT PERMISSION AND CAN RESULT IN OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION.

ACTIVITIES

All school-sponsored activities shall be under the control of the school principal or his or her designee or sponsor. All persons associated with the activity must conform to school regulations regardless of whether the activity occurs during school or non-school hours or is held on or off school property. **Students who are suspended or expelled from school, or banned from campus are not allowed to attend or participate in any school-sponsored function, athletic event, or activity.** If a suspended student does attend one of these events, he or she will be subject to further disciplinary action from school administrators. Students who are banned from being at any school-sponsored activity or banned from campus will subject themselves to being turned over to law enforcement authorities if they attend a school-sponsored event.

BUYING AND SELLING PERSONAL PROPERTY

Students are not allowed to buy from, sell to, or trade items with other students at school. This includes any items for sale from any club or organization not sponsored by Gaston High School. The administration and faculty of Gaston High School are not responsible for retrieving student personal property in cases of this nature. Any property confiscated by the school will only be returned to the parent or guardian.

GAMES AND/OR TRADING CARDS

Students are not allowed to have any type of games or cards in their possession on campus, unless used in a teacher-led activity. These items will be taken up by the faculty and administration.

RADIOS, EAR BUDS, IPODS, ETC

Students are not permitted to have these items visible upon entering the school building. These items will be taken up by the faculty and administration if visible without permission.

(Please refer to the Etowah County Electronic Device/Cell Phone Policy.)

TELEPHONE

1. Students are not permitted to have cell phones visible upon entering the school building. These items will be taken up by the faculty and administration if visible without permission.
2. No student will be called out of class to the telephone except in case of emergency.
3. Students are not allowed to use the telephone except for school business.

LOCKERS

1. Lockers are the property of Gaston High School and **will be checked** periodically by the administration.
2. No lockers should be paper-locked or otherwise tampered with to prevent the locker from locking. Students violating this rule will be subject to disciplinary action.
3. Students should not write on or put stickers on any part of the lockers.
4. Sharing of lockers is not permitted. Students found violating this rule will be subject to disciplinary action.
5. Students should not keep any food or drink in their lockers other than bringing a lunch from home.
6. Lockers will be rented to students at the cost of **\$20.00** per year. This is non-refundable should the student transfer, quit, or be expelled from school.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

The administration reserves the right to search any student, vehicle, book bag, or locker at Gaston High School. Searches of lockers will be done on a periodic basis, and searches of vehicles, book bags, and students will be done if the administration deems it necessary for the safety and integrity of the school environment. Any prohibited items found during these searches will be confiscated and law enforcement officials will be notified when appropriate.

STUDENT PERSONAL PROPERTY

School personnel are not responsible for lost or stolen items that students bring to school. Valuable items should be left at home. Students should avoid bringing excessive amounts of money to school. Items brought to school should remain secured in the students' locker. Students are advised to lock their vehicles and lockers at all times.

HALL PASSES

Students are not to be in the hallways during instructional time without a legitimate reason and a designated hall pass from their teacher. Students will not be let out of class to make personal phone calls, talk to other students, or retrieve forgotten books and assignments from cars or lockers. Students in hallway without permission will be subject to disciplinary action.

NO REFUNDS

No refunds will be given to students for field trips if prepaid and then the student is not able to go on school trip due to disciplinary action caused by a school rule violation or personal reasons.

VISITORS ON CAMPUS

Students are not permitted to have visitors on school grounds unless approved by the administration. All non-registered students, parents, and other visitors must report to the main office to sign in and receive a visitors' ID sticker before going anywhere on campus. Students should report any person without an ID sticker to a teacher, administrator, or the SRO. Visitors are subject to driver's license check for proper identification.

BOOK BAGS/GYM BAGS - (NO ROLLING BOOK BAGS)

Book bags or gym bags are not allowed in classrooms. They must be put in the students locker before first period. These bags are subject to search and seizure by the administration or school resource officer if the administration deems it necessary.

Athletes/Cheerleaders should make arrangements with their coaches or sponsors for storage of team bags in a central location prior to the start of school each morning. All bags with PE clothes should be kept in the gym. Gym lockers are available from the gym instructor for a \$3.00 fee.

PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

Students are prohibited from engaging in public displays of affection on school grounds, including while attending school-sponsored events during or after school hours, held on or off campus. This includes, but is not limited to, kissing and holding hands. The administration has the authority to deem what kinds of physical contact between students are inappropriate for the school setting.

