Washington County Public Schools

2020-2021

HANDBOOK & GUIDE

Building a Community That Inspires Curiosity, Creativity & Achievement.

WCPS
Washington County Public Schools
NEED TO TALK?
Problems with alcohol or drugs? Depression? Anxiety? Thoughts of suicide?

Crisis can take many forms. CALL MARYLAND’S HELPLINE
Reach out to talk with someone who cares. Available 24 hours/7 days a week.

CALL 211, PRESS 1
or
TEXT US
Text your ZIP code to 898-211 (TXT-211).

For more information, visit 211md.org.

MARYLAND Department of Health
This guidebook contains information about the many schools and programs available to students attending Washington County Public Schools. This information is very important. If you are unable to read it, please have someone explain it to you in a language you can understand, or call 301-766-2977.

ARABIC

لا يمكنني قراءة النص العربي. إذا لم تستطع قراءته، فقم بالرجوع إلى مكتبة 도서관 أو مكتب العمل العام. 301-766-2977

SPANISH

Este manual contiene información sobre las muchas escuelas y programas disponibles para los estudiantes que asisten a las Escuelas Públicas del Condado de Washington. Esta información es muy importante. Si no puede leerlo, pída que le expliquen en un idioma que pueda entenderlo, o llame al 301-766-2977.

VIETNAMESE

Tập sách này được tìm hiểu tiếng Việt để tất cả học sinh có thể đọc được. Nếu bạn không thể đọc, hãy tìm đến thư viện hoặc một người bạn có thể giúp bạn. 301-766-2977
“STUDENTS FIRST”

September 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians:

I encourage you to review the 2020-2021 Washington County Public Schools (WCPS) Handbook and Guide, which contains important information for students and families. It is helpful to read through the handbook as a family and then complete and return the designated forms to your child’s school.

As a parent or guardian, your involvement is critical to your child’s success in school, and WCPS provides many avenues for you to be engaged in the educational process. We encourage you to spend time talking with your child about the school day, classroom time, and homework, as many of the assignments your child will be asked to complete will benefit from your experience and guidance. One of the best ways to support your child on a daily basis is by ensuring he/she is prepared for each school day. In addition, we advocate for reading in families, especially reading with your child. We believe your interest in your child’s school success is a positive motivational force and sends a clear message to children that you value their education.

Volunteering at your child’s school is a deeper level of engagement. This work is greatly appreciated by school staff as the experience allows them to know you better, and it is another way of showing children that you care about their academic success. Volunteering in schools and contributing to the work of teachers and administrators is proven to turn good schools into great schools.

There are also volunteer opportunities with advisory committees and study groups which seek parent participation for input and feedback in the school system’s decision-making processes. Additional details are shared through local media outlets, on the WCPS website, and in schools throughout the year.

I would like to personally thank you for placing your trust in the dedicated and committed staff of WCPS to lead and guide your child through his/her academic career. WCPS is a “Students First” school district, where every decision we make is in the best interest of student learning.

Respectfully,

Boyd J. Michael III, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Building a Community That Inspires Curiosity, Creativity, and Achievement.

wcpsmd.com
General Information

Introduction and Scope of Handbook and Guide

The Washington County Public Schools (WCPS) Handbook and Guide for parents, guardians, students, and staff includes school system guidelines, policies, and procedures that apply to all public schools in Washington County. In addition to this handbook and guide, administrative teams at each school may include additional expectations for their students at the school level with the approval of appropriate WCPS administrators. Please review this handbook and guide during the early days of the school year and return the pull-out section to schools for students enrolled this school year.

Parent Involvement and Parents Helping Students

WCPS, in its effort to provide quality education for all students, seeks a full partnership with parents, guardians, family members, and the community. WCPS recognizes that parents, family members, and communities need a full understanding of the educational opportunities for children and that schools need maximum involvement of parents, family members, and communities in the school improvement process.

Parent involvement enhances the academic and social development of students.

Definitions

- **Parent**—the adult(s) responsible for the direct care of the child, i.e., biological parent(s), custodial parent(s), guardian(s), foster parent(s).
- **Family**—the people directly involved with the well-being of the child, i.e., brother(s), sister(s), aunt(s), uncle(s), grandparent(s), step-parent(s).
- **Community**—all other people involved in supporting the child, i.e., neighbors, schools, businesses, etc.
- **Parent Involvement**—any action or behavior which directly or indirectly enhances or encourages a child’s education, i.e., providing breakfast for the child prior to going to school, reviewing homework with the child each night, being active in a PTA/PTO, communicating often with teachers, serving on committees, attending school functions, etc.

Belief Statement

Parents, guardians, and other family members are the child’s first teachers. Therefore, parents and family members are encouraged to provide a home atmosphere that supports learning and to express to their children the importance of education. Further, parents, guardians, and family members are encouraged to cooperate and collaborate with teachers and school administrators in matters relating to their child’s education and to participate in school program planning and decision making.

To promote effective education, schools also need the support of other members of the community, including parent and service organizations, public libraries, businesses, and faith-based organizations. Community groups will be made aware that an investment in education is an investment in the community. Further, community groups will be encouraged to help schools develop and, as appropriate, implement school programs that promote educational goals and support high academic expectations for all students.

Goals

- In partnership for student success and achievement, WCPS will work towards the following goals, based on the National and Maryland P.T.A. Standards:
  - **COMMUNICATION**—Schools and families will communicate frequently and clearly about academic opportunities, school performance, student progress, and school-family partnerships.
  - **PARENTING**—Schools and the community will work together to support families’ parenting skills and developmental activities that prepare young children for school and promote ongoing achievement.
  - **STUDENT LEARNING**—Parents, families, and community members will support academic achievement by reading with children, helping them with assignments, and engaging them in educational activities.
  - **VOLUNTEERING**—Parents, families, and community members will be encouraged to volunteer in efforts to improve schools and support students.
  - **DECISION MAKING**—Parents, families, schools, and community members will collaborate, as appropriate, on educational decisions that affect children, families, and school improvement.
  - **COLLABORATION**—WCPS, community organizations, agencies, and businesses will collaborate effectively and efficiently to strengthen schools, families, and student learning.
Title I Schools

- To provide parents of students in Title I schools with opportunities to provide input to the school, each Title I school will:
  - Convene an annual meeting to explain the Title I program and inform parents of their right to be involved in the program.
  - Involve parents in the planning, review, and improvement of the school’s Title I program, as appropriate.
  - Provide information about the Title I program and describe curricula, student assessments, and proficiency levels.
  - Provide parents with the opportunity to submit dissenting views about the school’s Title I program.
  - Offer a flexible number of meetings and may use Title I funds to pay related expenses, such as child care, transportation, or home visits.

Accessing the WCPS Student Information System

Parents are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to view student educational information online by signing up for Synergy “ParentVUE” portal. Through ParentVUE, parents and legal guardians are able to access real-time information about their child’s schedule, assignments, and grades. In fact, a single login will allow parents/guardians to view information on all WCPS students in the family. Parents/guardians must use a computer and web browser to log in to ParentVUE for the first time and to create an account. To log in for the first time, contact your child’s school for a username and password.

Visiting Schools

Schools and school grounds are places of learning and work. To maintain security and safety, the school staff, parents, students, and community must work as partners. Parents and visitors must initially use the main entrance. A video intercom system is available at the front door of each school.

VISITORS—Parents and visitors must check in at the school office and request a Visitor Pass. This practice supports a safer school. Without a pass, access will be denied.

Parents or visitors requesting to meet with a teacher or administrator may be required to schedule an appointment. Teachers will not be available for unscheduled meetings during the school day.

When visiting or picking up a child, the office staff may ask to see the visitor’s driver’s license or other Maryland approved identification.

Due to federal and state laws regarding the privacy of student information, only parents, legal guardians, and/or those with written authorization will be permitted to visit or access students during the school day.

See page 18 for information on Consent to Permit Access to Student and/or Student Information.

STUDENTS CAN HELP—Students are encouraged to be alert for unusual or suspicious activity in the school or on the school grounds. Talk of violence or threats should be reported immediately to a teacher or an administrator.

MARYLAND LAW—“A person may not willfully disturb or otherwise willfully prevent the orderly conduct of activities, administration, or classes of any institution of elementary, secondary, or higher education.” (§ 26-101 of the Annotated Code of Maryland) The school administration is responsible for the enforcement of this law.

Video Surveillance Cameras

WCPS and the Washington County Board of Education believes that the safety and security of students are top priorities. The Board has authorized the installation and use of video surveillance cameras in schools.
Food and Nutrition Services

The Food and Nutrition Services Department is a self-supporting enterprise that sponsors the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs. The primary source of funding is from the federal government. The only local funds received by this department come from students at the point of sale or in the form of kitchen equipment during capital improvement projects. More than 225 professionals take pride in serving over 23,000 meals daily in 48 school sites. Breakfast and lunch is available daily in every cafeteria.

It is the mission of the food services team to prepare and serve nutritious and appealing meals that meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans for students, staff, and the community in a positive, cheerful manner, while maintaining financial soundness and contributing to the quality and excellence of the educational process. The nutritional balance of each meal is available daily on our menu web page. (www.wcps.nutrislice.com)

Meal Prices
The price for lunch is $2.35 for elementary students and $2.60 for secondary students, and $0.40 for students approved for reduced priced meals. Lunch for staff is $3.75. Breakfast is available for $1.55 and is free to any student eligible for free or reduced priced meals. Parents are encouraged to enjoy a meal when visiting the school; the visitor’s lunch price is $4.10 per meal.

Student Accounts
All students have a debit account which is accessed with their student identification number. Parents have the ability to deposit money in their child’s account for meals, milk, or a la carte purchases. A la carte items may not be purchased by any student until a negative balance is paid in full, even if payment for a la carte is with cash. Student account activity can be monitored, low balance alerts can be sent, and online deposits may be paid at www.myschoolbucks.com. Parents can also limit their child’s a la carte purchases by contacting the Food and Nutrition Services office at 301-766-2890. Parents/guardians are encouraged to ensure that their child has money on a daily basis to purchase meals. Any charges incurred by students are the responsibility of the parent/guardian. WCPS will notify parents of negative account balances by phone and mail. When all efforts to collect negative account balances have been exhausted with no communication from the family, WCPS will turn delinquent accounts over to a collection agency. The complete charge policy and regulation is included as an appendix to the handbook and available on WCPS website.

Free and Reduced Priced Meals
As a sponsor of the National School Lunch Program, WCPS offers the Free and Reduced Priced Meal program to families in Washington County. Foster children and families receiving benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Temporary Aid for Needy Families are eligible for free meals. Additionally, families who have a household income of 130% of the federal poverty level or below are eligible to receive free meals. Families with a household income of 130% to 185% are eligible to receive reduced priced meals. The cost for a reduced priced lunch is $0.40, and the school breakfast is free.

A new application must be completed each year. Applications are to be completed electronically at www.schoollunchapp.com. If you are not able to complete the application in this format, a paper application will be made available to you by calling the Food and Nutrition Services office at 301-766-2890. Paper applications can be returned to your child’s school or to the Food and Nutrition Services office, 10435 Downsville Pike, Hagerstown, MD 21740.

Allergies and Special Dietary Needs
WCPS works to ensure that students with allergies or special dietary needs are served accordingly. Parents/guardians should contact the school health office and the Food and Nutrition Services office at 301-766-2890 as soon as a special dietary need is identified. Parents must also complete a Medical Form for Students with Special Dietary Needs, which is located on the Food and Nutrition Services website at http://wcpsmd.com/food-nutrition-services.

Contact Us
Suggestions and questions about the food services program are welcome. Please call 301-766-2890 for more information.

Media Permission
WCPS works cooperatively with representatives of the news media to disseminate information concerning programs and activities. With approval of the school principal and/or the communications officer, news media representatives and school system employees may videotape or photograph students participating in school programs and activities for publications or broadcasts, including the Internet and Antietam Cable Channel 99.
In order to streamline parent/guardian completion of various student information, the following notice is provided on the Student Health/Family Information form and distributed to all families the first week of school.

In the course of school activities, WCPS staff and/or the news media occasionally wish to interview, photograph, or videotape students, display their work, or publish their names. Unless indicated otherwise, we will assume permission to do so. (WCPS cannot control media coverage of events that are open to the public.)

School system staff and media representatives will be given appropriate access to students for media/publicity-related purposes unless the parent/guardian indicates, in writing, that permission is denied.

At times, teachers and authorized students may use recording devices as part of an assignment. Those recordings (audio/video) are used for classroom purposes and are not made available to the media.

In addition, teachers may use recording devices to record (audio/video) the classroom environment for educational purposes, such as professional development and self-evaluation. Such recordings must be maintained by a school administrator.

Overview of Information Resources

WCPS on the Web

The WCPS website is a constantly changing method of communication for WCPS staff, students, parents, and anyone who is interested in the system. The site contains a wealth of information from telephone numbers and school addresses to employment opportunities, complete versions of district publications, news of honors and awards received, news releases, and general system information. Information and documentation for Board meetings are posted on BoardDocs, the Board of Education’s website, which can be accessed through the WCPS website. See: wcpsmd.com

Social Media

WCPS shares information and engages with our school community through a variety of social media platforms, including:

- Facebook (www.facebook.com/wcpsmd)
- Twitter (@wcpsmd)
- YouTube (www.youtube.com/mywcps411)

Some individual schools also maintain a presence on social media outlets. For more information, simply search the name of the school on the social media platform or speak with a school administrator.

Connect 5 Notifications/WCPS App

WCPS utilizes technology to keep families informed of events, emergencies and other school system news. Contact methods range from phone calls and e-mails to text messages and Smart device notifications. Parents and guardians are encouraged to provide a mobile phone number and an e-mail address when filling out student information cards, or call the home school to add this information so the school system can contact families with important information, including school closures, emergency notifications, and specific school news. Similar information is shared via the WCPS app, which can be downloaded for iOS and Android devices by searching “Washington County ps” in app stores. Allow notifications in phone settings to receive alerts about new information posted to the app about your child’s school.

Antietam Cable Channel 99

Antietam Cable Channel 99 is a cooperative communication venture with Hagerstown Community College, WCPS, and Antietam Cable. Check out activity listings, live Board meetings, and other special programming. School closing/delay information and other emergency communication will be posted on the scroll when circumstances warrant.

Board Advisory Committees

Advisory committees are valuable resources in the WCPS system. The committees study important topics and make recommendations to the Board of Education. They also help facilitate communication between system stakeholders and the Board. For more information, contact Debbie Cechovic at 301-766-2971 or cechodeb@wcps.k12.md.us.
Student Enrollment

Enrollment and Transfer
A legal parent/guardian must be physically present with appropriate documentation in order to enroll a student in WCPS. If an in-person enrollment is not possible because the school is temporarily closed to the public, school staff will schedule a video conference with the parent or make a home visit to verify the identity of the enrolling adult, review completed enrollment forms, discuss student needs, and to identify a start date.

Photo ID: To validate the identity of the parent/guardian responsible for the student’s enrollment, photo identification must be provided at the time of enrollment.

Proof of Age: Students new to WCPS need to provide documentation to establish proof of age in the form of a birth certificate or passport if birth certificate is not available. The name of the enrolling parent must be included on the birth certificate or official documentation establishing legal custody must be provided.

Age Requirements: Children are eligible for pre-kindergarten (Pre-K), kindergarten (K), and first grade based on their birth dates and ages:

- Children must be four years old on or before September 1 for pre-kindergarten.
- Children must be five years old on or before September 1 for kindergarten.
- Children must be six years old on or before September 1 for first grade.

See page 38 for information on Early Admission process.

According to Maryland State Department of Education regulations, a one-year exemption from school enrollment may be granted if a parent or legal guardian believes that a delay in school attendance is in the best interest of the child. The exemption is also permitted for five-year-old children enrolled in a full-time licensed child care center, full-time registered family day care home, or part-time or full-time Head Start program.

Questions regarding mandatory kindergarten may be directed to the Office of Early Childhood Education at 301-766-8722.

The School: Generally, a student entering WCPS for the first time must enroll in a school based on the legal residence of the student and the custodial parent(s) or legal guardian(s). Parent(s)/Guardian(s) may access the Washington County Interactive School District Map on WCPS website in order to determine the appropriate school.

Custody: The person enrolling a student must be the legal parent/guardian of the student and reside in the appropriate school district with the student. Biological parent(s) are presumed to be the legal custodian of a child unless legal documentation exists that alters this fact. Accordingly, legal custody, not simply physical custody, must be determined at the time of enrollment. Any legal documentation pertaining to the custody of the student must be provided and maintained in the student’s cumulative file. A student under age 18 living with a person other than his/her legal custodians may not enroll in school until an application for legal custody is filed. In Washington County, application to transfer or modify custody is filed with the Circuit Court for Washington County (form DR4 or DR7 along with DR-50). Notarized statements from parents transferring custody to a relative or another person are not legal documents and are not acceptable for educational use.

Residency Verification: The custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) must provide proof of residency, current within three (3) months of enrollment date, including applicant’s name, address, and date. Proof of residency consists of one of the following: real estate tax bill/statement, lease or mortgage statement, utility bill (water, sewer, gas, electric, oil), or deed, title, or settlement sheet. Proof of residency must have been issued or executed within 3 months of the date it is presented. Proof of residency must be provided upon initial enrollment, with any change of address, and when a student is transferring from one school to another.

Health Enrollment Requirements: The Maryland State Immunization Regulations require that children who are starting school have the appropriate immunizations. For each new entrant, a Maryland Immunization Certificate, Form 896, is required by law so that immunization information may be recorded in the school file. Children will not be enrolled in school unless they have had the required immunizations. All WCPS students must have a physical examination performed by a physician or certified nurse practitioner within a 9-month period before the child enters the school system or within a 6-month period after entering the school system. All WCPS students must have a Blood Lead Testing Certificate completed when enrolling a child in Pre-K, K, or first grade. (See Student Health Immunization Requirements on page 29)

Questions concerning school enrollment should be directed to the Department of Student Services at 301-766-2960.
Special Permission

WCPS’ regulation for student enrollment stipulates that each student shall attend the appropriate school in his or her district. However, a custodial parent/guardian may request permission for a student to attend a school in another WCPS at-attendance area for specific reasons including: childcare; the need for a specific academic program; hardship; or other extenuating circumstances. Each request for a student to attend a school outside his/her designated attendance area will be reviewed and decided on its own merit and school capacity. A request for special permission may be recommended for approval if the school has adequate local-rated capacity to accommodate the pupil, if the student is in good standing (academics, behavior, and attendance), and if an approved special permission criteria is deemed to exist.

To request permission for a student to attend school out of the home school attendance area:

- A **Special Permission Application** for the appropriate school year may be obtained from the school in the desired attendance area.
- The application must be submitted between February 1 and May 1 of the current school year for the following school year to the principal of the requested school. Applications received at any time during the year other than February 1 - May 1 must make note of special or changing circumstances.
- A recommendation will be rendered by the principal on or before May 30.
- The special permission application, including the principal's recommendation, will be forwarded to the Department of Student Services for final decision. Written notification of the decision will be sent to the applicant by the end of June.
- If the request for special permission is approved, transportation to the out-of-district school will be the responsibility of the custodial parent/guardian(s).
- If the applicant wishes to appeal the decision, an appeal should be submitted in writing to the Director of Student Services, School Counseling, and School Health within five (5) days of receipt of denial notification.

Students in Magnet and Signature-Theme Programs

Students from many areas in Washington County travel outside of their attendance areas to participate in magnet and signature-themed programs. All students should have the opportunity to be successful, which requires a partnership between each family and the magnet/signature school community. Student success is predicated on the following:

**Academic Commitment**

Magnet/signature program students demonstrate a strong work ethic, take coursework seriously, and possess a willingness to be challenged. Magnet/signature program teachers hold high, yet attainable, expectations for their students. Should a student struggle academically, the school team will work with the parent(s) and student to determine specific areas of need and create a plan. Progress according to the plan will be evaluated after a time period that is determined by the parent, student, and teacher. If the student fails to make adequate progress toward a predetermined benchmark, then he/she will no longer continue in the magnet/signature program at that site. The student would then return to the school in the attendance area of current residence.

**Cooperative Behavior:** Magnet/signature program students are active and considerate members of the school community; they are respectful to both adults and peers. Repeated or severe behavior infractions will result in a student’s dismissal from the magnet/signature program and require a student to return to his/her home school.

**Student Health/Family Information Forms**

Parents or guardians must complete the Student Health/Family Information Form for each student upon enrollment and at the beginning of each school year. This vital information is kept on file in the School Attendance Office and shared with the School Health Office, so that it will be available, should an emergency occur or there is a need to make contact with the home. Parents/Guardians **MUST** provide the contact information for at least three individuals who will serve as “Emergency Contacts.” Contact persons listed should be those persons who will be accessible to the school and may be entrusted to assume temporary care or supervision of the student if contacted by school staff because the school is unable to reach the parent(s) or guardian(s). Parents/Guardians are also requested to provide up to date health information for each student on this form, including any health conditions, medications, allergies, etc. so that school health staff can provide appropriate assistance, if necessary. This information should be updated annually, or sooner, if information changes.
School Bus Transportation

Provision of Service to and from School

1. Students must ride the bus to which they have been assigned. School staff and school bus drivers are not authorized to accept notes from a parent for their student to ride a bus other than the one to which he or she has been assigned.

2. Changes to your student’s transportation, due to residential relocation or change of a consistent care provider, can be made only by submitting a Transportation Location Change Form (TLC). The form is available on the WCPS website in the Quick Links column. It is a “fill-in” form that can be completed and either emailed to wcps.transportation@wcps.k12.md.us or faxed to 301-766-2911.

3. Parents must complete a TLC Form (See Exhibit EEA-E) to request student transportation to and/or from any location other than the student’s home address. Any such request is subject to the approval of the Transportation Supervisor or designee. A TLC Form must be submitted annually or when a student’s transportation change becomes necessary.

4. To promote safety, consistency, and accountability, submitting a TLC Form will allow, within the student’s assigned school zone, two consistent a.m. stop locations and two consistent p.m. stop locations per student for the school year. Exceptions will be made only in case of an emergency, as determined by the Transportation Supervisor or designee. A maximum of ten working days may be required to process and implement a TLC request.

5. Consistent stop locations mean that a student must maintain the same schedule from week-to-week. Alternation of days or weeks is not permissible.

Transportation of Students with Special Permission Approval

Generally, students who receive special permission to attend a school outside of their attendance area must provide their own transportation to the “new” school. Parents may request access to an existing bus stop inside the attendance area of the “new” school’s approved school zone. All requests are subject to the submission of required information and the approval of the Transportation Department.

1. A parent or guardian who is requesting transportation for a student with special permission must submit a TLC Form to the Transportation Department.

2. The TLC Form is subject to the approval of the Transportation Department. Available seating on the bus is one of the considerations in the approval process.

3. Students, for whom transportation is approved, will be dropped off at a pre-designated location which, in most cases, will not be in proximity to the student’s home. It is the obligation of the parent or guardian to be present at the designated drop-off location at all times.

4. The TLC Form must also provide an alternate adult and a dwelling in the immediate area of the designated bus drop-off location. This information is important in the event the parent or guardian is unable to meet the student at the designated stop at the designated time.

Failure of the parent or guardian to adhere to these obligations will result in the immediate termination of special permission bus services.

(See also, Policy JC and Administrative Regulation JC-R – “Permission to Attend School Out of Home School Attendance Area”)

School Bus Riders Rules and Regulations

The school bus is an extension of the school day. Conduct should be the same as in the classroom. The safety of all passengers on the school bus is paramount to WCPS. The school bus riding rules are posted on every bus.

I. SCHOOL BUS RIDING RULES

   A. Follow directions from the driver the first time that they are given.
   B. Driver is authorized to assign seats.
   C. Remain properly seated at all times during the ride.
   D. Use classroom voice on the bus. No loud talking and no profanity.
   E. Keep aisle clear at all times. Do not block rear emergency door.
   F. Keep all body parts to yourself and inside the bus at all times.
   G. The school bus is a drug, alcohol, and tobacco-free zone.
   H. Use of cell phones is restricted to games, music, or texting. No phone conversations, no use of cameras, and maintain possession at all times.
   I. Never tamper with the bus or any of its equipment.
   J. Maintain quiet when crossing a railroad track.
Students may transport musical instruments as long as it can be held on his/her lap or placed at his/her feet. The instrument may not protrude into the aisle or occupy the seat space of another passenger, nor can it impede the view of the rear window, or of the other students, to the driver. Other items, such as classroom projects, may be transported so long as the container size meets the same guidelines for storage as musical instruments. Glass containers and animals, including birds, fish, and insects, may not be transported.

II. AFTER LEAVING THE BUS
   A. The driver will not discharge students at stops other than the regular bus stop, at the home, or at school, unless proper authorization is received from the school principal and/or the Transportation Department.
   B. When it is necessary to cross the road, students should always walk at least 10 feet in front of the bus, looking to be sure that no traffic is approaching from either direction. Students should never cross behind the bus.
   C. Students should proceed straight home upon exiting the school bus.

III. EXTRACURRICULAR TRIPS
   A. The above rules and regulations apply to any field trip under school sponsorship.
   B. Students shall respect the directions of a competent chaperone appointed by the school and follow directions given by the driver

School Bus Stop Laws
Excerpted from the Maryland Vehicle Law, Titles 1, 2, and 11 to 27 of the Transportation Article, and 11.02.06, “Rules and Regulations Governing the Transportation of School Children.”

§ 21-706. Overtaking and Passing School Vehicle
   The driver must stop on meeting or overtaking any stopped school vehicle. If a school vehicle has stopped on a roadway and is operating the alternately flashing red warning lights specified in §22-228 of this article, the driver of any other vehicle meeting or overtaking the school vehicle:
   ● Shall stop at least 20 feet from the rear of the school vehicle, if approaching the school vehicle from its rear, or at least 20 feet from the front of the school vehicle, if approaching the school vehicle from its front.
   ● May not proceed until the school vehicle resumes motion or the alternately flashing warning lights are deactivated.

§ 22-228. Special Equipment on School Vehicles
   Every school vehicle driver shall put in operation alternately flashing warning signals not less than 100 feet before bringing the vehicle to a full stop for the purpose of receiving or discharging passengers or when stopping within 100 feet behind another school vehicle in the act of loading or unloading passengers.

Parental Responsibilities
1. Riding the school bus is a privilege. Student behavior directly affects the safety of all passengers. School buses are an extension of the school day and all school rules and regulations apply accordingly. All elementary students will be assigned to a seat. The bus driver is authorized to assign seats to middle and high school students at any time. Parents or guardians must ensure that their student(s) understands the rules and regulations for riding the bus.
2. Parents should notify their student’s school immediately of a change of address or to request a change in transportation. Complete a Transportation Location Change Form (TLC) for bus stop location changes other than your student’s home address.
3. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to provide supervision for their student(s) while walking to, from, or waiting at the designated bus stop, or while walking to and from school if they reside in the designated non-transported area. Parents are responsible for identifying the appropriate walk route from home to school or to the bus stop.
4. Parents are expected to have students at the assigned bus stop five (5) minutes before the scheduled arrival time of the bus in the morning. Traffic volume or accidents, beyond the control of the Transportation Department, may affect the bus schedule. Please allow a window of time for the bus to arrive. For information regarding a late bus, please call 301-766-2903.
5. Pre-K and Kindergarten students must be met at the bus stop at the end of the school day by a parent, guardian, or care provider who has been identified on the student’s emergency contact list. In the event that an authorized adult or appropriately aged sibling is not at the bus stop, the Pre-K or Kindergarten student will be returned to the school. Repeated occurrences of no one meeting a Pre-K or Kindergarten student at the bus stop may result in suspension of bus services, pending a meeting with the parent, school administrator, Assistant Supervisor of Transportation, and bus driver.
6. Parents or guardians are liable for damage caused by their student(s) to the property of others, including the school bus.
7. Parents are not authorized to board the bus at the bus stop. If a parent has a concern regarding their student’s transportation, they should contact their school or the Transportation Department.
8. Parents should learn their student’s bus number for safety and security purposes, and to expedite assistance when contacting the school or Transportation Department.
The application of common sense is the best method for determining the role of the parent regarding the safety of their student traveling to and from school, either as passengers on a school bus or as pedestrians.

Student Bus Discipline

Discipline problems on the school bus distract the driver’s attention from driving safely, which could potentially lead to an accident. To minimize that type of situation from occurring, it is very important for students to know and follow the School Bus Riding Rules and for parents to communicate the importance of the rules to their student(s).

If a student chooses to break a rule, the following consequences may be applied:

Step 1 – The driver will give a verbal warning, describing the action for which the student is being warned.

Step 2 – The driver has the right to select and implement one or more of the following actions:

- Consult with school staff who have knowledge of the student for guidance and support.
- Provide a written discipline report to the parent.
- Place student on probation for one week with the expectation that the behavior will be corrected.
- Assign student to a specific seat for a defined period of time.

Step 3 – The driver will prepare a written referral and deliver it directly to school administration for action.

- School administration is responsible for dealing with the referred student and for administering appropriate disciplinary action.
- School administration will complete their portion of the written referral, noting action taken, and return a copy to the school bus driver.
- If a student is suspended from the bus, the driver should be notified of the start date and duration of the suspension.
- A driver may be present at a student conference with school administration and/or a parent during the discipline process as appropriate.

Severe offenses, such as possession of weapons, drugs, or fighting, etc., will escalate the consequences as reflected in the Disciplinary Guidelines set forth on page 26-27 of this handbook.

If a student loses his/her bus riding privileges, it is for all school buses operating in Washington County.

HOUSE BILL 631: Transportation – Interfering with Transit Operators and School Bus Drivers - Penalties prohibits a person from obstructing, hindering, or interfering with a school bus driver while the driver is engaged in the performance of official duties. A violator is guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to maximum penalties of a $1,000 fine and/or 90 days imprisonment.

Audio and Video Surveillance Cameras

The Washington County Board of Education believes that the safety and security of students are top priorities. The Board has authorized the installation and use of audio and video surveillance cameras on school buses operating in Washington County.

Staff and students are informed of the presence of audio and video surveillance cameras on the school bus in the annual WCPS Handbook and Guide and through the posting of audio and video surveillance signs on each school bus.

See also Policy EFGH.

For more information contact the WCPS Transportation Department at 301-766-2902 or 301-766-2903.

School Closings and Delays

General Process for School Delay or Closure Decisions for Inclement Weather or Other Emergencies

Inclement Weather

On inclement weather days, including snow, ice, or flooding conditions, the WCPS transportation supervisor and staff travel designated inclement weather routes that are representative of some of the critical areas for safe school bus travel throughout the county. Additionally, the Supervisor of Transportation communicates with the county roads department, state highway administration, and other surrounding counties’ transportation departments as to the conditions in the neighboring areas. After reviewing local information and the satellite weather service information, the Supervisor of Transportation contacts executive administrators to recommend changes in school status, as needed. Final determination is normally made prior to 5:30 a.m. with media notifications occurring immediately following a decision. Depending on specific weather situations, the timeline may be earlier or later. The primary consideration for delay or closure decisions is the safety of students traveling to and from school.
Zone Closing Options

WCPS has implemented two specific weather zones, in Hancock and Cascade. These areas sometimes experience greater inclement weather than the majority of the county. These zones may be delayed or closed separately from the rest of the county.

Other Emergencies

In addition to school delays or closings due to inclement weather, including snow, ice, flooding, or heat, the superintendent may determine the need to close a school, schools, or the school system based on other emerging situations (power outages, etc.). In the event of a school closing or delay, notification will occur using area media, the WCPS website, social media, and Connect 5.

Notification

Parents are expected to check local radio stations and television broadcasts, as well as the WCPS website for announcements of a delayed opening, closing, or early dismissal of schools. Parents are encouraged to sign up for text alerts and for calls from the Connect 5 system.

Decisions will be made and communication with the media will begin at 5:30 a.m.

In case of a breakdown in the communication plan due to power outages or other technical difficulties, parents and staff should familiarize themselves with more than one source for this information.

Responsible Use of Technology Guidelines

I. Purpose:

Washington County Public Schools (WCPS) recognizes the integral role that anytime- anywhere access has in teaching, learning, and working in the 21st Century. The school system's technology infrastructure and digital devices (“Technology”) are established for the administrative and educational purpose of preparing students for college and career readiness by providing electronic access to a wide range of information and the opportunity to collaborate with people throughout the world. The network will be utilized to increase intra-communication, enhance productivity, and to assist school system employees in advancing professional growth. The network will also assist in the sharing of information with the local community, including parents, service agencies, government agencies, and businesses. This administrative regulation is also designed to guide students and staff in adherence to Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA), and Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) requirements.

II. Background

The Board of Education is providing employees and students with access to the school system's electronic communication network and technological resources, which includes Internet access. Individuals are responsible for exhibiting the behavior as outlined in the policy on all WCPS sanctioned devices and all WCPS sanctioned digital and social media, just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway. WCPS will provide students and staff with training to inform them about the responsible use of technology, digital privacy, and good digital citizenship. Violation of this administrative regulation may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination (employee) or expulsion from school (student).

III. Definitions

Within the context of this administrative regulation, the following definitions apply:

A. Individuals: School system employees, students, parents, organizations, or guests accessing and/or utilizing school system computers and telecommunication services.

B. Network: The entire school system technological infrastructure that handles voice, video, and data traffic that either begins or ends within school system buildings or surrounding grounds.

C. Personally--Owned Electronic Device: Any electronic or battery--powered instrument which transmits or receives voice, text, data, pictures, video, or information in any form including, but not limited to, cell phones, laptop computers, smart phones, beepers, two--way radios, tablets, electronic readers, or language translators and which is not owned by WCPS.
IV. Statement/Procedures

A. Responsible Use

ALL individuals using WCPS or personally--owned technology on the WCPS network must comply with the following:

1. Individuals may use technology when authorized to do so by an instructor or administrator.
2. Individuals may use personal technology devices as outlined in Board of Education Policy JICJ, “Use of Personally-Owned Electronic Devices,” and its accompanying administrative regulation.
3. Individuals are responsible for their behavior while utilizing school system or personally-owned technology.
4. Individuals are responsible for taking reasonable precautions to protect WCPS -owned technology equipment against damage and/or theft.
5. Individuals are responsible for all activity on their accounts, passwords, and devices.
6. Individuals will respect others by using appropriate language and constructive criticism when supporting the efforts of others.
7. Individuals will respect online spaces and facilities: by using appropriate edits, uploading only appropriate images and files, and taking care not to delete or damage other student or staff material on any site.
8. Individuals will utilize appropriate local and third party online collaborative spaces to demonstrate exemplary work, advance teaching and learning, and to develop a positive online presence.
9. Individuals are responsible for using WCPS technology and WCPS social media, whether onsite or remotely, in an ethical, responsible, and legal manner. Users will not use the school system network to access, write, or publish material that:
   a. Depicts profanity, obscenity, the use of weapons, terrorism, or violence.
   b. Promotes use of tobacco, illicit drugs, alcohol, or other illegal or harmful products.
   c. Contains sexually suggestive messages or is sexually explicit or obscene.
   d. Advocates illegal acts.
   e. Contains language or symbols that demean an identifiable person or group or otherwise infringe on the rights of others.
   f. Provides disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.
   g. Contains rude, disrespectful, discourteous expressions inconsistent with civil discourse, or behavior, or that constitute cyberbullying.
   h. Advocates violence or discrimination towards other people.
   i. Circumvents or disables technology protection measures put in place by the Superintendent or his or her designee.
   j. Knowingly deploys computer viruses or software with malicious intent.
   k. Violates copyright laws, the privacy rights of others, or plagiarizes.
   l. Is accessed via another individual’s account credentials.
   m. Causes or is likely to cause a disruption to WCPS activities or the orderly operation of the WCPS.
10. Content transmitted with WCPS technology must adhere to all Board of Education policies.
11. Reasonable exceptions to these guidelines may be made for students conducting educational research under the direction of a teacher/administrator. Specific permission must be granted regarding the nature of the research to be conducted and the type of files related to that research which might be accessed/created.
12. The school system is not responsible for, nor does it control, information and content found on outside networks, including the Internet. The school system utilizes a content filter to prevent or minimize access to inappropriate information and content in compliance with the CIPA. Access through cellular networks does not provide the same measures of filtering. Students should only use the WCPS network (not private cellular service) for Internet access while on WCPS property. In addition, students and staff will use Board of Education issued/approved identities (e-mail addresses, Apple IDs, Google Accounts, etc.) to register with/enroll in WCPS devices and third party online collaborative digital spaces. All work on school system-owned devices or in support of district efforts are not protected by privacy laws. Users should be aware that all files may be available under Federal and State public information laws and are discoverable in litigation.
13. WCPS has made every effort to maintain COPPA compliance with regards to district approved online resources, including iTunes and Google. Parent permission will be obtained when students under the age of 13 are instructed to use an online resource/app requiring students to create an account.

See also:

Policy GBEE and Administrative Regulation GBEE--R: “Employee Use of Social Media”

Policy JICJ and Administrative Regulation JICJ--R: “Use of Personally--Owned Electronic Device” (If the policy and reg are not rescinded)

Personally-Owned Electronic Devices

Student use of a personally-owned, electronic device during instructional time (as defined in this policy) is prohibited.

I. Basic Rules and Procedures

A. A personally-owned, electronic device that a student brings to school is his/her sole responsibility. The Board of Education assumes no responsibility for a personally-owned, electronic device if it is lost, loaned, damaged, or stolen.

B. All students are expected to keep their personally-owned, electronic device secure at all times and not loan it to others. During instructional time (class time) such devices are to be kept out of sight and turned off.

C. Due to confidentiality, privacy, and legal concerns, a student may not use his/her personally-owned, electronic device to take photographs or record audio or video in school, during the school day, or on a school bus.

D. All students are expected to exhibit digital responsibility and to follow the Board of Education’s Acceptable Use of Telecommunications Administrative Regulation IIBH-R.

E. The use of technology is a privilege, not a right. This privilege can be revoked.

II. Emergency Situations and Other Exceptions

A. The use of a personally-owned, electronic device may be granted in an emergency situation as determined by the supervising adult.