Violations of the policy will carry the following actions:

1st offense: Warning by the staff or administrators.

2nd offense: Students will be sent to office, and a discipline notice will be sent home to parents.

3rd offense: Students will be suspended from school, and a conference with parents of both students involved will be held prior to return to school.

STUDENT DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

1. All Gaston High School students should be dropped off behind the lunchroom at the faculty member who is on duty.
2. Speed limit is 10 MPH on campus.
3. No student should be dropped off prior to topping the hill behind the band room at the point where the faculty member is standing.
4. Parents who attempt to drop off students in front of the gym, in front of the main office during bus loading, and those dropping students off in the high school parking lot or directly behind the band room will be sent a letter reminding them of the drop-off procedures.

If parent continues to divert from procedures, an administrator will contact them concerning different drop-off plans for that student.

CHARGES FOR ELECTIVE CLASSES / SENIOR REQUIREMENTS

There are certain charges for the following elective classes. This is necessary to offset the expense for materials used in these classes. Students choosing these courses are required to pay the charge stipulated by the instructor. Lockers are mandatory and must be rented for the year.

NOTE: These charges are subject to change pending board approval. Any board decision to change the charge for a class will override any charge listed below.

Family and Consumer Science	\$30.00
Drivers Education	\$40.00
Agribusiness	\$30.00
Band	\$165.00 YEARLY
Mandatory Gym Locker	\$ 3.00
Keyboarding/Computer	\$30.00
Chemistry/Physics	\$20.00
Physiology	\$20.00
Senior Requirement	\$80.00
Senior Cap & Gown	\$50.00

RESPECT AND CONDUCT

Students are expected to behave properly in all school settings including classrooms, lunchroom, library, restrooms, playground, field trips and on school buses. Students must obey and show respect for all teachers, substitutes, and other school and board personnel. Any disrespectful behavior towards any staff members will result in disciplinary action for that student.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR PARTICIPATION

- 1. In order for a student to participate in any extracurricular activity, the student must have attended school for at least one-half the school day.** Checking in after 11:30 is counted as an absence and the student will not be allowed to participate in any activities. Checking out before 11:30 is counted as an absence.
2. No student will be allowed to participate in or attend any activities while on suspension from school or while attending alternative school.
3. Students must meet the State and County grade requirements to participate in any extracurricular activity.

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE EXCUSES

A student is fully responsible for any work or assignments given during an absence from school. It is the students' sole responsibility to get the missing assignments from the teacher upon his or her return to school.

Assignments can only be made up if the absence is excused.

All students arriving at school after 11:30 AM will be counted absent for the entire school day. Attendance for students in grades 7-12 will also be recorded each period for exemption purposes.

STUDENTS ARE NOT TO LEAVE CAMPUS FOR ANY REASON ONCE THEY HAVE ARRIVED UNLESS THEY HAVE PERMISSION FROM AN ADMINISTRATOR, EVEN IF THE STUDENT HAS ONLY COME INTO THE PARKING LOT PRIOR TO THE START OF SCHOOL.

In accordance with the law, only the following types of absences shall be considered excused, provided parental confirmation has been received.

1. Student illness
2. Inclement Weather which would endanger the life or health of the student if he or she attempted to attend school.
3. Legal quarantine.
4. Death in the immediate family.
5. Emergency conditions as determined by the principal or superintendent.
6. Permission from the principal with consent from the parent/guardian.
7. **Only accept three parental (absent) excuses per semester.** A parent note will only cover two days of consecutive absences. Anything more than two days would require another parent note or doctors excuse. After three notes, the absence will be marked unexcused unless it is for medical reasons, which will then require a doctors' note to be excused.

NOTE: Participation in extracurricular activities including but not limited to the following: field trips, prom, clubs, parking privilege's, homecoming activities, field days will be revoked for any student referred to Early Warning for excessive absences.

DELIVERY OF PERSONAL GIFTS

Flowers, candy, or any other personal items sent to students for birthdays or other special occasions will not be delivered to the student during school hours. The administration reserves the right to refuse delivery of these items.

LIBRARY

1. All students Gaston High School are entitled to use the library and to check out books.
2. Books are checked out for two weeks and may be renewed for additional time.
3. Students are responsible for paying for damaged or lost books.
4. Reference materials may be checked out overnight only and should be returned the following morning.
5. If a book is damaged, call it to the attention of the librarian. Do not attempt to make repairs.
6. No food, drink, or gum is allowed in the library.