B. The use of a personally-owned, electronic device may be granted by the supervising adult outside of instructional time including lunch time and in between classes.

C. The use of a personally-owned, electronic device on a school bus is permitted provided such usage does not disrupt bus operations. Due to confidentiality and privacy and legal concerns, a student may not use his/her personally-owned, electronic device to take photographs or record audio or video on the bus.

III. No Technology Support

A. School system staff will NOT provide technology support for a student’s personally-owned, electronic device.

B. There should be no expectation that the school system will provide network connectivity (Wi-Fi, etc.) for students’ personally-owned, electronic devices.

C. If the school system chooses to provide network connectivity, this access may be more limited than that provided to school-system owned equipment; may require the installation of software to verify the integrity of the personally-owned, electronic device; and connectivity may be revoked at any time.

D. The school system is not responsible for any damage or other issues (malware infections, etc.) that may occur as a result of connecting a personally-owned, electronic device to the network.

E. The school system will not provide software or accessories for personally-owned, electronic devices.

IV. Disciplinary Consequences

Violation of this policy or of the administrative regulation will result in disciplinary measures in accordance with the student discipline guidelines (see Exhibit JK-E). A school administrator may take temporary possession of a personally-owned, electronic device if a student is attempting to use the device during any time when such usage is prohibited or if the use of the device violates any of the previously outlined inappropriate uses, disrupts the learning environment, creates safety concerns, violates the confidentiality or privacy of others, or otherwise contradicts this policy.

V. Administrative Regulation

The Superintendent is authorized to promulgate an administrative regulation to implement this policy.
Communication Expectations

Recommendations for Staff, Students, and the Community

E-mail
E-mail is a valuable communication tool that is widely used. As such, staff, parents, students, and other members of the general school community are encouraged to use it to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of communication. Because not every parent has access to, staff members cannot make the only option for communicating with parents. Similarly, neither a student nor a parent may demand that a staff member correspond via.

Representatives of WCPS using to correspond will adhere to the following expectations:

1. The staff members should respond or acknowledge receipt to student and parent(s) in a timely manner.
2. Staff and students should use only WCPS provided accounts to receive or send and avoid using home accounts for professional correspondence.
3. WCPS has the right and responsibility to access and disclose the contents of all messages as required for legal, audit, and legitimate operational purposes.
4. Users are responsible for all sent from their accounts; they should take care to protect access to the account by keeping their password secret.
5. Messages should be consistent with professional practices for other correspondence, including grammar, punctuation, and formatting.
6. Careful consideration should be used when discussing contentious, emotional, or confidential issues via.

Web Pages
Websites must comply with these expectations and all other relevant Washington County Board of Education (WCBOE) policies. Failure to do so could result in the loss of website privileges. The Communications Officer or designee can revoke website privileges for web pages that do not meet these expectations:

1. Schools, departments, and divisions of WCPS are encouraged to participate in publishing student and community focused information on the Web. School-related groups should work with their schools to publish information on the schools’ custom Web pages or have a link off these pages to their own page/Web servers.
2. The school principal or program administrator of a participating group shall designate at least one WCPS employee in the participating group as the website manager or content contributor.
3. Website managers and content contributors must ensure the content on their sites follow these expectations and all relevant BOE policies.
4. Contents must be school, curriculum, or school system related.
5. All copyright laws and regulations must be followed. Written permission for the use of copyright material used on a website must be obtained and kept on file by the website manager or content contributor.
6. Personally identifiable information of students and staff shall NOT be published on any publicly accessible system/school website (FERPA).
7. WCPS employee’s full name and is considered public information and may be posted on the Web page.
8. Personal pages of students or teachers will NOT be posted on, or have links from, WCPS Web server(s).
9. No advertisements for or from private businesses are allowed on school system Web server(s). Acknowledgement of sponsors for school or system events with links to a sponsor’s Web page is permissible.
10. Links to external sites should be tested prior to publishing on a Web page to ensure the pages are active and they do not lead to areas that are inappropriate for K-12 school environments. These external links should be tested at least quarterly. For information, call 301-766-2809 or info@wcps.k12.md.us.
Social Media

The responsible use of social media can promote exceptional teaching, learning, and community interaction when used appropriately and in a professional manner. WCPS has crafted policy (GBEE) and regulation (GBEE-R) to clarify the use of social media. In professional and instructional roles, employees and students need to follow the same behavioral standards online as they would in real life. The same laws, professional expectations, and guidelines for interacting with students, parents, alumni, general public, media, and other WCPS constituents apply online as in the real world. The following are the expectations for communications via social media:

1. Employees and students should familiarize themselves with the aforementioned policy and regulation regarding the use of social media.
2. Personally identifiable information of students and staff shall NOT be published on any social media site (FERPA).
3. Respect copyright and fair use laws.
4. Any use of the WCPS logo or any other school system images or iconography must be approved by school system administration.
5. The use of WCPS’ name to promote a product, cause, or political party or candidate is prohibited.
6. Understand that content contributed to a social media site could encourage comments or discussion of opposing ideas. Responses should be considered carefully in light of how they would reflect on the poster and/or WCPS and its respective schools.
7. Ensure the accuracy of any posted facts and credit sources prior to posting them on social media. Review content for grammatical and spelling errors.
8. Prior to posting photographs, consult the Student Health/Family Information Form for parental permission to post student images, interviews, videos, student generated work or when publishing names.
9. When posting on behalf of a WCPS school or department on a social media platform, state your name and position.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a core value in the WCPS and serves as one of the cornerstones for our vision of becoming a world-class school system. Striving for high achievements must rest on a foundation of respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, fairness, citizenship, and caring. Academic integrity enables the social value of regard for others and their work to exist within the school community. It ensures that achievements are honestly earned and can stand on their own merit. Academic integrity also instills values that will serve students well in all of their intellectual endeavors.

Students have an obligation to their school, teachers, peers, parents, and the community to act with integrity in scholarship and in general academic work. Expression of original, well-formulated ideas is a fundamental skill for academic and career success. Staff, parents, and the community must be able to trust that the work of students is the product of their own learning and academic effort. Grades and diplomas must represent honest work and accomplishments. In a competitive world, it is essential that all members of our school community uphold a standard that places the integrity of each student’s honestly earned achievements above higher grades or easier work dishonestly attained.

Each student’s work should be held to the highest standards of honesty. Academic dishonesty in any form demonstrates a lack of integrity, shows character that is inconsistent with the goals and values of WCPS, and violates an ethic of mutual regard. It impairs the school’s educational role and defrauds all who comprise its community. It skews the learning process and interferes with the assessment and feedback process necessary to promote academic growth. It compromises the instructional process by giving teachers and parents a false view of a student’s academic ability and effort. Academic dishonesty may prevent further needed instruction and delay a student from reaching his or her potential.

The Board’s policy delineated below is intended to promote the highest standards of academic integrity. Academic integrity requires that all assignments that students complete and submit represent their own work, concepts, ideas, and wording that have been honestly and truthfully developed and composed. When the work of others is incorporated into assignments submitted, students must properly credit that work.

All students will sign a statement of promise to uphold academic integrity. Parents must also sign the statement to acknowledge that they are aware of the standards of integrity to which students will be held. Consideration will be given for the developmental appropriateness of instruction with respect to the policy. The statement of promise is included in this handbook, and reads as follows:

“I promise to uphold the Washington County Public Schools’ standards for Academic Integrity. I hold the qualities of honesty and integrity in highest regard and will not violate them or support those who do.”

The signed promise will be submitted to and retained by the appropriate teacher at each school.
Academic Integrity Process and Procedures

I. Purpose
The purpose of this administrative regulation is to set forth the type of conduct that would constitute a violation of academic integrity standards and the consequences for such violations.

II. Background
Students have an obligation to their school, teachers, peers, parents, and the community to act with integrity in scholarship and in general academic work. Expression of original, well formulated ideas is a fundamental skill for academic and career success. Staff, parents, and the community must be able to trust that the work of students is the product of their own learning and academic effort.

III. Policy Statement/Procedures
1. Violations of Academic Integrity:

   Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, the following acts of dishonesty or misconduct:

   a. Cheating on exams, tests, quizzes, or assignments:
      i. Using or accepting unauthorized sources of information, aids, or materials. Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to:
      ii. Dishonestly obtaining, using, or possessing copies of an exam, or providing or receiving information about an exam
      iii. Exchanging information during an exam or copying from another person’s paper
      iv. Completing an exam in the name of someone else
      v. Submitting another person’s work or portion of work as your own

   b. Fabrication:
      Inventing, falsifying, or misrepresenting information. Examples of fabrication include, but are not limited to:
      i. Falsifying data
      ii. Faking sources
      iii. Inventing events

   c. Plagiarism:
      Using ideas, language, or work of another without proper credit, citation, or reference to the original author, text, or source. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to, any of the following actions committed without giving appropriate credit, citation, or reference:
      i. Using a direct quotation word-for-word
      ii. Submitting rephrased ideas of another person
      iii. Submitting as your own, papers or sections of texts accessed from the Internet
      iv. Copying material from an encyclopedia, dictionary, or other source
      v. Using data that you did not derive by yourself
      vi. Using non-textual material, such as musical or artistic copyrighted works, compositions, or choreography

   d. Facilitating academic dishonesty:
      Helping or attempting to help another person commit an act of academic dishonesty

2. Consequences for Violation of Academic Integrity:
   All forms of academic dishonesty are unethical and, in some cases, may be illegal. Students who violate academic integrity will be subject to disciplinary measures as outlined below.

   Consideration should be given to the role of instruction and developmental appropriateness for elementary students or for students with cognitive disabilities.

   Consequences for cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty:
   a. The student will be given a grade of “0” for the assignment
   b. Written notification will be sent to the parent
   c. A written copy of the incident will be forwarded to the school administrator for placement in the student’s discipline file
   d. Additional disciplinary consequences may be administered consistent with “Washington County Public Schools Disciplinary Guidelines” (Exhibit JK-E) for violation of school policies
Homework Policy

WCPS supports the concept of assigning homework which is meaningful and appropriate to the reinforcement of school studies and skills.

The purpose of homework is to:
- Help young children develop good study habits.
- Promote positive attitudes toward school.
- Develop self discipline and independence.
- Develop a sense of responsibility.
- Communicate to students that learning takes place outside as well as inside school.
- Provide opportunities for students to practice skills, prepare to learn new information, or elaborate on introduced material.
- Provide a communication link between home and school.

Homework should be an extension of the school day. When homework is assigned for the purpose of practice, it should be structured around content with which students are familiar. When homework is assigned to prepare students for new content, homework can be assigned that is meant to promote critical thinking and not for practice. Homework assignments are intended to encourage and further learning; they should never be excessive, nor used as punishment.

Teachers are encouraged to maintain communication with parents/families regarding their guidelines for homework. Decisions related to frequency and amounts of homework should be determined based upon grade level, students’ progress, and course needs.


Code of Conduct

RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, AND CIVIL BEHAVIOR

Rationale:
Schools have three primary responsibilities. The first responsibility is to foster academic achievement. The second responsibility is to create and maintain a school environment that is safe, orderly, and conducive to teaching and learning. The third responsibility is to promote and support positive community values and standards such as civility, respect for others and self, citizenship, academic integrity, and other constructive character traits and behaviors among adults and students in the school community. Without these values and standards, traits and behaviors, a school’s climate inevitably deteriorates and teaching and learning is negatively impacted. Furthermore, students become deficient in the tools that are critical for functioning successfully in community life, regardless of how proficient they are academically.

The purpose of the Code of Conduct, which applies during the school day and also applies to all school-sponsored activities whether on or off school property is to provide a framework that will guide staff, students, and parents in promoting excellent behavior among all members of our school community, and create a safe, civil, and nurturing climate in which teaching and learning can take place.

Code of Conduct:
The WCPS code of conduct is guided by six standards. These standards are based on the Josephson Institute of Ethics Character Counts pillars: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. All members of our school community — students, parents, educators, administrators, and support staff — are to be aware of the requirements of the Code of Conduct and are to align their behavior with these standards while they are in school or while engaged in school-related activities.

Respect
- I will respect myself and treat others as I want to be treated.
- I will speak to others in a polite and courteous manner.
- I will respect diversity.
• I will solve problems and express myself toward others in a non-violent manner.
• I will be considerate of others’ space and property.
• I will behave in a way that helps others and me to learn.
• I will take pride in my school and community by treating school facilities and materials with care.

Responsibility
• I will attend school regularly and on time.
• I will actively participate in my own education and growth.
• I will put forth my best effort.
• I will follow established school codes and community rules.
• I will be accountable for my behavior.
• I will accept the consequences of my actions.
• I will encourage others to obey school rules and follow the code of conduct.
• I will report any activity that will be harmful to others.

Trustworthiness
• I will be honorable in my words and actions.
• I will be honest and tell the truth.
• I will keep my word and do what I say.

Fairness
• I will treat all people fairly, equitably, and justly.
• I will consider others’ perspectives.
• I will be understanding of different opinions.
• I will make decisions without favoritism or prejudice.

Caring
• I will be sensitive to the needs of others.
• I will be kind and considerate.
• I will help people in need.
• I will show compassion, concern, and caring.

Citizenship
• I will comply with authority and the law.
• I will serve as a model for high standards of behavior.
• I will cooperate to make my school a safe place to learn.
• I will make choices that will improve my school and community.
• I will help create a school atmosphere free from bullying, intimidation, and harassment.

Legal Reference: Annotated Code of Maryland Education Article 7-306 – Each county board shall adopt regulations designed to create and maintain within the schools under its jurisdiction the atmosphere of order and discipline necessary for effective learning.
**Dress Code**

The dress code shall apply to all school activities during the traditional instructional school day. Exceptions for legitimate reasons, such as a medical condition or religious practice, as well as for specialized classes or activities, will be considered and can be granted by the school administration on a case-by-case basis.

The school administration reserves the right to approve or disapprove any items not addressed in this policy. Decisions to approve or disapprove items will be based on the goal of providing a safe and orderly environment for the education of all students.

**Head Coverings**

Head coverings are acceptable if worn in accordance with a sincerely held religious belief system. Head coverings may also be worn for medical reasons.

Other headwear may not be worn in the school building. The following are some examples of prohibited headwear:

- hats
- visors
- sunglasses

Headbands (including bandanas folded as headbands of less than 2 inches in width), scrunches, etc., that are used to hold hair in place and do not cover the entire head are permitted.

**Clothing**

- Tops must be worn in such a manner so as to:
  - cover the entire back
  - cover the midriff area
  - not be see-through
  - fit modestly and cover cleavage and chest
  - cover undergarments

  Sleeveless tops must have two shoulder straps worn on the top of the shoulders and cover all undergarments. Tops must also be worn to:
  - cover the entire torso of the body, where torso is defined as the area of the body from hips to underarms
  - cover cleavage and chest, fit modestly
  - cover the back so as to go no lower than the area where a conventional bra is worn on a female or the mid-point on the shoulder blades of a male
  - traditional sleeveless undershirts, muscle shirts, or T-back shirts are not acceptable tops under this policy

  Skirts and dresses must be worn modestly and cover all undergarments when sitting or standing.

  Shorts must be modest and hang at or near mid-thigh when standing. Shorts must be worn in a manner which covers all undergarments, whether sitting or standing.

  All other pants (bottoms) must be worn in such a manner as to:
  - cover undergarments at all times
  - not be excessively long so as to drag on the floor
  - not be excessively baggy or worn on the hip in a manner which exposes undergarments or flesh normally covered by undergarments
  - yoga pants (exercise type pants that are not see-through), in a narrow or flair leg, are acceptable
  - leggings may only be worn in conjunction with another dress
  - code-appropriate dress or bottom (leggings are defined as a sheer or slightly sheer material)

  Shoes must be worn at all times. Shoes must fit to allow safe movement and be appropriate to school activities.

  Coats and heavy jackets are not to be worn during the school day and should be stored appropriately.
  - Light, form-fitting jackets such as: sweat jackets, hoodies, and windbreakers are not considered coats or heavy jackets and are, therefore, acceptable.
Jewelry and Accessories
Jewelry or accessories which can be used as or perceived to be a weapon or threat to others are a safety hazard and are prohibited.

Language, Symbols, and Messages
Words or symbols deemed to be inappropriate for the school setting such as: rude, disrespectful, or discourteous expressions which are inconsistent with civil discourse and behavior, or which may substantially disrupt or materially interfere with the educational setting are expressly prohibited on student apparel and person. Student appearance and apparel must not show any reference to or inference to:

- profanity
- drugs, alcohol, or tobacco
- violence
- suggestive, sexual messages
- language or symbols that offend, demean, or promote hatred toward an identifiable person or group

This also applies to body art, whether permanent or temporary. Body art which violates the regulation must be completely covered during the traditional school day or at any district sponsored or sanctioned event.

Consequences for Violation of the Dress Code
First Offense – Discussion of violation(s) and review of student handbook will take place with student. Student will be required to adjust or change clothes. It is expected that the first offense conference will prevent any further infractions.

Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation
WCPS seeks to maintain an environment that is safe for all members of the school community. School safety is of the highest priority in schools. An essential element of safe schools is ensuring all children feel accepted and comfortable in their schools.

Four bullying prevention school rules:

- I will not bully others.
- I will help students who are bullied.
- I will include students who are left out.
- If I know that somebody is being bullied, I will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.

Bullying, harassment, or intimidation of any individual, by any person or group of people, will not be tolerated in WCPS because these behaviors compromise the learning environment and well-being of students. Bullying, harassment, or intimidation of any person on school property during school hours or at school-sponsored functions, or by the use of electronic communication devices at a public school or by use of a school system-owned electronic communication device regardless of location is prohibited. The Board of Education prohibits reprisal or retaliation against students who report acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation, or those who are victims, witnesses, or bystanders, with reliable information about an act of bullying, harassment, or intimidation.

WCPS students whose behavior is alleged to be in violation of this policy will be subject to an investigation which may result in disciplinary action in accordance with WCPS disciplinary guidelines.

Bullying, harassment, or intimidation means intentional conduct, including verbal, physical, or written or electronic communication that creates a hostile educational environment by substantially interfering with a student’s educational benefits, opportunities, performance, or with a student’s physical or psychological well-being and is:

- Motivated by an actual or perceived personal characteristic including, race, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry, physical attributes, socioeconomic status, familial status, or physical or mental ability or disability; or,
- Sexual in nature, including descriptions or depictions of a student with the student’s intimate parts exposed or while engaged in an act of sexual contact; or
- Threatening or seriously intimidating; and,
- Is occurring on school property, at a school activity, or on a school bus; or,
- Is substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.
Bystander - a person or persons who have direct knowledge of or witness an alleged event and/or actions.

Cyberbullying - Cyberbullying is a form of bullying, harassment, and/or intimidation using communication transmitted by means of electronic devices and includes the use of social media sites. Cyberbullying shall include any future applications that fall under “electronic communication.”

Electronic communication - a communication transmitted by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, cellular phone, computer, or tablet, and shall include any future applications.

Hostile environment - a negative (real or perceived) learning environment that is verified or documented.