FIRE DRILLS

1. One long continuous ringing of the bell will signal a fire drill.
2. All students are to leave their desks in a quiet and quick manner.
3. Remain quiet at all times.
4. Remain in line outside until the all-clear signal is given.
5. Return to the classroom in a calm and quiet manner.

TORNADO DRILLS

1. Short on/off ringing of the bell will signal a tornado drill.
2. Students are to walk with their class to the designated area in a quiet and calm manner.
3. Remain calm and quiet and listen for instructions from your teacher.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY / ATHLETICS / EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extracurricular activities are defined as activities that are sanctioned by a public school which are not related to a student's academic requirements.

Note: No younger siblings/friends are allowed to be left with other students who are participating in after-school extracurricular events/practices.

All students promoted to the 7th grade are eligible.

For students in grades 8-12 - Eligibility is determined by grades earned during previous school year/summer school.

For students entering grades 8-9 - Must have passing grades in five (5) subjects with a composite numerical average of 70.

For students entering grades 10-12 - For the last two semesters of attendance (and summer school, if applicable) must have a passing grade and earn the appropriate number(s) of credits.

Must include four (4) credits from the four core subjects of English, Science, Social Studies and Mathematics, with a composite numerical average of 70.

Regaining Eligibility Status

Students may regain eligibility at the start of each term using the last two term grades. For AHSAA purposes, a "term" is defined as two 9-week grading periods which equal one semester.

Physical education may only count as one (1) unit per year.

No more than two (2) units may be earned during summer school.

If a subject is repeated in summer school, the higher numerical grade for the subject may be used to compute the composite grade average.

ATHLETICS AND CHEERLEADING

All athletic and cheerleader programs of the Etowah County School System are conducted in accordance with the Alabama High School Athletic Association. Students must show written proof of adequate insurance coverage prior to engaging in practice or participation in any athletic program sponsored by the school. Students must submit to and pass a physical examination prior to engaging in practice or participation in any athletic program sponsored by the school. All athletes and cheerleaders are subject to random drug testing.

STUDENT PARKING

1. All students will park in their designated space in the parking lot.
2. Student cars must have their parking tag hanging from rearview mirror with number visible.
3. A valid driver's license in addition to current vehicle insurance are required to purchase a parking tag. Cost is \$25.00 per year.
4. The **10 MPH** speed limit on campus will be enforced at all times.
5. **Students are to exit their cars immediately after parking in the mornings and are not allowed in parking lot during school hours.**
6. Loitering is not allowed on any part of the school campus after school hours or after school-sponsored events.
7. Stickers, tags, writing or other things with obscene or offensive wording or pictures are prohibited on any cars driven to school.
8. Music must be kept down to a reasonable level. If it can be clearly heard from outside the car, it is too loud.
9. No parking on the highway or right of ways at any time.

10. Students who drive and are excessively tardy will have their driving privileges suspended by the administration.
11. Students caught driving and parking on campus without having purchased a permit after the grace period will subject themselves to of School Suspension.

First offense: Verbal or Written Warning , from teacher/
SRO/administration.

Second Offense: Lose of driving privilege for five days.

Third Offense: Lose of driving privilege for ten days.

NOTE: Students driving cars onto Gaston School property are hereby notified that their vehicle is subject to search at any time by the administration if there is reasonable suspicion of any illegal items being contained in the vehicle. Such items may include, but are not limited to tobacco products, lighters, matches, alcohol, narcotics, drug paraphernalia, knives, guns, ammunition, or other items reasonably considered to be a danger to students at Gaston High School. Disciplinary action will be taken against students and law enforcement notified when appropriate.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students are to remain in the teacher designated areas at all times. Appropriate clothing/shoes must be worn. A written excuse must be presented, signed by the parent or guardian, to excuse a student from participation in physical education for one or two days. A doctors' excuse must be presented for three or more consecutive days of non-participation in physical education activities.

HIGH SCHOOL (GRADES 7-12) STUDENT DRESS CODE

The purpose of the Gaston High School dress code is to give students a safe and orderly environment that is free from distraction. All students are expected to be neat, well-groomed, and modestly dressed at school and school activities. Any student who willingly and knowingly violates any provision of the dress code after having received reasonable notice, and in some cases being afforded an opportunity to conform to this code, shall be subject to disciplinary action. Teachers are responsible for checking student dress code the beginning of each class. All dress code violations, including warnings, will be documented in the computer by the administration.