Interfering - having a direct, substantial effect on students’ physical, educational, and/or social well being.

Intimidating - intentional actions that threaten and induce a sense of fear and/or inferiority which adversely affects the student’s ability to participate in or benefit from educational programs or activities.

Revenge Porn - intentionally causing serious emotional distress to another by intentionally placing on the internet a photograph, film, videotape, recording, or any other reproduction of the image of the other person that reveals the identity of the other person with his or her intimate parts exposed or while engaged in an act of sexual contact (1) know that the other person did not consent to the placement of the image on the Internet and (2) under circumstances in which the other person had a reasonable expectation that the image would be kept private.

Behavioral examples that are not tolerated include, but are not limited to, the following:
- Physical aggression such as hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, hair pulling, or throwing things resulting from bullying, harassment, or intimidation
- Encouraging or influencing another person to hit or harm a student
- Teasing, name-calling, making critical remarks, or threatening, in person or by other means
- Demeaning or derogatory jokes
- Making rude and/or threatening gestures
- Excluding or rejecting a student by another student or group of students as a means of creating a hostile environment that is verified or documented through investigation
- Intimidating (bullying), extorting, or exploiting
- Spreading harmful rumors or gossip

Sexual Harassment
The Washington County Board of Education encourages and expects an atmosphere free of discrimination and sexual harassment and one that is conducive to high quality performance in the school setting. The Board of Education prohibits sexual harassment of, or by, employees and students.

“Sexual harassment” is defined as: (1) unwelcomed, inappropriate sexual advances or requests for sexual favors, (2) verbal or physical conduct/behavior of a sexual nature, (3) verbal or physical conduct/behavior of a sexual nature that is a form of intimidation, hostile or offensive to the educational environment, and (4) adverse actions against a student as a result of the rejection of, reaction to, or filing of a harassment complaint.

Some examples of sexual conduct may include, but are not limited to, the following:
- Sexual advances
- Verbal comments, jokes, name-calling, or slurs of a sexual nature
- Touching of a sexual nature
- Graffiti of a sexual nature
- Displaying or distributing sexually explicit drawings, pictures, or written materials
- Sexual gestures
- Sexual or “dirty” jokes
- Pressure for sexual favors
- Touching oneself sexually or talking about one’s sexual activity in front of others
- Spreading rumors about or rating another’s sexual activity or performance
Reporting acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation

WCPS, in conjunction with the Maryland State Department of Education, is committed to eliminating incidences of bullying and harassment in schools. To address this issue, WCPS has adopted a procedure for parents and students to report alleged incidences of bullying and harassment.

A student who reports an alleged incident of bullying, harassment, or intimidation (including sexual harassment) should report the alleged incident using the Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Reporting Form and submit the form to the school administration. This form may be obtained in the school’s main office, counselor’s office, on the WCPS website or WCPS Handbook and Guide. A student may request assistance from a staff member to complete the form.

If a student expresses a desire to discuss an alleged incident of bullying, harassment, or intimidation with a staff member, the staff member will make an effort to provide the student with a practical, safe, private, and age-appropriate way of doing so.

If the alleged incident is brought to the attention of an adult other than the principal or the principal’s designee, that adult shall assist the individual in bringing the allegation to the attention of the principal or the principal’s designee.

If a school system employee observes or otherwise becomes aware of an incident that appears to constitute bullying, harassment, or intimidation under this policy, the employee shall immediately report this information to the principal or the principal’s designee.

An allegation of bullying, harassment, or intimidation made against the principal or building administrator should be reported to the Director of Human Resources at the Center for Education Services (CES) of WCPS.

The school system takes seriously any allegations of bullying, harassment, or intimidation and will fully and promptly investigate such allegations. However, if it is determined that an individual has intentionally made a false accusation, that person will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Reporting Forms may be obtained in the school’s main office, counselor’s office, on the WCPS website or WCPS Handbook and Guide. The forms may be submitted by a student, parent or guardian, close adult relative, or staff member to school administration.

Direct communication with school administrators, school counselors, or teachers remains an appropriate avenue for parents or children to report alleged incidences of bullying, harassment or intimidation, in addition to use of the reporting form.

WCPS will not tolerate bullying, harassment or intimidation. Parent and student involvement in reporting alleged incidences of bullying, harassment or intimidation will support the efforts of the WCPS staff to address this behavior. For additional information concerning this matter, please contact your child’s school counselor, school administrator, or the Office of School Counseling at 301-766-2966.

Procedures for the prompt investigation of acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation

All reports must be written using the Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Reporting Form, which can be found at any school or on the WCPS website. After receipt of a reporting form, the principal or the principal’s designee will promptly investigate the allegation, within two (2) business days, consistent with due process rights, using the Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Incident Investigation Form. Based on the school administrator’s findings, appropriate actions will be taken to address the allegations.

The principal or the principal’s designee will determine whether bullying, harassment, or intimidation actually occurred by taking steps to verify who committed the act of bullying, harassment or intimidation and whether others played a role in perpetuating this act. Other related complaints, if any, will be reviewed in making this determination.

Neither a victim(s) nor a witness(es) should be promised confidentiality at the onset of an investigation. They will be informed that any information discussed and reported will be confined to the investigation.

The principal or the principal’s designee will notify parents or guardians of the alleged victim of the reported incident within three (3) business days of receiving the report. The principal or the principal’s designee will notify the parent or guardian of the alleged offender of the reported incident within five (5) business days. The investigating administrator will document the date of parent contact as part of the investigation notes.

The principal or the principal’s designee will apply corrective actions, while ensuring due process rights. The offender will be informed that retaliation against a victim or bystander is strictly prohibited and that progressive consequences will occur if the activity continues.
An initial follow-up conference will occur two (2) weeks after the completed investigation to confirm the bullying, harassment, or intimidation has ceased. If not, then additional corrective actions need to be implemented. A second follow-up conference will be held with the victim six (6) weeks after the completed investigation to confirm the bullying, harassment, or intimidation has ceased. If not, then additional corrective actions need to be implemented. The principal or the principal’s designee will determine which school staff will conduct the follow-up conferences. Once it has been confirmed that the bullying, harassment or intimidation has ceased for six (6) consecutive weeks, then a follow-up letter must be sent to the victim’s parent or guardian. Upon completion of the investigation and all follow-up conferences, the original reporting form, the investigation form with any supporting documentation, and a copy of the follow-up letter are sent to the Office of School Counseling within one (1) week.

Some acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation could also be delinquent acts. If they are delinquent acts, they shall be promptly reported to the responsible law enforcement agency according to the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13A.08.01.15.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) prevents the disclosure of student record information, including all disciplinary records, to anyone other than the student, parent, or legal guardian.

Gangs and Gang-Related Activities

In conjunction with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), Washington County Public Schools (WCPS) adopted a gang policy during the 2011-2012 school year that prohibits gang activity and similar destructive or illegal group behavior on school property, school buses, or at school-sponsored functions.

A “criminal gang” is defined as a group or association of three or more persons whose members:

1. Individually or collectively engage in a pattern of criminal gang activity.
2. Have as one of their primary objectives or activities the commission of one or more underlying crimes, including acts by juveniles that would be underlying crimes if committed by adults.
3. Have in common an overt or covert organizational or command structure.

A “pattern of criminal gang activity” means the commission of, attempted commission of, conspiracy to commit, or solicitation to two or more underlying crimes or acts by a juvenile that would be an underlying crime if committed by an adult.

WCPS is committed to addressing and reducing gang activities that potentially disrupt the school climate and interfere with student learning. All WCPS employees are required to report any incidences of suspected gang activity or destructive or illegal group behavior to the principal or, in the absence of the principal, to the school security coordinator.

WCPS has adopted procedures for stakeholders to report gangs and gang-related activities. Gang-Related Incident Reporting Forms are available in the guidance and administrative offices of each school for parents, students, and staff members. Gang-Related Incident Reporting Forms may also be obtained electronically from the school system’s website or the individual school’s website. Individuals reporting incidences should submit the completed form to the principal or school security coordinator. Upon receipt of a Gang-Related Incident Report, the principal or designee and the school security coordinator shall initiate an investigation. If the report is of a high level of severity, (criminal activity, imminent danger or disruption), every effort will be made to initiate the investigation within 24 hours after receipt of the written report.

WCPS considers gangs and gang-related activity a serious matter and will not allow its presence on school property. Your involvement in reporting gangs and gang-related behavior will support the efforts of WCPS officials to address this issue. If you have additional questions concerning this matter, please contact your child’s guidance counselor, school administrator, or the WCPS Safety and Security/Risk Manager, at 301-766-8757.

Reportable Offense Notification

Maryland Code – EDUCATION TITLE 7 – PUBLIC SCHOOLS Subtitle 3 – Section 7-703

Arrest for Reportable Offense:
The police are required to notify WCPS when a juvenile commits a crime listed as a Reportable Offense. The information will be used to provide appropriate educational programming and related services to the student and to maintain a safe and secure school environment for students and school personnel.
Rights to Education Records

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Maryland Student Records Regulations protect the privacy of student records and also give biological parents, legal guardians, or eligible students the right to inspect and review the student’s education records and to request that inaccuracies in the record be corrected.

A policy and procedure statement about the protection of parents’ and students’ privacy and rights to access student records under FERPA is available to interested individuals in all schools. It specifies procedures for inspection and review of educational records.

Upon request, WCPS provides parents, legal guardians, and/or an eligible student (18 years of age or older) access to the education records of the student. Explanation and interpretation of the educational records will be provided to the parents in their native languages. A request to access educational records must be submitted in writing to and granted by the principal.

WCPS will not permit access to, or release of, education records of students, or personally identifiable information contained therein, without the written consent of the parents, legal guardians, or the eligible students with the exception of those reasons listed below.

Directory Information

As specified by FERPA, WCPS will permit the release of directory information, unless parents and/or eligible students notify the school to the contrary.

“Directory information” includes:

- student’s name,
- address,
- telephone number,
- date and place of birth,
- major field of study,
- participation in officially recognized activities and sports,
- weight and height of members of athletic teams,
- dates of attendance,
- diplomas, degrees, and awards received,
- the most recent school attended by the student,
- list of graduates.

Outside organizations to whom directory information may be released include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks.

Parent/guardian(s) who do not want student directory information released must complete the Restriction of Access to Directory Information Annual Parental Opt-Out Form available at each school and return it within 10 days of enrollment.

The third party receiving directory information from the school may not re-disclose the information to any party without prior written consent of the parent, guardian, or eligible student.

Release of Personally-Identifiable Information

FERPA also permits the release of personally identifiable information from education records without the written consent of the parents or the eligible student to:

- other school administrators, supervisors, teachers, and paraprofessionals of WCPS with legitimate educational interests.
- officials of other elementary, secondary, or post-secondary schools or another school system in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.
- state and national agencies in the course of their educational work.
- court officials, in compliance with a judicial order or subpoena.
- appropriate persons in health and safety emergencies.
- Department of Juvenile Services officials, in regard to court authorized cases.
- institutions or agencies involved with financial aid for which the student has applied or received if the information is necessary to determine eligibility, amount, conditions, or to enforce the terms or conditions.
- organizations conducting certain types of studies for or on behalf of WCPS or an individual school.
- accrediting organizations to carry out accrediting functions.
- parents or legal guardians of a dependent student.
Student records, which WCPS will make available for inspection and review only to persons who have a right to know, include:

- Personal and Family Information,
- School Enrollment Information
- Attendance Information,
- Subject Performance Information,
- Standardized Test Information,
- Non-Subject Performance Information,
- Physical Health Information
- Referrals for Physical or Behavioral Reasons,
- Health Inventory,
- Special Education and Individual Test Information,
- Discipline Records.

WCPS will obtain the written consent of the parent or legal guardian of a student or the eligible student before disclosing the above referenced personally identifiable information from the education records of a student, other than for the specific identified reasons listed above.

Parents have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school system to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

Destruction of records will be in accordance with the procedures established by the Washington County Board of Education and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

**Military Recruiters**

Information including students' name, address and phone number(s) will be released to military recruiters for high school students, upon request, unless a parent/guardian or eligible student indicates that this information should not be released. A parent/guardian who does not want this information released to military recruiters may indicate this by checking the appropriate box on the Student Health/Family Information form.

**Rights of Non-Custodial Parents**

If parents of a student are separated, divorced, or living apart, the school must permit both the custodial and non-custodial parent to inspect, review, and obtain copies of the student records, unless the custodial parent provides the school with legal documentation restricting or terminating parental rights. In addition, a non-custodial parent may request to receive school-related information. School-related information consists of documents that are regularly provided to the custodial parent at school meetings, by mail, or by sending home with the student. Examples are:

- Statements on student and parent rights and responsibilities,
- School newsletters,
- School calendars,
- Notices of parent conferences, open houses, and plays.

School-related information also includes those student records that are provided to the custodial parent such as:

- Report cards,
- Disciplinary notices,
- Special education notices.

A reasonable fee to cover the cost of copying and mailing these documents may be charged.

**Permission to Release/Student Record Information**

A custodial parent/guardian who wants to allow someone other than a non-custodial parent/guardian to have access to protected student record information (i.e., report cards, attendance information, teacher feedback, etc.) must complete a Consent for Release of Student Information Form and return it to the student’s school. This form will be maintained in the student’s cumulative folder. A new form must be completed for this purpose each year.

**Consent to Permit Access to Student and/or Student Information**

If a parent/guardian wants to allow someone other than the custodial guardian (i.e. relative, service provider) to have access to the student during the school day or to attend school conferences or meetings, the parent/guardian must complete and submit the WCPS Consent to Permit Access to Student and/or Student Information Form. This consent permits access. It does not permit educational decision-making by any one other than the custodial guardian.
In order for a student to be released during or immediately after the school day to someone other than the custodial parent/guardian, the school must receive written permission from the custodial parent/guardian on the date of the intended release. The written permission must indicate the full name of the person to whom the student will be released and the reason for the release. The person to whom the student is to be released should be prepared to show current photo identification.

Please note:
“Emergency Contacts” identified by the parent/guardian are adults who may assume temporary care of a child without further consent in the event of an emergency, illness, or accident when contacted by school staff because the parent/guardian cannot be reached.

In the event of a non-emergency circumstance, such as an appointment off school grounds, the parent/guardian must provide the school with additional written consent to identify the adult who has permission to pick up the student.

Safe and Drug-Free Schools

Drugs/Alcohol
Students do not have the right to use, sell, distribute, possess, or be under the influence of drugs, including alcohol, on school property or during school-sponsored activities unless the medication has been prescribed by a physician for the individual student. The principal and school nurse must be notified by the parent and/or physician of the student’s need to take medication (prescription or over-the-counter) during school hours. See Student Health: Medication in this handbook. Students also must be aware that Maryland law (Article 27, Section 286B) prohibits possession, distribution, etc., of non-controlled substances (“look-alikes”) in school.

K-9 Drug Scans
WCPS has partnered with local, county and state law enforcement agencies to conduct K-9 scans in and around the school.

If the police K-9 scan results in an alert, the police officer will notify a school administrator. The school administrator will attempt to locate the student associated with the vehicle parked on school property and have them respond to the vehicle. Police policies and procedures will determine if the police search the vehicle or take other action.

Students who have alcohol or other drug-related problems are urged to discuss the problem with appropriate staff. School staff will respect the student’s right to privacy. Students who violate the drug and alcohol policy must be referred to the school’s Student Assistance Program (SAP).

Staff, parents, students, and visitors may not use tobacco on school property.

Student Possession/Use—Drugs and Alcohol
1. Use of illicit drugs, including the unlawful use of alcohol and tobacco, is illegal and harmful for students.
2. There shall be no use, possession, or distribution of illicit drugs, tobacco, or alcohol by students on school premises or at any school activity on or off school grounds.
3. Students who knowingly and willingly place themselves in proximity with a person who is illegally in possession or using drugs or alcohol may be deemed to have violated Student Possession/Use Regulations.”
4. Students who violate this procedure face disciplinary action, as well as possible legal penalties. (See WCPS Disciplinary Guidelines)
5. Students who use or possess drugs/alcohol in any WCPS schools will be referred to the Student Assistance Program.

Parents—Drugs and Alcohol
All programs, guidelines, services, standards of conduct, and disciplinary sanctions must be made known to parents.

Where to Call for Information
Department of Student Services – 301-766-2960

Staff—Drugs and Alcohol
There shall be no use, possession, or distribution by any employee of illicit drugs, alcohol, or tobacco in the school and/or workplace or at school activities on or off school grounds.

Persons who violate this procedure face legal action and risk termination of employment.

Employees who need services related to drug/alcohol use should be able to seek help at 301-766-7600 or 1-800-635-2774.

Employees must understand that these standards are mandatory.
Firearms
If the superintendent or designated representative finds that a student has brought a firearm onto school property, the student may be expelled from WCPS for up to one (1) school year. The superintendent may specify, on a case-by-case basis, a shorter period of expulsion or an alternative educational setting. *(See WCPS Disciplinary Guidelines on pages 26-27)*

COMAR 13A.08.01.12 ss7-305
(Firearm: a handgun, rifle, shotgun, bomb, grenade, rocket, .32 caliber gun, missile, .22 semi automatic, 9mm gun. 18 U.S.C. ss 921.)

If a school production contains a scene with a Firearm Prop (a permanently inoperable prop, [80 Op. Atty. Gen. MD 147]), the Drama Coordinator will notify the school administrator and WCPS Legal Counsel. Notification will be made in the program that a prop resembling a firearm will be displayed during the play.

Asbestos Management
In October of 1986 the U.S. Congress enacted the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). Under this law comprehensive regulations were developed to address asbestos problems in public and private elementary and secondary schools. These regulations require schools to inspect for friable and non-friable asbestos, develop asbestos management plans that address asbestos hazards in school buildings, and implement response actions in a timely manner.

The WCPS program for fulfilling these responsibilities is outlined in the asbestos management plan for each school. The plans currently contain the inspection reports and the appropriate response actions. They also contain plans for periodic re-inspections and post-response activities.

Delivery of asbestos management plans to schools began on May 1, 1989. The receipt of these management plans required an acknowledgment by the principal or assistant principal. On May 9, 1989, the Asbestos Management Plans were delivered to the Governor as required by law.

On December 14, 1987, the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) went into effect requiring school districts in the United States to inspect each building used for educational purposes. These inspections are to be conducted using persons who have been trained and annually re-certified by the Environmental Protection Agency and the State Department of Health.

This law compels the Board of Education to locate and identify all asbestos-containing material (ACM) in the schools. Not all schools in Washington County contain asbestos. Regarding those that do contain asbestos, the inspections identified ACM in floor tile, ceiling tile, sprayed-on surfacing material, thermal system insulation, and miscellaneous materials. The law also requires the Board of Education to assess each area of ACM and determine what plans of action will be taken to ensure that no asbestos fibers are released into the environment, repair any damaged ACM, and remove any material that cannot be controlled using conventional engineering techniques.

WCPS developed an Asbestos Management Plan that identifies the locations of all known ACM in the schools and describes the plan of action to be taken to manage the ACM. The plan has been reviewed by the State of Maryland and is available to any concerned individual who wants to examine its contents.

Since May 9, 1989, the Asbestos Management Plans have been available for review during normal business hours at the following locations:

- The main office of each school during normal school hours.
- Department of Maintenance and Operations
  Washington County Public Schools
  10435 Downsville Pike
  Hagerstown, MD 21740
  301-766-2881

For further information, please contact the Department of Maintenance and Operations at the above location.
**Integrated Pest Management Program**

The Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program employed by the WCPS is a proactive rather than a reactive approach to insect and rodent control in school facilities. The IPM program includes routine inspections or surveys of all school facilities to identify conditions conducive to pest invasion, to ensure early detection of pest presence, and to monitor infestation levels. As a first step in pest control, the IPM approach employs a number of preventative strategies and alternatives to pesticide application, such as employee education, source reduction, inspection and identification of potential problem areas, and improved sanitation. Each approach is monitored and evaluated, and modifications are made if necessary. Pesticides are used only as a last resort.

Maryland law requires that parents of all elementary school children be notified prior to any pesticide application. Parents of middle school or high school students who wish to be notified prior to interior pesticide applications must request that they be placed on the school system’s pesticide notification list. To be added to the notification list, send a written request which includes your name, address, and telephone number as well as your child’s name and school to:

Director of Maintenance and Operations  
Washington County Public Schools  
10435 Downsville Pike  
Hagerstown, MD 21740

The following is a list of the pesticides and bait stations, by common name, that may be used on school premises during the school year. The list includes, but is not limited to:

- glyphosate  
- disodium octaborate tetrahydrate  
- prometon fipronil  
- resmethrin  
- allethrin  
- abamectin  
- trifluralin  
- atrazine  
- lambda-cyhalothrin  
- naphthalene  
- diphenacine  
- dichlorprop  
- quinclorac  
- indoxacarb  
- Methyl Anthranilate

Copies of material safety data sheets (MSDS) and product labels for each pesticide and bait station used on school property are maintained by the contact person. Persons wishing to review this information or who need additional information should contact the Director of Maintenance and Operations or designee, at 301-766-2978, to arrange an appointment.

**Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect**

Every WCPS employee receives annual training on the prevention, identification, and reporting of suspected child abuse and/or neglect. Maryland law and WCPS Policy mandates that every educator who has reason to believe that a child has been subjected to physical or sexual abuse or neglect, must immediately report the information to the Department of Social Services and the appropriate law enforcement agency.

- The law and policy are quite specific: When there is doubt about reporting a suspected situation, it is to be resolved in favor of protecting the student and the report must be made immediately.
- School personnel are permitted to briefly question a student to determine if there is reason to believe that the child’s injuries resulted from physical or sexual abuse.
- Investigation of suspected abuse is the responsibility of the Department of Social Services, assisted by the police.
- School staff may not inform parents/guardians about any report of suspected abuse.
- School personnel may not attempt to conduct an internal investigation and must cooperate with DSS or law enforcement, if an investigation is conducted.
- All records and reports concerning protective service investigations of child abuse and neglect and their outcomes are protected by the confidentiality statute Article 88A-Section 6 (B). School personnel only become involved if requested to assist in providing services to the child or family.

Additional information and copies of the complete policies may be secured from the Department of Student Services, 301-766-2960.
Reporting Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect
Anyone who has reason to believe that a child has been abused or neglected should make a report to the Department of Social Services by calling: 240-420-2222

Washington County Community Agencies
For a complete list of community support agencies, please see the Appendix.

School Attendance
The Maryland Compulsory Attendance law requires that every child in Maryland five (5) years old by September 1, and up to the age of eighteen (18) must attend school daily unless the child is lawfully absent or registered and participating in a certified home teaching program. It is the WCPS expectation that students attend school daily. Every school day is important and students who miss even one day miss valuable instruction.

The following attendance guidelines apply to all WCPS students:

- WCPS will follow the requirements in the Maryland Student Records System Manual and district regulations/procedures when determining if a student is counted present for a full-day or half-day. In general, a student must attend the majority of his/her classes or the school day in order to be counted present for the full day. During distance or blended learning, a student is in attendance for the entire day if he/she is present for more than 50% of their daily schedule/blended learning sessions.

- All school absences are recorded. Absences are coded as excused or unexcused.

- Only excused absences are considered lawful according to Maryland law.

- **Excused absences include:** 1. Illness of student (three or more days may require medical verification); 2. Death in the immediate family, 3. Court summons specific to the student, 4. Suspension, and 5. Other special circumstances.

  **Note:** All absences (other than those related to school discipline) require a parent note, which explains the reason for the absence, upon the student’s return to school. Failure to provide a parent note within 30 days may result in the absence being coded as unexcused.

- When the combined absences reach twelve (12) days, only official/legal documentation will be accepted in order for absences to be excused (i.e., doctor notes and/or legal summons).

- **Religious absence:** Student and staff absences from school to observe religious holidays are excused. Absences related to travel for the purpose of a religious observation will be considered “family vacation” absences, and must be pre-approved by the school principal. School personnel should be aware of religious holidays and should make every effort to avoid scheduling major examinations and events on those dates. Students will be permitted to complete make-up work, within a reasonable time period.

- **Family vacation absences:** Vacations or trips during the school year are strongly discouraged, as the loss of class time may have a negative impact on the student’s academic progress and record. It is also recognized that on some occasions, working parents have little control over the time of year when vacations may be taken.

  Family vacation absences are considered excused only if they have prior written approval of the principal and do not exceed three (3) days per school year. Written requests must be made at least 10 days in advance of the requested vacation absence, and after approval, parents and students are responsible for requesting students’ assignments. Teachers need at least four (4) days’ notice for preparation of student materials.

- **Approved college visitations:** A college visit for students in grades 11 and 12 who pre-schedule the visitation with the principal’s approval shall be considered an extension of the student’s program and the student shall be recorded as present. No more than three (3) college visitation days shall be approved per school year. Pre-approved absences related to recruitment or enlistment in the military will be considered in the same manner as approved college visitation.
- **Unexcused absences**: If a student is absent for any portion of the day, for any reason other than those identified as excused, the absence will be considered unexcused. (This includes absence from school without the knowledge of the parent/guardian, shopping, babysitting, providing care for other adults, running errands, etc.) **Unexcused absences may be defined as truancy.**

- **Truancy**: Any time a student between the ages of five and eighteen is absent without lawful cause, the student is considered truant.

- **Chronic Absenteeism** refers to a student who is absent 10 percent or more of school days (9 or more days in a semester/18 or more days in a school year) for any reason (excused or unexcused).

  Chronic Absenteeism will require a conference between school personnel, parents, and students. Students who are absent more than nine (9) days in a school year will be referred to the appropriate WCPS Pupil Personnel Worker (PPW).

- **Habitual truancy** refers to a student whose unexcused absences are in excess of 20 percent of the school days in any semester, or school year (greater than 18 days in a semester, 36 days in a school year).

- **Tardiness**: Individual schools have defined opening times when students are expected to be present. Students arriving after the designated time are marked tardy depending upon the time of arrival.

  Excessive tardiness will result in missed instruction and may require the school to take disciplinary action.

- **Make-up work requirements**: Make-up work will partially compensate for absences from classes. Teachers are required to assign make-up work for students whose absences are excused, if requested by the parent or student within the designated time lines.

- **Incentive programs**: Schools encourage regular on-time attendance and sponsor a variety of programs to encourage students.

- **WCPS attendance standards**: The Washington County Board of Education has established minimal standards for attendance and absences for students. When absences, excused or unexcused, accumulate to six (6) days, parents/students will be notified by mail. By WCPS policy, absences beyond twelve days in a school year are unacceptable. Cases involving excessive absence will be referred to the student support team (SST). Parents may be requested to participate in a conference with school personnel to discuss excessive absence.

- **Possible results when students accumulate excessive absence or habitual truancy**:
  - Request for additional documentation
  - Assignment of additional days of attendance (not included in the regular school year, i.e., Saturday School)
  - Establishment of a probationary attendance period
  - Retention in grades 1 through 8
  - Failure to earn high school credit or credits
  - Referral of the parent to the court for appropriate action

- **Appeal Process**: The following procedures are applicable for students and parents in order to appeal coding of absences and any penalties relative to the Student Attendance Policy.

  **Step I** - The student and/or parent shall contact the school principal to arrange for a conference to discuss the specific concern.

  **Step II** - If after conferencing the problem is not resolved, the parent within 10 days may contact the office of the Director of Student Services in writing following the Step I decision.

  **Step III** - If the problem is not brought to resolution after conferencing with the Director of Student Services, the parent, within 10 days following the Step II decision, may contact the Executive Director of Elementary or Secondary Education in writing to request a meeting.

  **Step IV** - If the problem is not brought to resolution after conferencing with the appropriate Executive Director, the parent may contact the Superintendent in writing, within 10 days after the Step III decision, to discuss the matter. The decision of the Superintendent of Schools shall be final.

- **Information dissemination**: Parents and students will be provided information concerning the student attendance policy/procedures during or before the opening week of each school year.
NOTE: The WCPS Attendance Policy is not designed nor intended to punish sick children or to encourage ill children to be in school. The procedures are designed to promote the importance of regular, daily school attendance. The law is quite clear – students are to be in school every day school is in session, unless they are ill or absent for another lawful reason.

### School Counseling Services

Counselors provide a safe, trusting environment that respects the privacy, rights and integrity of all students; allowing them the opportunity to freely explore ideas, express feelings and behaviors.

School counselors work with students who might be experiencing barriers to learning such as poor academic performance, absenteeism, health concerns, bullying, family issues, and peer conflicts.

School counselors provide support and direction to help students focus on academic, personal/social and career development. Their efforts help students achieve academic success with tools to prepare them to lead fulfilling lives as responsible members of our ever-changing global society. School counselors are trained at the graduate level and certified to deliver comprehensive services for students.

School counselors are involved in the implementation of both proactive and responsive services for students in grades Pre-K-12.

**Elementary and middle school counselors:**
- Provide classroom lessons for students in the area of academics, personal/social issues, and careers
- Meet with students individually to provide academic and emotional support
- Conduct small group counseling
- Coordinate full school initiatives for programs such as PBIS, Character Counts, Olweus Bullying Prevention, Second Step, Naviance, Career Cruising for career exploration, mindfulness activities, along with other programs to address targeted needs
- Support students in transitioning to and from various levels, and situational changes
- Provide crisis intervention as needed

**High school counselors:**
- Meet with students individually to provide personal/social, academic, and career advising
- Conduct small group counseling
- Provide classroom lessons for students in the area of academics, personal/social issues, and careers
- Provide students with academic, college, and career advisory
- Meet with students and parents for college coaching utilizing Naviance
- Support students in transitioning to and from various levels and situational changes
- Provide direction for students through four-year planning
- Assist students in course selection process
- Monitor student progress toward meeting graduation requirements
- Coordinate visits and direction regarding post-secondary educational options
- Provide financial aid, scholarship, and career counseling information.

School counselors also consult with school staff and parents to provide information and community resources in addressing student needs.

Students in Washington County can request to meet with their school counselor at any time throughout the school year. Students can also be referred by teachers, administration, or parents.

Parent/Guardians are encouraged to contact their child’s school counselor for information or to discuss any concern. Questions, concerns, and/or comments regarding the school counseling program should be directed to the Supervisor of School Counseling 301-766-2966 or the appropriate school principal.

### Mental Health Services

WCPS is dedicated to monitoring the provision of mental health services within our schools and throughout the community to support our students. In an effort to sustain this dedication, the Coordinator of Mental Health Services position maintains connections for school employed mental health staff and collaborates with community based mental health workers. Additionally, supports are available for WCPS staff to be better prepared to support students with mental health needs.
WCPS has partnerships with mental health providers throughout the Washington County community who have Memorandums of Understanding with the system to be able to come into schools and provide therapeutic services to students. The providers work collaboratively with families and WCPS staff to ensure all student needs are met, and that ongoing collaboration and communication is available.

Should families be interested in learning more about accessing mental health support for their students, they can reach out to the counselor at their school or connect with the Coordinator of Mental Health Services at the central office at 301-766-8739.

**Pupil Personnel Workers (PPWs)**

PPWs serve as representatives of the Department of Student Services, and as consultants to the schools. They reach out to families and assist students to succeed in school. Specifically, they encourage school attendance on a regular basis, foster appropriate behavior, and help families access community and support services, as needed. PPWs conduct home visits to promote family involvement; assist schools with enrollment, residency, custody, disciplinary actions; and help plan and carry out alternative services. Each PPW is assigned to several schools and serves as a key member of the student support team for each school.

Concerns regarding school attendance or the PPWs should be directed to the Director of Student Services at 301-766-8776.

**Student Discipline**

**Code of Maryland Regulations**

Each local school system must adopt a set of regulations designed to maintain an environment of order and discipline necessary for effective learning. These regulations should provide for counseling and establish standards for appropriate disciplinary measures and may permit suspension, alternative placement, or expulsion, if necessary. WCPS recently adopted a new Student Discipline Policy. (JK and JKR)

**Restorative Approaches**

The primary purpose of any disciplinary measure is rehabilitative, restorative, and educational. Restorative approaches is a relationship-focused student discipline model that (1) is primarily proactive and preventative; (2) emphasizes building strong relationships and setting clear behavioral expectations that contribute to the school community well-being; (3) is in response to behavior that violates clear behavioral expectations, focuses on accountability for any harm done by the problem behavior; and (4) addresses ways to repair the relationships affected by the problem behavior with the voluntary participation of an individual who was harmed.

Restorative approaches used by schools may include conflict resolution, mediation, peer mediation, circle processes, restorative conferences, social emotional learning, trauma-informed care, positive behavioral intervention supports (PBIS), and rehabilitation.

**Suspensions and Expulsions**

The removal of a student from school because of inappropriate, disruptive or dangerous behavior is a serious matter. However, removal is sometimes necessary when a student’s behavior interferes with the efforts of teachers and students to learn or when the safety of the students and teachers is involved.

The length of time the student is out of school depends both upon the seriousness of the incident and upon the student’s previous conduct. Through this handbook and guide and other school announcements, students are informed of some of the behaviors that are not acceptable in WCPS.

Students should be aware that the school has the authority to take disciplinary action, even when the misbehavior occurs off school property or when schools are closed, if the behavior affects the good order and discipline of the school. For example, schools may take disciplinary action when students are misbehaving on the way to or from school or misbehaving while participating in school-related activities such as field trips and other school-sponsored activities.

*See more information on Conduct Ineligibility.*

**Extracurricular Activities**

Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege provided to students who meet the academic and behavior standards detailed in this and other publications. Extracurricular activities include, but are not limited to sports, clubs, graduation ceremonies, and field trips that occur or extend beyond the regular school day. Students can lose the privilege of participating in extracurricular activities if they fail to meet WCPS’
academic and behavior standards, their school’s behavior standards, or the behavior standards of the extracurricular program in which they are participating or are requesting to participate. Students will be informed if they are ineligible to participate in all or some extracurricular activities.

**In-school Suspension**

“In-school suspension” means the exclusion within the school building of a student from the student’s regular education program for up to, but not more than, 10 school days in a school year for disciplinary reasons by the school principal or designee.

**Out-of-School Suspension**

“Out-of-School Suspension” means the removal of a student from school for disciplinary reasons for a period not to exceed ten days by a school principal or designee. A student may be suspended for up to 10 days for just cause. A principal or designee may use other disciplinary means to correct student behavior (detention, in-school suspension, etc.) at their discretion, in accordance with school policies and procedures.

The principal or designee may place a student on short-term suspension after a conference with the student. During this conference, the student can tell his or her side of the story. Parents are notified when the student is placed on short-term suspension and a meeting is arranged at the school so that the school administrator, parents, and student can plan together to avoid any repetition of the misbehavior.

Parents/guardians have the right to an informal appeal of the school administrator’s suspension decision. The informal appeal is a paper review and all requests for appeal must be in writing. The written appeal should include the reason for requesting the appeal and contain any written documents to be considered. During the appeal process, the suspension of the student remains in effect. Through the appeal process, the consequences may be increased or decreased. The following are the steps in the appeal process:

1. Parents/guardians may appeal the decision for the suspension directly to the principal. Such appeals must be submitted in writing to the principal within 10 days of the suspension decision.

2. In the event the parents/guardians are not satisfied with the principal’s decision, they may appeal that decision, in writing, to the Director of Student Services, School Counseling, and School Health within 10 days of the principal’s ruling of the appeal. The Director of Student Services, School Counseling, and School Health will direct a PPW to make a thorough review of the matter. The Director of Student Services, School Counseling, and School Health will confer with the PPW and will render a decision.

3. If parents/guardians are not satisfied with the decision of the Director of Student Services, School Counseling, and School Health, the parents/guardians may appeal that decision, in writing, within 10 days, to the Executive Director of Elementary Education or the Executive Director of Secondary Education.

4. If the parents/guardians wish to appeal the decision of the Executive Director of Elementary Education or the Executive Director of Secondary Education, this may be made in writing within 10 days to the Superintendent of Schools, in accordance with WCPS policies BEE and BEE-R(1).

5. Further appeal of the decision of the Superintendent may be made in writing within 10 days to the Washington County Board of Education. The decision of the Washington County Board of Education is final.

**Extended Suspension, Alternative Placement or Expulsion**

“Extended Suspension” refers to the removal for disciplinary reasons of a student from school for a period of more than ten days. An extended suspension can result in a student being out of school for a period longer than ten school days. Examples of unacceptable behavior for which a student may be recommended for extended suspension and/or alternative placement can be found on the chart on page 26. These regulations apply to all activities that are connected with school. For example, students may be disciplined if they have weapons at school football games, dances, and while traveling to and from school.

An “expulsion” means that the student cannot attend any regular day school program of the WCPS during the period of expulsion. A student may be recommended for expulsion for the following offenses: arson, possession of a weapon or physical assault leading to serious bodily injury.

Important notes in reference to weapons violations:

- The type of weapon or the reason the weapon is in the student’s possession is not relevant. The following will be treated as weapons: an airsoft gun, a tazer, a penknife, a large knife, brass knuckles, a chain, a pipe, nunchaku, a BB gun, a pellet gun, a starter pistol, a revolver or automatic pistol–loaded or unloaded, operable or inoperable.
If a student is asked to hold a weapon, the student should refuse. The student may be expelled because the weapon is in his or her possession. The person who brings the weapon to school may also be expelled.

Violations of Maryland law will result in notification of law enforcement and possible arrest and prosecution.

While the principal can recommend a student for extended suspension/alternative placement or expulsion after a conference with the student, the Superintendent’s designee is responsible for determining the disposition in each case. A decision may be made to reinstate the student in the same school; provide an alternative placement or program for the student; transfer the student to another school; withdraw the student from school; recommend expulsion; continue the student on suspension; or require professional evaluation and/or counseling.

If a school administrator recommends extended suspension, alternative placement, or expulsion, the principal will immediately summarize the situation and request additional consequences, in writing, to the Superintendent.

Upon notification of the receipt of the request, the Director of Student Services, School Counseling, and School Health shall direct a PPW to meet with the student and parent(s), provide an additional opportunity for due process, and thoroughly investigate the disciplinary incident. The Director of Student Services, School Counseling, and School Health, after such review, will determine if a longer suspension, a change in school placement, or expulsion is warranted and notify the parents, in writing, of the decision.