The dress code as described in the Etowah County Code of Conduct applies in addition to the following:

1. Any clothing that causes distractions, disturbances, or is a safety risk is not allowed. Students are to wear clothing in the manner it is designed to be worn, i.e. clothing worn backwards or inside out is not allowed.
2. Sunglasses, hats, visors, or any other headgear may not be worn inside the school building. These items should not be in a student's possession and visible inside the school building during school hours.
3. Visible body piercing jewelry is limited to the ears.
4. Students must not expose skin of the midriff and cleavage. Straps of sleeveless tops must have a minimum width of two inches.
5. Undergarments should not be visible at any time. This includes but is not limited to boxers, spandex, bras, and sports bras.
6. All pants/shorts/skirts must be worn at the waist level. Pants and shorts must have a button and/or zipper at the waist level. All pants and shorts must be correctly sized without sagging or slacking.
7. All shorts/skirts should not be shorter than 3 inches above the knee. Holes in clothing, whether intentional or not, may not be higher than 3 inches above the knee.

8. Clothing or other personal possessions must not advertise alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, or adult establishments. Clothing or other personal possessions containing obscene, offensive, or suggestive pictures, words, or slogans will not be allowed.
9. Gaston administration reserves the final authority to deem articles of clothing and accessories inappropriate for the school setting.
10. No unnatural hair colors will be allowed.

VIOLATIONS OF STUDENT DRESS CODE

- **FIRST OFFENSE:** Written notice will be given to students for parents to sign and returned to assistant principal. Parents must bring appropriate clothing to school and student will not be allowed to return to class until the violation has been corrected and will be placed in ISS until clothes are brought to the school.
- **SECOND OFFENSE:** Parents will be called to bring appropriate clothing to school and the student will be assigned after school detention or ISS.
- **THIRD OFFENSE:** Student shall be suspended from school for one day. Parent must accompany student back to school after completion of suspension.
- **FOURTH OFFENSE:** Student is suspended from school for three days. Parent must accompany student back to school after completion of suspension.
- ***All** violations of the dress code are cumulative for the entire school year. It is the belief of the administration that each child and parent makes a conscious decision about what clothing the child will wear to school each day. If you have any doubts about whether a certain article of clothing will meet the standards set forth in the dress code, then please **do not** wear that article of clothing to school.*

TARDIES TO SCHOOL

Be advised it is the parents responsibility to get the student to school on time. Appropriate legal action shall be taken against parents who are neglectful in this area. Parents may be subject to appear at the early warning program. Failure to appear may result in the filing of a complaint or petition, under the Code of Alabama (1975), 16-28-12 (c).

***** ALL STUDENTS ARE TARDY AT 7:45 AM ****

TARDIES TO SCHOOL/CLASS (HIGH SCHOOL GRADES 7-12)

1. All morning tardies (check-ins) are to go through the office.
2. Students late to school or class for the first time in any given semester, will be issued a warning if the tardy is unexcused.
3. On the subsequent tardies to school or class in the same semester, the following disciplinary actions shall be followed:
 - 2nd tardy verbal warning
 - 3rd tardy conference / parent letter
 - 4th tardy parent/guardian must sign student in for the remainder of the semester/written notice/ one hour detention assigned
 - 5th tardy parent/guardian must sign student in/two hour detention/parent notification
4. A students failure to attend break detention/after school detention will result in additional days added.
5. At the end of the semester, a students tardy count is reduced to zero, and the tardy policy will be followed in the next semester from step one.

DRUGS/ALCOHOL/TOBACCO PRODUCTS

These items are not allowed on the school grounds or at any school functions during or after school hours. Possession of these items will result in severe disciplinary action being taken against the student, ranging from corporal punishment to possible expulsion from Gaston High School. **The appropriate law enforcement officials will be notified when necessary.**

PROBABLE CAUSE/REASONABLE SUSPICION DRUG TESTING

Students refusing a drug test will be treated as a positive result.

LUNCHESES

The cost of lunches at Gaston School for the 2019-2020 school year is as follows. Prices may be changed at a later date by the board of education and will supersede these prices:

Gaston Students (K-12) - Breakfast – Free to all students

Students Lunch - \$2.50 plus \$0.25 for tea grades 9-12

Teachers/Staff - Lunch - \$3.25

Visitors Lunch - \$4.25

Visitors Breakfast - \$2.50

SAFE SCHOOL POLICY

Gaston High School will follow the safe school guidelines and mandates set forth by the State of Alabama and the Etowah County Board of Education. The faculty and administration will do what it deems necessary within its power to ensure the safety of all students and personnel at Gaston High School.