The decision to suspend a student longer than ten (10) days, change a student’s school placement or to expel a student may be appealed. All requests for appeals must be in writing and include the reason for the appeal. Throughout the appeal process, the decision of the Director of Student Services, School Counseling, and School Health remains in place. In the appeal hearings, the parents/guardians and student may bring counsel, witnesses, and may present evidence to support their position. Through the appeal process, the consequences may be increased or decreased.

The following are the steps in the appeal process:

1. If the parents/guardians wish to appeal the decision of the Director of Student Services, School Counseling, and School Health, they may file an appeal within 10 days of such a decision with the Executive Director of Secondary Education. The Executive Director of Secondary Education or a designated Hearing Officer will schedule a hearing with the parents/guardians and student to hear the appeal and will render a decision, in writing, to the parents/guardians.

2. If the parents/guardians are not satisfied with the decision of the Executive Director of Secondary Education, the parents/guardians may file an appeal, in writing, within 10 days of such a decision, with the Superintendent of Schools, in accordance with Board of Education policies BEE and BEE-R(1).

3. If the parents/guardians are not satisfied with the decision of the Superintendent of Schools, the parents/guardians may file an appeal, in writing, within 10 days of such a decision, with the Board of Education in accordance with Board of Education policies BEE and BEE-R(1).

4. The decision of the Board of Education is final.

**Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities may be suspended or expelled according to IDEA regulations, Procedural Safeguards Parental Rights Handbook (provided at least annually to the parent/guardian of a student with a disability), the student's individualized educational program, and WCPS procedures.

**School Work Missed Due to Suspension**

Students will be provided the opportunity to make up class work missed during any out of school suspension, within a reasonable time period. Parents/guardians will be provided with the name and contact information for a designated school liaison who will assist in obtaining and exchanging school work during the period of suspension.

Suspended students should not be on school property unless permission is granted by the school administrator. Students will be given the number of days equal to the number of days absent to submit completed make-up work.

**Restitution**

"Restitution" refers to restoring something that has been taken away or making payment for an injury or loss. WCPS is charged with educating the children of Washington County. Part of the educational process is to teach respect for the person and property of others, as well as to teach...
that all persons are responsible for their own behavior. If, as the result of certain behavior, properties are damaged, destroyed, or stolen, the person or persons responsible must be prepared to pay to repair or replace the property.

**Vandalism**

School staff tries to prevent vandalism and help students understand the need to respect the rights of others. Efforts are made to increase school pride, involve parents, and create activities and programs that stress pride in school and care of property.

Where minor acts of vandalism are committed, students may be required to perform school service chores as restitution to discourage future acts of this kind. For instance, a student may be asked to remove writing from the walls of a school building or clean a given area that has been dirtied by the student.

In addition, Maryland law describes a procedure for obtaining restitution from a parent and/or a student who has been charged with a crime and prosecuted through Juvenile Court. Maryland law states that if a juvenile is found to be delinquent as the result of an act that has damaged another person or another person’s property, the Juvenile Court may require the juvenile or the parent of the juvenile to pay the injured person in repayment for the loss. WCPS will make every effort to obtain restitution for damage to school property through the use of Maryland law and the Juvenile Court.

**Hazing**

Hazing is any action or activity that inflicts physical or mental harm or anxiety, or which demeans, degrades, or disgraces a person, regardless of location, intent, or consent of individuals. Additional information regarding hazing of persons involved in extracurricular activities, including interscholastic athletics, can be obtained from each high school athletic director and varsity head coach.

Individuals who are proven to have made false accusations shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary and/or legal action.

Administrators will make every effort to ensure that individuals who make a complaint of harassment or hazing in good faith, and individuals who assist in the investigation of harassment in good faith, will not have their grades or learning environment adversely affected.

The school system takes seriously any allegations of harassment or hazing and will fully and promptly investigate such allegations. However, if it is determined that an individual has intentionally made a false accusation, that person will be subject to appropriate disciplinary and/or legal action.

**Textbooks**

Textbooks are a vital resource for the school system. If any student loses or damages textbooks, the parent/guardian will be required to replace the textbook or pay the cost of repairing the damage. The principal may withhold books, supplies, or equipment until restitution or, in extenuating circumstances, an appeal has been made to the Executive Director of Secondary Education or the Executive Director of Elementary Education.

**Loaned Instructional Materials**

WCPS loans instructional materials in addition to textbooks for students to use in classes and activities. These materials include but are not limited to, the following: calculators, science laboratory equipment, musical instruments, band uniforms, choir robes, athletic uniforms, and equipment. It is the responsibility of the student using and/or possessing loaned instructional materials to care for them properly and to return them in good condition, taking into account normal wear. The student and parent/guardian are liable for any vandalism, damage, or theft because of negligence or improper use. Any other negative circumstances regarding these items must be reported to the teacher in charge immediately. Maintenance and repair, other than that which is performed by the system or respective school, is the responsibility of the student or guardian. Cost of replacement is also the responsibility of the student or guardian and will be determined according to fair and current market value.

**Corporal Punishment**

Principals and assistant principals and all other employees of WCPS are not permitted to use corporal punishment as a disciplinary measure for students. Corporal punishment is bodily punishment such as spanking or striking someone with a hand. Shaking, pinching, or any contact intended to inflict pain may also be considered corporal punishment.

- There are circumstances and/or conditions under which WCPS employees are permitted to appropriately touch students. Maintaining a safe and orderly school environment, administering first aid, and attending to health needs are circumstances and/or conditions where touching students is permitted. Other examples of these circumstances are as follows:
  - intervening in fights,*
  - preventing accidental injury,
  - protecting oneself,
  - providing appropriate care to disabled students,
  - moving through a crowd to address an emergency, and
• employing passive restraint with students with emotional disabilities (only if staff have received appropriate training).

*All school staff are encouraged to contact an administrator and/or wait for the assistance of other adults, in order to ensure further injury does not occur to students or staff.
# Violations of School Regulations & Consequences

**Washington County Public Schools (WCPS) Disciplinary Guidelines**

Washington County Public Schools (WCPS) has adopted discipline guidelines to discourage inappropriate student behavior and so that parents and students understand potential consequences of student misconduct. This chart serves only as a guide and does not circumvent the authority of principals and assistant principals to administrate consequences based on the severity of the infraction, the student's prior disciplinary record, and the age of the student. Other optional consequences may be available based on school-based practices such as Saturday School. Any violations determined to be criminal in nature will be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency, as noted in the guidelines. Consequences are progressive in nature as misconduct persists and increases in severity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VW = Verbal Warning</td>
<td>DET = Detention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LP = Loss of Privilege</td>
<td>ISS = In-School Suspension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TO = Time Out</td>
<td>LEN = Law Enforcement Notification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC = Parent Contact</td>
<td>SAP = Referral to Student Assistance Program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Progressive Discipline
Consequences for student misbehavior are progressively more severe as misbehaviors continue or severity increases. Initial discipline is handled in the classroom with teachers addressing minor rule violations. If behaviors persist or become more serious rule violations, a referral to an administrator will be made. Initial administrative referrals will be given less severe consequences unless the incident warrants immediate, decisive action (see table below).

### Student Offense

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Dishonesty/Cheating</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>Elementary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Alcohol</em></td>
<td>Possession, use, or showing evidence of use, sale, or distribution of any alcoholic substances.</td>
<td>$3</td>
<td>SAP</td>
<td>EX/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arson/Fire</td>
<td>Attempting to set, aiding in setting, or setting fire to a building or other property.</td>
<td>$4</td>
<td>LEN</td>
<td>EP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullying/Harassment</td>
<td>Purposeful conduct or communication, (oral, written, or electronic) that makes a student feel unsafe.</td>
<td>WW</td>
<td>IPC</td>
<td>EX/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Cutting</td>
<td>Failing to attend a class or school activity.</td>
<td>DET</td>
<td>ISS</td>
<td>DET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disrespect</td>
<td>Making intentional inappropriate and/or harmful gestures, verbal or written comments or symbols to others; being insubordinate or persistently disrespectful and/or in defiance of authority.</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>S4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disruption</td>
<td>Behavior that interferes with the learning environment or disrupts the operation of a school.</td>
<td>WW</td>
<td>S4</td>
<td>VW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dress Code</td>
<td>Failure to follow the dress code guidelines on page 14 of the student handbook.</td>
<td>Min: VW</td>
<td>Max: ISS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Drugs/Controlled Substances</em></td>
<td>Possession, use, or showing evidence of use, sale, or distribution of controlled dangerous substance.</td>
<td>$3</td>
<td>SAP</td>
<td>EX/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explosives (Does not include lighters or matches)</td>
<td>Possession, sale, distribution, detonation, or threat of detonation of an incendiary or explosive material or device including pyrotechnics, firecrackers, smoke bombs, fuses, or any combustible or explosive substance or combination of substances or articles, other than a firearm. See 18 U.S.C. § 921.</td>
<td>EX/A</td>
<td>EP</td>
<td>LEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extortion</td>
<td>The process of obtaining property from another, with or without that person's consent, by a wrongful use of force, fear, or threat.</td>
<td>ISS</td>
<td>EX/A</td>
<td>LEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>False Alarm/ Bomb Threat</td>
<td>The conveyance of threats or false information concerning the placement of explosive or destructive substances, initiating a false report of a fire or other catastrophe without cause in person or by phone. The offense of false reporting.</td>
<td>S4</td>
<td>EP</td>
<td>LEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting</td>
<td>A physical confrontation involving two or more students.</td>
<td>ISS</td>
<td>EX/A</td>
<td>ISS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firearms</td>
<td>Possession of a firearm as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921. Examples include handguns, rifles, shotguns, and bomb.</td>
<td>EX/A</td>
<td>EP</td>
<td>LEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Offense</td>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>--------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gang/Gang-Related Activity</strong></td>
<td>Known participation in a &quot;criminal gang&quot;—defined as a group or association of three or more persons whose members: (a) individually or collectively engage in a pattern of criminal gang activity; (b) have as one of their primary objectives or activities the commission of one or more underlying crimes, including acts by juveniles that would be underlying crimes if committed by adults; and (c) have in common an overt or covert organizational or command structure. All gang-related activity should be reported utilizing a Gang-Related Incident Reporting Form.</td>
<td>LEN</td>
<td>PC</td>
<td>LEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Carrying or Possessing a Gun</strong></td>
<td>Possession, use, or showing evidence of use, sale, or distribution of any firearms or other dangerous weapons.</td>
<td>S4</td>
<td>SAP</td>
<td>EX/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Guns</td>
<td>Possession of any type of gun, other than a firearm, loaded or unloaded, operable or incapable. This may include any object that is materially akin to a gun or firearm. (e.g., BB guns, pellet guns, water guns).</td>
<td>S4</td>
<td>EP</td>
<td>LEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Weapons</td>
<td>Possession of any implement that could cause or is intended to cause body harm, other than a firearm or other gun.</td>
<td>S4</td>
<td>LEN</td>
<td>EP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Attack—Student</td>
<td>Physically pushing, hitting or otherwise being intentionally physically aggressive toward another student.</td>
<td>ISS</td>
<td>EX/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Attack—Teacher/Staff/Adult</td>
<td>Being physically aggressive towards an employee of the school system or other adult, including physical contact with staff member who is intervening in a fight or other disruptive activity.</td>
<td>S4</td>
<td>EX/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inappropriate Use of Personal Electronic Devices</td>
<td>Inappropriate behavior of a sexual nature, including indecent exposure, consensual sex, inappropriate touching of a sexual nature, and other sexual activity not identified as sexual assault or harassment.</td>
<td>ISS</td>
<td>S4</td>
<td>ISS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Activity</td>
<td>Engaging in behavior directed towards a school system employee or another student that is physically, sexually aggressive.</td>
<td>S4</td>
<td>LEN</td>
<td>EX/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious Bodily Injury</td>
<td>Causing serious bodily injury which involves: (a) a substantial risk of death; (b) extreme physical pain; (c) permanent disfigurement; (d) substantial loss or impairment of a function of a bodily member, organ or mental faculty. Reference: IDEIA at 20 U.S.C. § 1415 (k)(7)(D) refers to 18 U.S.C. § 1365 (b)(3)</td>
<td>EX</td>
<td>EX/A</td>
<td>EX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Harassment</td>
<td>Engaging in intentional unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other inappropriate verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, directed toward others.</td>
<td>ISS</td>
<td>EX/A</td>
<td>DET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tardiness</td>
<td>Late to school or class.</td>
<td>WW</td>
<td>ISS</td>
<td>VW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft</td>
<td>Taking or obtaining property of another, without permission and/or knowledge of the owner.</td>
<td>ISS</td>
<td>EX/A</td>
<td>PC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>Possession, use, sale, or distribution of tobacco or tobacco products.</td>
<td>ISS</td>
<td>S3</td>
<td>ISS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trespassing</td>
<td>Unauthorized presence on school property, including while on suspension.</td>
<td>LEN</td>
<td>LEN</td>
<td>LEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truancy</td>
<td>Unlawfully absent from school or classes for a school day or a portion of the school day.</td>
<td>DET</td>
<td>ISS</td>
<td>DET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unauthorized Sale of Property</td>
<td>Unauthorized sale or distribution of items not otherwise defined in the suspension code.</td>
<td>WW</td>
<td>S4</td>
<td>WW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandalism and Destruction of Property</td>
<td>Damage, destruction, or defacement of property belonging to the school or others.</td>
<td>ISS</td>
<td>EX/A</td>
<td>LEN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal or Physical Threat to Student</td>
<td>Threatening, or aggressive language or gestures directed toward another student.</td>
<td>ISS</td>
<td>EX/A</td>
<td>EX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal or Physical Threat to Teacher/Staff/Adult</td>
<td>Threatening or aggressive language or gestures directed toward a staff/teacher or anyone other than a student.</td>
<td>ISS</td>
<td>EX/A</td>
<td>EX</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Distribution of identified items warrants maximum consequences. (IDEA at 20 U.S.C. § 1415 (k)(7)(D) references the definition for "serious bodily injury" from 18 U.S.C. § 1365 (b)(3))  

Updated 10/14/19
The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act ensures that each homeless child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as other students, and requires that any barriers to the enrollment, attendance, retention, or success of these children are eliminated.

If there is a possibility that a student is experiencing homelessness and, therefore, entitled to McKinney-Vento rights, the parent/guardian/caregiver will be requested to complete a Student in Transition Enrollment form to assist in determining eligibility.

Once the homeless student is identified, WCPS will either continue the student’s education in the school of origin (school in which student was last enrolled), or enroll the student in the school in the attendance area where the student is currently living, depending on the needs and best interest of the student, in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Act.

- The placement determination will be student-centered and consider the age of the student, the distance of the commute and the impact it may have on the student's education, personal safety issues, a student's need for special instruction, the length of anticipated stay in a temporary location, and the time remaining in the school year.
- To the extent feasible, a homeless student should be allowed to remain enrolled in his/her school of origin or appropriate school in the student/family feeder pattern, unless doing so is contrary to the wishes of the custodial parent(s)/guardians(s).
- A homeless student's right to attend the selected school extends for the duration of the homelessness.
- If a homeless student becomes permanently housed during the academic year, he or she is entitled to stay in the selected school for the remainder of the academic year, if appropriate.
- Transportation will be provided to the school deemed to be in the student’s best interest at the request of the parent/guardian.
- Students who become homeless between academic years are entitled to attend the selected school for the following academic year, if appropriate.
- If a student is assigned to a school other than the school of origin, or the school requested by the custodial parent(s) or guardian(s), the district must provide written explanation to the parent, including the right to appeal.
- In the case of an “unaccompanied youth,” the student will be assisted with placement/enrollment decisions, which consider the youth’s wishes, and notice will be provided to the youth of the right to appeal.
- A decision regarding appropriate school assignment must be made regardless of whether the child or youth resides with the homeless custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) or has been temporarily placed elsewhere.
- Disputes and appeals regarding services to homeless students should be referred to the Director of Student Services.

Students who are homeless have a right to access all school-related services (i.e., pre-school education, ELL services, vocational programs, field trips, athletic programs, before-and after-school programs, magnet schools, school nutrition programs, etc.). Homeless students shall not be separated from the mainstream school environment on the basis of their homeless status. All effort should be made to ensure that homeless students transferring from another school district are awarded credit for all completed coursework. Homeless students immediately qualify for free meals and are not responsible for any school-related fees.

Public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youth are posted in every public school and in appropriate places in the community. Contact the school guidance office for questions or details.

The WCPS Coordinator of Homeless Education in the Department of Student Services (301-766-2961) is also available to assist parents with any issues regarding enrollment, transportation and other available support and services.

Reference: Board Policy JFA and Board Regulation JFA-R

Foster Care

Students placed in Foster Care have the same rights as McKinney-Vento Homeless students. Foster Care students have the right to stay in their school of origin for the duration of their placement or may elect to attend the school in the attendance area where they are currently residing. A Best Interest Meeting will take place between WCPS and the Department of Social Services (DSS) or the Department of Juvenile Service (DJS) to determine the appropriate school placement. Foster parents are expected to meet with guidance office staff at the student’s school in order to provide the placement letter/court order from DSS or DJS, complete WCPS school enrollment documents, as well as WCPS Consent to Release and Consent to Access forms.
Student Health

School Health Services/Program Overview
The School Health Program was adopted in 1991 by the Code of Maryland Annotated Regulations from the State of Maryland (COMAR) which requires that public school systems and health agencies implement a comprehensive health services program that offers a variety of services to students, including the services of a school nurse.

Comprehensive school health services are provided in each of Washington County’s public schools by Meritus School Health. Registered Nurses (RN), Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN), and Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA)/Certified Medication Technician (CMT) work together in the delivery of health services. The RN maintains overall responsibility for each assigned school or cluster of schools. Health services include medication and treatment administration, first aid, illness appraisal, immunization compliance monitoring, health teaching and screenings, and communicable disease surveillance. The RN works with students, parents, physicians, and school staff in developing a health care plan for students with medical needs.

School Health Office
Students with illnesses or injuries must obtain a pass from their teacher and report to the Health Office. In some cases, parents or emergency contacts will be notified. If a student needs to go home, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to make these arrangements. Students will be released by the School Health Staff only with permission of the parent, guardian, or friend/relative as indicated on the Student Health/Family Information form. Students must sign out with the attendance secretary. If a student does not sign out, it may be counted as an unexcused absence.

Medications/Treatments
If a student is to receive medication during the school hours, the parent must provide a completed Physician’s Medication Order from and be signed by the health care provider, parent/guardian, along with the medication in a properly labeled prescription container. Also, the parent/guardian must provide the school health staff with all necessary equipment, supplies, formula, and medication. All treatments must have a completed Authorization for Treatment form, or specifically for a tube feeding - a Tube Feeding Authorization form, completed by a healthcare provider and signed by parent/guardian. The forms are available on the WCPS website under School Health Program or in the School Health office. Medication/treatment/tube feeding forms are renewed annually. Medications that are discontinued or expired are destroyed after 5 days if not picked up by an authorized adult. Medications not picked up by the last day of the school year are destroyed that day.

Medication/Treatment (tx) administration procedures:
● The parent/guardian must give the first dose of any new medication/tx at home before it will be administered by school health staff.
● The appropriate order forms must be complete before health staff will administer any medications or treatments to students.
● Students are expected to report to the health office at the appropriate time to receive the prescribed medication/tx.
● School health staff will notify parents if their child fails to report for a medication dose or prescribed treatment.
● School Health Staff will make every attempt possible to locate students who do not report for their medication or treatment.
● Students may not carry over-the-counter medications. A completed Physician’s Medication Order Form is required with signatures by the health care provider and the parent/guardian. Over-the-counter medications must be received in an unopened container or kept in the health office and administered by school health staff.

Students may be allowed to self carry inhalers for asthma or EpiPens for severe life-threatening allergic reactions. The nurse will assess the student’s knowledge and ability to self medicate the inhaler and/or EpiPen after the Physician’s Medication Order form is received in the School Health Office. The Physician’s Medication Order form section on self carry must be completed and filed in the School Health Office.

If a student is attending an overnight field trip and requires medication, the parent/guardian must provide a completed Overnight Field Trip Medication/Treatment Permission Form, which is to be signed by a health care provider and parent/guardian, along with the medication in a properly labeled prescription container, or if an over the counter medication, in an unopened container. Make sure the health care provider checks the box for self-administration. The Overnight Field Trip Medical and Emergency Information Form is also required to be completed. These must be reviewed by the nurse prior to the trip.

Illnesses
Students with fevers (100.4°F or greater) should be kept home until fever-free without any fever-reducing medication for 24 hours. Students with vomiting should also be kept home until there is no vomiting for 24 hours.
Major Injuries and Emergencies
Major injuries and emergencies will be referred to the Emergency Management System (911). Every effort will be made to notify the parent or guardian.

Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)
An AED is used to treat victims who experience sudden cardiac arrest. The treatment must be delivered within a short time to be effective. Sudden cardiac arrest occurs when the electrical impulses of the human heart malfunction causing ventricular fibrillation, a condition that will result in sudden death unless appropriately treated. AEDs are available at schools. Trained individuals are designated to use the AED on school system premises, however, any lay person is permitted to use it, if necessary.

Managing Students at Risk for Anaphylaxis Reaction
A student with a known history of anaphylaxis reactions must have parent/guardian provide detailed information to the school health staff, including types of allergens and triggers, history of allergic conditions, and emergency medication of an auto-injector epinephrine. The school nurse will develop a plan of care.

Students/individuals with an unknown history of anaphylaxis
The use of WCPS stock epinephrine auto injectors that are available in schools will be used per WCPS policy.

Naloxone
The drug naloxone is an overdose-reversing medication that is administered to individuals who are reasonably believed to be experiencing an opioid overdose. This emergency medication restores breathing and consciousness, and helps to prevent fatalities. Naloxone will be available in schools in accordance with state law.

New Students
Physical examination requirements and blood lead testing for new students, refer to page 3 under student enrollment section, health enrollment requirements.

Immunization Requirements
Maryland law requires that parents/legal guardians of students enrolled in kindergarten through twelfth grade provide evidence of immunizations or age appropriate immunity against Tetanus, Diphtheria, Poliomyelitis, Measles (Rubeola), Mumps, Rubella, Hepatitis B, Varicella, and Meningococcal. Children in preschool, who are under the age of 5, must also show evidence of immunization with Pneumococcal vaccination (PCV -7).

Parents/guardians should contact their healthcare provider to schedule an appointment for the immunizations prior to the start of school. The Washington County Health Department also provides immunizations. To schedule an appointment at the health department, call 240-313-3210. Children who do not have proof of immunizations or age-appropriate immunity may be excluded from school.

Vision and Hearing Screenings
Vision and hearing screenings will be provided for children in grades Pre-K, K, 1, and 8 sometime during the school year by Meritus School Health.

The Hagerstown Lion’s Club may provide additional vision screening to Pre-K students with consent.

Parents will receive written notification should their student need further evaluation. Parents should note that these are simple screening tests and are not designed to be diagnostic of specific vision or hearing disorders.

Maryland Children’s Health Program (MCHP)
Children up to the age of 19 without health insurance may qualify for the Maryland Children’s Health Program MCHP or the MCHP Premium Program. The MCHP program provides free health care and the MCHP Premium Program provides low-cost health care to children in families with low to average incomes. For detailed information on MCHP or MCHP Premium, call the Washington County Health Department at 240-313-3330 or visit www.washhealth.org. MCHP applications also are available from the school health office staff.
Accident Insurance for Students

Through special school programs, insurance policies are offered to students at the beginning of each school year. Application forms are distributed at school. Three types of coverage are offered. One covers any accident which may occur on the way to or from school and during school. The second, 24-hour coverage, is available at higher rates. A third policy is available for students playing football. Students considering participation in interscholastic sports should consider 24-hour coverage.

Parents may insure children against medical expense and loss of life or dismemberment or from bodily injuries due to school associated accidents. Details and limitations under this plan are outlined in the brochure made available to each child at the beginning of the school year. Information about insurance may also be viewed through the website for K & K Insurance at https://www.kandkinsurance.com/sites/K12Voluntary/Pages/Home.aspx.

Promotion and Retention

WCPS supports sound educational practices which support the development of each individual student.

Some students, based on individual, professional assessment, may benefit from acceleration or retention. When such acceleration or retention is under consideration, conferences with parents shall be held. Notification to parents shall be made immediately after either option is considered by school personnel. Early notification to parents of high school seniors who may not graduate on time is important. This notification shall be made immediately when the possibility of non-graduation is apparent.

Students in kindergarten through grade 8 must minimally meet content standards to be promoted to the next grade. Students in grades 9 through 12 earn credits for graduation through completion of courses. (See Graduation Requirements for details.)

The decision-making process concerning promotion or retention is a joint responsibility of professional school and county personnel and parents. The final decision relative to promotion or retention is the responsibility of the school district’s professional personnel.

Special Education and Related Services

When a student has a disability that significantly impacts his or her learning, the student may be eligible for special education. Special education is specialized instruction that is designed to meet the unique needs of a student with a disability.

Child find is the name of the process for identifying students with disabilities who require specialized instruction. The steps of this process are:

1. The student is referred to the special education process.
2. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) team meets to review the referral and all relevant information to decide if it is suspected that the student is being impacted by a disability.
3. If the team suspects a disability, the team determines what additional information is needed to determine eligibility. The parent/guardian must sign consent for the team to do assessments.
4. The team meets* to review the assessments and all relevant information to decide if the student has a disability that requires specialized instruction through an IEP or IFSP. *within 60 days from signed consent and within 90 days from referral.
5. If the student is eligible for special education services, the team meets* to develop an IEP or IFSP. The parent/guardian must sign consent for the IEP to be initiated. *within 30 days of determination of eligibility. Special education services are delivered in the least restrictive environment, which means that the student will spend as much time as possible in the general education setting.

The IEP or IFSP is reviewed and updated at least one time per year. Progress on IEP or IFSP goals is monitored and reported regularly. Reevaluation is considered at least every three years.
For Parents, Guardians, Staff, and Students

Commonly asked questions:

How do I refer my child for special education services? You can submit a written referral to the special education case manager at your child’s school. Be sure to include a description of your concerns.

What if my child is too young to be enrolled in school? You can make a referral through the WCPS Birth through Five Team at 301-766-8217.

What if I home school or my child is not enrolled in a public school? You can submit a written referral to the special education case manager at the school that your child would attend if he/she was enrolled in public school. If your child is found eligible through the child find process, an IEP draft will be developed and would be implemented through WCPS if your child was to enroll in a WCPS school.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ensures an equal opportunity for qualified people with disabilities. This goal translates into the provision of accessibility; the provision of benefits services, and aids that are equally effective for disabled and non-disabled people; and the provision of programs and activities that are otherwise free from discrimination based on disability. Equal opportunity, and not merely equal treatment, is essential to eliminating discrimination.

Destruction of Documents Related to Special Education

Special Education records for WCPS students will be retained for six years after the student is no longer enrolled. A permanent record of a student’s name, address, and telephone number, his or her grades, attendance record, classes attended, grade level completed, and the year completed will be permanently maintained pursuant to the Record Retention and Distribution Manual for Public School Systems in Maryland and COMAR 13A.08.02.08.

The purpose of this notification prior to destroying records is to allow time for the parent/guardian/student to consider the potential need for parents/guardians/students to retain this information in their personal records for purposes including but not limited to: accessing services for individuals with disabilities, public and private insurance benefits, social security benefits, and post high school education and training. Parents may exercise their rights to access records, and request copies of records through the student’s last school of attendance.

Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee (SECAC)

One of the predominant purposes of SECAC is to enable and facilitate community awareness, knowledge, support of special education, and the education business processes, whereby concerned citizens can participate in these processes to work cooperatively with WCPS to ensure the unique and multifaceted needs of students with disabilities are met.

Exact meeting times and locations for the 2019-2020 school year are subject to change but are currently scheduled for the third Wednesday of each month from 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. at Funkstown School For Early Childhood, 23 Funkstown Road, Hagerstown, MD 21740. Free childcare available with pre-registration. There will be no meetings held in July, August, or December.

September 18, 2019
October 16, 2019
November 20, 2019
January 15, 2020
February 19, 2020
March 18, 2020
April 15, 2020
May 20, 2020

For additional information on SECAC or meeting times, locations and to register for childcare, please contact: 301-766-8221 or powelmar@wcps.k12.md.us.
Family Support Resource Center

- Works to provide answers to parents’ questions about special education and their child(ren).
- Is a resource, referral, and training center established to assist families of children and young adults with special needs. The center serves as a link between family, school, and community.
- Offers a full range of support for families of children with special needs, from birth to 21 years.
- Is sponsored by WCPS, in collaboration with the Maryland State Department of Education to provide the following supports:
  - Meet with families to help them understand the special education process, which includes but is not limited to: explaining IEPs in detail, assisting families with meetings, and explaining the laws that govern special education.
  - Provide support for transitions from the Birth to Kindergarten program to Special Education Preschool services, and from school to work, or transitional youth programs where services will be funded through different public agencies.
  - Offer trainings to agencies that support families with children with special needs.
  - Provide disability awareness trainings to WCPS staff, churches, community groups, childcare centers, etc.
  - Offer sensitivity trainings in the schools for staff and students.

Workshops

- Practical workshops designed to meet the needs of parents and educators are offered throughout the year.
- An annual conference addressing current issues is also provided.

For additional information on times and locations of activities, please contact Family Support Resource Center at 301-766-8221 or nelsonon@wcps.k12.md.us & powelmar@wcps.k12.md.us. You may also visit our website at wcpsmd.com. Go to “Departments,” then click on “Special Education,” see Family Support Resource Center listed under “Overview & Resources.”

Funkstown School for Early Childhood Education
23 Funkstown Road, Hagerstown, MD 21740

June Harris Memorial Library
Publications and videos on a variety of topics are available for loan.

Phone “Hot-Line”
The Family Support Resource Center staff is available for consultation or to answer parents’ questions, please call 301-766-8221.

“Successful Times”
Family Support Resource Center publishes a newsletter several times a year.

Resources

- Community Agencies/Organizations
- State & National Resources/Activities
- Support Groups
- Advocacy Groups/Resources

School/Community Needs
Family Support Resource Center offers schools/community and civic groups information, insight, and/or workshops for people interested in learning more about children with special needs.

State and Federal Testing Requirements

Federal law requires that all students be assessed and receive an individual score in reading and mathematics in grades 3 through 8 and a high school grade. Maryland measures academic progress each year by administering the Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP), Maryland Integrated Science Assessment (MISA), Maryland High School Assessments (HSA and HS-MISA), the Alternate Maryland School Science Assessment for students with disabilities (Alt-MISA) and the Multi-State Alternate Assessment reading and math assessment for students with disabilities (MSAA). Scores from state assessments are posted on www.mdreportcard.org. This site contains test results, school progress, demographic information, and other facts and figures for every school and school system in Maryland.

Instructional information and parent resources at www.marylandpublicschools.org, including information on the MISA, MCAP ELA/math, and the HSA.
Elementary and Middle School Assessments
Students in grades 3 through 8 participate in the English language arts (ELA) and mathematics MCAP assessments. The MCAP assessment is a test of reading and math achievement that meets the testing requirements of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). This test is given during April and early May. The MCAP ELA/math assessment is designed to be administered online, containing multiple-choice questions and questions requiring written responses. The MCAP ELA/math assessment scores show how well students have learned the reading and mathematics skills in the Maryland’s College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS). Sample questions can be found at md.mypearsonsupport.com. In March, the MISA assesses science achievement for students in grades 5 and 8. These scores reflect the science skills learned during the current and preceding two years.

High School Assessments
Students in high school will take a combination of assessments to demonstrate their academic proficiency and meet graduation requirements. The HSA in government and the HS-MISA in science measure school and individual student progress toward Maryland’s High School Core Learning Goals. High school students will also take MCAP ELA/math assessments aligned with the courses in which they are enrolled. Students take each test after they complete the content-related course. This includes middle school students taking high school level courses.

Students who are unable to pass all of the required assessments can meet the graduation requirement by reaching a combined score based on the minimum passing scores on these assessments. Finally, those students who are unable to pass all tests or reach a combined score can satisfy this requirement by participating in the Bridge Plan for Academic Validation.

The website, www.marylandpublicschools.org, provides answers to commonly asked questions about the high school assessments and links to numerous resources, including the Core Learning Goals, publicly released test forms with answer keys and scoring rubrics, and a testing calendar. Resources for students taking the MCAP ELA/math assessment can be found at md.mypearsonsupport.com.

Bridge Plan for Academic Validation
The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) recognizes that there will be some students who will struggle on the required assessments, even after they take the tests several times and take advantage of academic remediation. The Bridge Plan for Academic Validation is an instructional intervention which provides students who are having difficulty on the assessments with an alternative means to meet the graduation requirement.

The Bridge Plan is for students who have passed the content-related course but have not passed the associated assessment after two or more attempts. To be eligible for the Bridge Plan, the student must also be making satisfactory progress toward graduation, have participated in locally administered or approved assistance, and have demonstrated satisfactory attendance as determined by local standards.

Students qualifying for the Bridge Plan will be assigned appropriate project modules that are meaningful, rigorous, and clearly tied to state standards. They will be given an opportunity to complete the project modules assigned and be subject to a careful review of his/her work based on detailed state guidelines and scoring rubrics.

College and Career Readiness
In 2013, Maryland passed the College and Career Readiness and College Completion Act. The intent of this legislation is to ensure that Maryland students graduate from high school prepared for college and career pathways. School districts are required to determine whether students are prepared to begin a career with proper certification and licensure, or ready to take credit-bearing college courses in math and English Language Arts by assessing them no later than 11th grade. To comply with the assessment requirements of the Act, WCPS will review students’ assessment scores from MCAP ELA/math, SAT, ACT, IB, or AP to determine if the student meets the requirement. If students have not yet demonstrated readiness for college-level work, they will complete supplemental coursework during 12th grade.

Alternate Maryland School Assessment
The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1997 also requires that states provide an “alternate assessment” when implementing statewide accountability systems. Students with significant cognitive disabilities who cannot participate in the MCAP ELA/math, MISA, and HSA assessments, even with accommodations, participate in the Alt-ELA, Alt-Math, and Alt-MISA assessments. These assess students’ attainment of their instructional level reading, mathematics, and science mastery objectives that are aligned with grade-level Maryland Content Standards.
Athletics–Interscholastic Standards

Information about student participation in and the administration of the high school interscholastic athletic program is in the Washington County Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association Handbook (revised annually). Additional information can be found in the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA) Handbook (revised annually). These handbooks are available for review on-line at www.wcpsmd.com. Information about the MPSSAA can be obtained on the website: www.mpssaa.org. High School Athletic schedules are online at www.washingtoncountycmc.org.

Extracurricular Activities Eligibility

Student Conduct Ineligibility

Students attending dances, concerts, athletic contests, field trips, etc., are expected to follow school rules. Students may be declared ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activities for a given period of time at the discretion of the school administration. Violations of rules of conduct for field trips, band trips, athletic trips, disruption of assemblies, and other school activity agreements, may result in ineligibility.

Extracurricular Activities–Eligibility (High Schools)

1. Extracurricular activities are those activities which ordinarily occur outside the school day, including athletics, clubs, plays, etc.

2. Student extracurricular activities are an integral part of school life and are used as a means of developing wholesome attitudes and good human relations as well as knowledge and skills. These activities often require as much careful planning and supervision as student experiences in the academic subject area; however, care must be taken that these activities do not take precedence over subject matter areas, but remain as supplemental activities to the basic courses of study.

While it is desirable that students participate in such activities to the extent that they further their educational development, it is of paramount importance that such participation shall not jeopardize pupils’ academic achievement nor exploit their time and talents.

3. In order for students to fully participate in extracurricular activities, including high school athletics, they must attain the following academic standards:
   a. A student who fails two (2) or more courses, in a marking period, is ineligible.
   b. A student who does not have a class scheduled for every period of the day must receive a passing grade in each credit/course in order to be eligible.
   c. The marking period grade, reported every nine (9) weeks, determines eligibility for the next marking period unless a final grade was awarded. Final grades always determine eligibility over marking period grades. (Refer to Grading Policy IKA.)

4. Eligibility shall be determined by the previous marking period grades except for the first marking period. Eligibility for the first marking period is determined by the final grades of the preceding year. Should a student not be eligible as determined by the final grades, that student may attempt to improve his/her grade by attending summer school. If, as a result of attending summer school the student meets necessary requirements, he/she is considered eligible and may participate in extracurricular activities in the fall.

If the specific make-up course needed by the student is not available in summer school, a course may be substituted with written permission from the guidance counselor and the principal.

5. In cases such as band or chorus, the student who is declared ineligible will participate in any regularly scheduled classes, but would not be permitted to perform in concert, marching or related activities occurring outside the school day. A student’s non-participation in such activities because of ineligibility will not affect his/her regular class grade. During the period of ineligibility, students are permitted to participate in practices after regular school hours.

6. In order for students to participate in high school athletics, they must be attempting to earn a minimum of three high school credits. The only college courses that apply toward athletic eligibility are the college courses that earn high school credit based on an existing agreement between WCPS and the college.

7. Students will be declared ineligible or eligible effective the next school day following the WCPS deadline for posting report cards for high schools and middle schools. Students do not become ineligible based on failing grades on interim reports; however, students who were ineligible due to their most recent marking period grades become eligible for full participation if their interim report indicates they are passing all classes.
8. Students who are ineligible may participate in practices, but cannot participate in a game or competition, dress in a game uniform, or travel with the team to games or competitions played away from their home school; these stipulations apply to students who are ineligible at the start of an athletic season or become ineligible during an athletic season.

9. Normally, an “incomplete” must be made up within ten (10) school days. However, in unusual circumstances, this period may be extended with permission from the principal. “Incompletes” become effective on the day report cards are distributed, but are not counted in determining eligibility. Students may participate in extracurricular activities during the periods of time an “incomplete” is in effect.