Any changes mandated by the Alabama State Department of Education or the Etowah County Board of Education shall supersede any requirement or information set forth in this handbook. The principal or designee have the right to enforce the rules and regulations in this handbook or any new regulations that may be passed by the State Department of Education or the Etowah County Board of Education.

PRIVACY ACT

The Etowah County Board of Education has developed and implemented a policy of compliance with the General Education Provision Act, title IV of Public Law 90-147, as amended. The act prohibits the release of personally identifiable information by school officials about students or former students without the written permission of the parents of the students or former students. However, information requested by persons or institutions that have a legitimate educational interest in the student or former student may be released without written consent.

CHECK-INS & CHECK-OUTS

1. All check-ins/outs will be done through the office unless otherwise announced by administration. Parent notes for check-ins and check-outs may be used three times during a semester to prevent unexcused absences from classes.
2. A student will be allowed to leave school early ONLY if a parent, guardian, or member of the immediate family comes to the main office and signs the student out. Persons checking out students must be listed on that students check-out list.
3. **Telephone requests or notes from home requesting check-outs will not be honored except in cases of family emergencies and approval by administration.**
4. Students should not be checked out for personal reasons whenever possible. These are unexcused absences from school and class work cannot be made up by the student and will reflect poorly in his/her grade in class.
5. Elementary parents are discouraged from checking out students after 2:00 unless for an emergency. **Checking out students in order to avoid sitting in the pick-up line will not be permitted.**

TRANSCRIPT REQUEST PROCEDURE

All official transcript requests and transcript exchanges are handled through Parchment Management Exchange. Contact the high school guidance counselor or school office for instructions.

Transfer Request Application Process

Please adhere to pages 9-11 in the ECBOE Code of Conduct for Transfer Request.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Etowah County Board of Education has adopted a policy that prohibits discrimination in all educational programs and activities and in employment and promotion practices within the Etowah County School System. This board policy applies specifically to non-discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, age, religious beliefs, national origin, or ethnic group and provides that no otherwise qualified handicapped individual shall, solely by reason of the handicapping constitution, be subject to discrimination. Persons wishing further information about redressing a grievance or filing a grievance procedure related to discrimination involving sex, age, color, race, religious belief, national origin, or ethnic group should contact the Etowah County Board of Education. Persons wishing further information about redressing a grievance or filing a grievance procedure related to discrimination involving the rights of handicapped individuals should contact the following:

Etowah County Board of Education
(256) 549-7578

ETOWAH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

The mission of the School Resource Officer is to help maintain a safe school environment, provide professional law enforcement services to our schools and communities within the Etowah County School system. The Etowah County Sheriff's Office will strive to enhance the quality of life in our schools by providing a well trained school resource officer who can build a partnership between law enforcement, students, faculty, and parents. Most importantly, the safety of our students will be our main goal.

PROM GUEST GUIDELINES

Guests attending the Gaston High School Junior/Senior Prom must be at least a high school freshman and no older than 20 years of age. Guests must be either 1) attending a high school and should present a letter from their principal stating they are in good standing, or (2) have graduated and must present a copy of their diploma. The administration reserves the right to deny admission to the prom.

PROM COMMITTEE

To be selected or allowed to serve on the prom committee is an honor and privilege. The sponsors have the right to add or remove members at their discretion. The sponsors will present guidelines at the beginning of the year or before each event.

SCHOOL DANCES

School dances are under the supervision of sponsoring clubs and its representatives. Sponsors will determine if certain types of dancing is acceptable. All students are warned that inappropriate dancing will not be tolerated. Students asked a second time to stop dancing inappropriately will be forced to leave and no money will be refunded. Further disciplinary action may be taken by the administration if deemed necessary.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF
GASTON HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENT HANDBOOK 2019-20**

I, _____

name of student

a student at Gaston High School and my parent(s)/guardian(s), hereby
acknowledge by our signatures that we have received, read, and
understood the rules and expectations set forth in the Gaston School
Handbook.

I would like to receive school updates by various email/text School Messenger notices.

Valid E-mail Contact: _____

Primary cell number: _____

(Signed) _____

Student

(Signed) _____

Parent/Guardian

(Date: _____

NOTE: The student is to sign the above statement. If the student lives with both parents, both parents are to sign the statement. If the student lives with only one parent or guardian, only one is to sign with the student.

PLEASE DETACH THIS PAGE AND RETURN IT TO YOUR HOMEROOM TEACHER.