10. Ninth graders would be exempt from this policy for the first nine-week marking period.

**Early Dismissal and After School Practices**
On early dismissal days established for teacher professional development or for grading at the end of a marking period, practices will not be held immediately after dismissal. School staff members are not available for supervision after dismissal. Students must leave school property and then return for practice at the scheduled time.

**Guidelines for School-Sponsored Activities**
(Dances, Social Events, and Related Activities)

School policies and procedures, including expectations for appropriate dress and behavior, are still in effect during all school-sponsored activities, whether on or off school property, that are not related to either curricular or athletic goals, such as dances, social events, and other related activities. In general, students who violate policies or engage in unacceptable behaviors will be removed immediately and may be suspended from school sponsored social or extracurricular events.

**Expectations for Attendance at High School Dances**
- High school dances are primarily for students who attend high school.
- Current high school students who invite non-students to school dances should receive approval from the principal’s office for the guests prior to the event.
  - Students who have dropped out during the current school year are considered conduct ineligible and, therefore, cannot attend school dances or functions without the expressed permission of the principal.
  - All dances are restricted to individuals under the age of 21.
  - High school students may not invite students enrolled in grades 6-8 to attend high school dances or bring children.
- Students who leave the dance may not re-enter.
- Dancing inappropriately or engaging in improper interpersonal conduct may result in disciplinary action. If inappropriate behavior continues after a warning, the student and/or guest may be directed to leave the premises.
Instruction and School Activities Information

Title I Programs

Program Overview
Title I is a federal assistance program for designated schools. “Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965” was reauthorized by the “Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), 2015.”

Federal Title I funds flow through the various state departments of education to local school districts. The amount of funds sent to each school district is based on the number of low-income families, according to federal census data on poverty. The local school district identifies eligible schools and provides Title I resources to those schools.

WCPS currently provides Title I funds to seven (7) elementary schools: Bester, Eastern, Hickory, Lincolnshire, Salem Avenue, Pangborn and Ruth Ann Monroe Primary. Each of these schools has a schoolwide Title I program. Schoolwide programs are used in schools that have a high percentage of students who receive free or reduced meals. Each Title I school must develop methods to serve the academic needs of all students in the school. Schoolwide programs combine Title I funds with federal, state, and local funds to improve school programs. Title I schools that are new to Title I must start as a Targeted Assistance program for the first two (2) years. In this type of program, Title I funds may only be used to provide services to children who are identified as having the greatest need for educational assistance.

Title I schools:
- Identify students most in need of educational help. (Students do not have to be from low income families to receive this help).
- Set goals for improvement.
- Measure student progress, using academic student achievement standards.
- Develop programs that add to regular classroom instruction.
- Involve parents in all aspects of the program.

Title I school programs generally offer:
- Smaller classes.
- Additional teachers.
- Additional professional development for school staff.
- Extra time for instruction, before or after school.
- A variety of teaching methods and materials.
- Counseling and mentoring.

“Every Student Succeeds Act” Notification Requirements
Parents or guardians of a student in a Title I school have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teacher(s) who instructs their child. Federal law allows parents to ask for certain information about their child’s classroom teacher and requires WCPS to provide this information in a timely manner, if it is requested.

Parents of students in Title I schools have the right to ask for the following information about each of their child’s classroom teachers:
- Whether the MSDE has licensed or qualified the teacher for the grades and subjects he or she teaches.
- Whether the MSDE has decided that the teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed or qualified under state regulations because of special circumstances.
- Whether the student has been assigned, or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who does not meet applicable State certification or licensure requirements at the grade level and subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.
- The teacher’s college major, whether the teacher has any advanced degrees and, if so, the subject or degrees.
- Whether any teachers’ aides or similar paraprofessionals provide services to the child, and if they do, their qualifications.

In addition, parents may request information on the level of achievement and academic growth, for the school, child, or school system, if applicable, on each of the State academic assessments.

Parents who would like to receive the above information are asked to make the request, in writing, to the school’s principal. The principal will then provide the information to the parent within 30 business days.
Process To Be Followed With Respect To Complaints Concerning State And Federal Statutes Or Regulations Relating To Programs Supported By Federal Funds

A. Complaint to be Submitted to the Superintendent
Complaints alleging that Washington County Public Schools has violated a state or federal statute or regulation relating to programs supported by federal funds should be directed to the Superintendent or her/his designee.

B. Procedures

1. Definitions
   
   **Complaint** - A written statement alleging that Washington County Public Schools violated a state or federal statute or regulation that applies to programs supported by federal funds. A complaint includes a request for review of a decision of the school system, but does not include a request for a hearing.

   **Resolution** - The final decision as to whether or not the violation alleged in the complaint has occurred and any actions deemed necessary to remedy a violation will rest with Washington County Public Schools.

2. Filing a Complaint
   
   a. An organization or an individual may file a complaint with the Superintendent or his/her designee.
   
   b. The complaint shall be in writing, addressed to the Superintendent, signed by the individual complainant or by an official of the complaining organization, and delivered to the Superintendent and the Office of the Washington County Public Schools’ Ombudsman.
   
   c. Each complaint shall contain:
      
      i. A statement that Washington County Public Schools has violated a requirement of a federal or state statute or regulation applicable to a program; and
      
      ii. The facts upon which the statement is based.
      
      iii. Complainants whose allegations fail to meet the requirements are to be notified that they must comply with the requirements in order for the complaint to receive full investigation.

3. Receipt of Complaint by Washington County Public Schools
   
   a. Complaints against Washington County Public Schools shall be filed with the Superintendent and the Washington County Public Schools’ Ombudsman, who may assign the complaint to the supervisor of a department not named in the complaint for investigation.
   
   b. Initial processing by the investigating supervisor:
      
      i. All complaints shall be logged in writing with the Superintendent or his/her designee, with information:
         
         ● Identifying the complaint;
         
         ● Supplying the date upon which the complaint was filed; and
      
      ii. The complainant will be notified by the investigating supervisor or designee that the complaint is being investigated. Notification will include:
         
         ● The date of receipt of the complaint;
         
         ● The name of staff assigned to the complaint; and
         
         ● Washington County Public Schools’ intent to fully investigate the complaint, and to respond, if possible, within thirty (30) business days of receipt.
      
      iii. Each Washington County Public Schools’ department named in a complaint shall receive a copy of this acknowledgement letter as well as a copy of the complaint.

4. Investigation of Complaint
   
   a. The investigating supervisor shall review and investigate the complaint, where necessary, an independent on-site investigation may be conducted.
   
   b. Upon completion of the investigation, the investigating supervisor shall report the findings, along with recommended resolutions (when necessary) to the Superintendent for final determination.

5. Resolution of Complaint
   
   a. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall inform the parties in writing, if possible, within thirty (30) business days of receiving the complaint of Washington County Public Schools’ resolution of the complaint and include:
      
      i. Washington County Public Schools’ final decision as to the action that will be taken, if any, in response to the complaint.
      
      ii. Notice of the right of either party to request that the Board review the final decision.
iii. Procedures for filing an appeal of the decision to the appropriate officials at the Maryland State Department of Education and federal agency.

b. After the resolution letter is sent, the Superintendent or his/her designee shall note on the complaint log the date of the letter and whether or not any further action is required.

Administrative Regulations adopted:
March 20, 2007 Washington County Board of Education

**Advanced-Level Learners and Magnet Programs**

WCPS provides students and families a variety of educational options to address the diverse interests, talents, and aptitudes of advanced level learners. The Annotated Code of Maryland (Section 8-201) defines an advanced learner, or gifted and talented student, as one who has outstanding talent and performs, or shows the potential for performing, at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with other students of a similar age, experience, or environment. Accomplishment or potential may be demonstrated in intellectual, creative, or artistic areas. Advanced learners may also demonstrate unusual leadership capacity or excel in specific academic fields. All WCPS’ gifted and talented programs are aligned with COMAR Chapter 12A.04.07 Gifted and Talented Education.

All WCPS elementary schools offer Primary Talent Development (PTD) Pre-K-2 as part of their regular education programs. PTD is a science-based thinking skills development curriculum, which consists of two units of instruction per year. Performance on PTD tasks is also part of a student’s screening for participation in all elementary WCPS gifted education programs.

Currently, WCPS offers two options for advanced-level learners at the elementary level: Elementary School-Based Gifted and Talented Program (GATE) and WCPS Magnet Programs for Highly Gifted Students. Placement into either program involves a comprehensive review of multiple data sources through a screening process of all students, including English Learners and students who may be twice-exceptional. The WCPS Elementary GATE program extends and/or accelerates county curricula in math, reading, science, and social studies through interdisciplinary instruction for identified highly-able and gifted students in grades Pre-K through 5.

WCPS Elementary Magnet Programs for Highly Gifted Students, located at four elementary schools, offer highly challenging and fast-paced curricula on a full-time basis for advanced learners in Grades 2-5. Each magnet program features a specialized theme which offers opportunities for in-depth study, projects, and enriching activities that can benefit all students at the school. Magnet programs have been strategically located to serve families and children throughout Washington County. WCPS elementary schools that offer magnet classes include:

- Boonsboro Elementary Magnet School for Global Literacy
- Emma K. Doub School for Integrated Arts and Technology
- Fountaindale School for the Arts and Academic Excellence
- Williamsport Elementary Magnet School for Math, Science, and Technology (STEM)

At the middle schools, advanced learners are challenged in advanced-level classes for math, language arts, social studies, and/or science. Placement in these classes is based on a comprehensive review of multiple sources of information, including county and state assessments, teacher observation, and parent nomination. Parent nomination, however, does not guarantee placement in advanced classes. The review process is also inclusive of English Learners and students who may be twice-exceptional. Students may also participate in co-curricular/extracurricular activities such as Destination Imagination, Geography Bee, Math 24 Game, and Math Counts.

Four (4) WCPS Middle School Magnet Programs for Highly Gifted Students with specialized themes are also offered. Magnet students take at least two (2) magnet advanced-level classes in which the instruction is infused with the school’s particular theme. A magnet student may also have other advanced classes on his/her daily schedule. The middle school magnet programs are strategically positioned to serve incoming sixth, seventh, and eighth graders from across the county and build on the highly successful elementary magnet themes. They include:

- Boonsboro Middle School Magnet Program for Global Literacy
- E.R. Hicks Middle School Magnet Program for Media Technology, Humanities, and Digital Writing
- Northern Middle School International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme
- Springfield Middle School Magnet Program for Math, Science, and Technology (STEM).
- Western Heights Middle School Program for Supporting Creative Academic Performance and Excellence (Arts: SCAPE) Avenue A.

Additionally, Arts: SCAPE at Western Heights Middle School offers a second magnet program for creatively gifted students: Avenue B. Avenue B applicants complete either an audition or a portfolio, depending upon the program of concentration. Avenue B options include band, dance, graphic design, orchestra, theater, and visual arts.

Since the elementary magnet program begins at grade two, and the middle school magnet program begins at grade six, all first and fifth-grade students in the regular education program are screened for their potential to apply to a magnet program. Eligible students are then invited to

WCPS offers a variety of advanced, early college, magnet, specialized, and Career-technology education programs (CTE) to meet the needs of highly-able and identified gifted and talented students. Consult the WCPS High School Program of Studies to learn more about these learning opportunities, which can be found at www.wcpsmd.com/documents.

Title III-English Learners (EL)

The Law
Title III of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 provides Federal financial support to state and local educational agencies to supplement English language development programs in order to ensure that all English Learners (ELs), including immigrant children and youth, attain English proficiency and develop high levels of academic language achievement in English, and achieve at high levels in academic subjects so that all ELs can meet the same challenging academic standards that all students are expected to meet.

According to the ruling in Plyler v. Doe, undocumented students have the right to attend public schools and participate in all school activities. Moreover, school officials are not allowed to require children or their parents to prove that they are in this country legally, through evidence such as green cards, citizenship papers, or social security numbers.

Identification and Eligibility of English Learners
Students are identified as needing services based upon parent/guardian responses to Maryland’s Home Language Survey and a test of English proficiency. If a language other than English is indicated on two or more of the three questions below, the student will be assessed for English language support services. Additional criteria for testing may be considered.

- What language(s) did the student first learn to speak?
- What language does the student use most often to communicate?
- What language(s) are spoken in your home?

Parent Notification
A parent notification letter must be sent to parents/guardians annually for new and continuing ELs who participate in English language development programs, including ELs for whom services have been refused. Parents of an EL identified for participation in the English language development program are informed:

- No later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year for students who enter at the start of the school year.
- Within the first two (2) weeks of a student being placed in such a program if the student was not identified as an EL prior to the beginning of the school year.

Instructional Programs
The WCPS English language development program adjusts instruction to students’ strengths and needs. Instructional strategies, practices, and methods to help each child learn English and meet age appropriate academic standards are based upon scientific research. The expectations for ELs are to transition fully into mainstream classes, meet appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion, and graduate from high school at the same rate as mainstream students. Based on individual student need, a highly qualified EL staff member develops an individual EL plan using one or more of the instructional models:

- Middle School and High School EL Courses: These EL classes offer intensive English instruction in listening, reading, writing, and speaking.
- Structured Immersion: The goal of this program is to develop English language skills so that the ELs can succeed in an English only mainstream classroom. This involves teaching and modifying grade-level curriculum. Such programs require high levels of skills in both content matter and English language development and clearly defined language and content objectives.
- Pull-out support: A program outside of the regular classroom designed to teach ELs academic English language skills, which may include listening, speaking, reading, writing, study skills, content vocabulary, and cultural orientation.
- Push-in support: The EL teacher accompanies and assists ELs in the general education classroom.
- Tutoring Support
- Summer School
Description of Program Placement Options and Goals
All programs include English language development and teaching strategies differentiated for each student's level of English language proficiency. These strategies are used to help each student reach English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing and succeed academically in all core subjects. The expectations for EL are that students fully transition into mainstream classes, meet appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion, and graduate from high school at the same rate as mainstream students.

ELs With Special Needs
The student's English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) program will support meeting the instructional objectives of the individualized education plan (IEP).

Exit Criteria
ELs will no longer be eligible for ESOL services when they meet the state exit criteria on the annual English language proficiency assessment.

Parental Rights
Parents have the right to request placement in a different method of instruction if available. You have the right at any time to refuse ESOL services by contacting your child's ESOL teacher or school. Students will still take the annual English Language Proficiency Assessment. This process must be completed annually.

Reclassified English Learners
ELs who no longer require Title III services and who are exited from ESOL services are monitored for two (2) years to ensure that these students continue to make progress in meeting challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards for each of the two (2) years after such children are no longer receiving services.

English Language Proficiency Assessment
All ELs including those who refuse services are required to take an annual English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA). The English language proficiency assessment (ELPA) is administered to ELs in grades K through 12 upon their entry into the school system and annually during a testing window in the second semester (ACCESS for ELLs ®). The assessment measures a student's English language proficiency in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and literacy. ELPA results are reported in six (6) proficiency levels: entering, emerging, developing, expanding, bridging, and reaching.

The Alternate ACCESS for ELLs™ is designed for ELs with significant cognitive disabilities. In order to receive the most descriptive information from the test, it is very important that only students who meet all three criteria below and who cannot participate in the ACCESS for ELLs®—even with the provision of accommodations—shall be considered for the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs™.

Participation criteria:
1. The student has been classified as an EL.
2. The student has a significant cognitive disability and is eligible for special education services under IDEA.
3. The student is in an alternate curriculum aligned with his or her State's academic standards, and is participating in the State's alternate accountability assessment.

The Alternate ACCESS for ELLs™ is available for the 1–2, 3–5, 6–8, and 9–12 grade clusters.

English Language Development Standards
Maryland is a member of the WIDA Consortium and has adopted WIDA’s English Language Development (ELD) Standards. As a multi-state coalition of state departments of education, WIDA acts in collaboration to advance academic language development and academic achievement for ELs through high quality standards, assessments, research, and professional learning for educators. WIDA’s grade-level ELD Standards directly correspond to grade-level Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards and utilize proficiency levels to measure the progression of a student’s English language development.

Exemption of Recently Arrived English Learners
Maryland exempts “recently-arrived” ELs from one administration of its reading assessment during the first year of enrollment in U.S. schools per federal law.

Accommodations for English Learners
Both federal and state laws require the inclusion of all students, including ELs in large scale assessments and equal access to grade-level content standards. Teachers ensure that students work toward grade-level content standards by using a range of instructional strategies based on the varied strengths and needs of students. Providing accommodations during instruction and assessments may also promote equal access to grade-level content.
Parent and Community Outreach Services
WCPS provides community participation programs, family literacy services, parent outreach and training activities to EL children and their families. The WCPS EL department also provides interpretation and translation services upon request. Information/Información For more information on the EL program, please refer to the EL Handbook of Guidelines and Procedures or call 301-766-8288. Esta información es importante. Si no puede leerla, pidale a alguien que se la explique en un idioma que pueda comprender, o llame al 301-766-8288.

International Welcome Center and EL Community Liaison
The EL Community Liaison provides language support in multiple languages for pre-enrollment, personalized support to families new to WCPS, EL eligibility testing, and resources from the school and community. The EL Community Liaison can be reached at 301-766-8288 or at the International Welcome Center at Pangborn Elementary School.

Unified Arts/Related Arts and Health
The Related Arts program in the middle schools includes opportunities in health and physical education, consumer science, performing arts, instrumental music, choral music, technology education, and visual arts.

Program offerings and duration may range from 30 days per year to 90 days per year depending upon individual schools’ schedules. For example, students may alternate days within a schedule so that on one day they have physical education and on the next day either choral or instrumental music. Some schedules may rotate through programs of visual art, family consumer science, and various technology classes. Check with your middle school to learn about the specific related arts opportunities available.

Elementary Overview
The WCPS elementary instructional program aligns with the Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards in both language arts and mathematics. The Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards identify the knowledge and skills that all elementary students should master by the end of each grade-level and prepare students to be college-and-career-ready by graduation. The language arts program focuses on the development of literacy skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) through content integration across all subject areas, including social studies, science, and mathematics using informational and literary text. Students learn mathematics through the development of conceptual and procedural understanding to empower effective problem solving connected to real-world application. Math fact fluency is an effective component of effective problem solving. Elementary students also receive regular instruction in social studies, science, the arts, and health to become informed and critical thinkers. STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math), financial literacy, and environmental literacy are also embedded in the curriculum throughout the year. Through the use of the Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards and content integration, elementary students develop the ability to work independently and collaboratively to become global problem-solvers.

Admission for Pre-kindergarten, Kindergarten, and First Grade
Children are eligible for pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade based on their birth dates and ages:

- Children must be four years old on or before September 1, for pre-kindergarten.
- Children must be five years old on or before September 1, for kindergarten.
- Children must be six years old on or before September 1, for first grade.

Based on research that focuses on school readiness and best practices, the Maryland State Board of Education aligned Maryland’s entry guidelines with other states to ensure that children enter school ready to learn.

Pre-kindergarten Eligibility Guidelines
WCPS pre-kindergarten program is a State and Federally funded program for four-year-old children who demonstrate school readiness needs. The primary focus of pre-kindergarten is designed to provide high-quality learning experiences, which establish a routine of lifelong learning, so that the students may be fully ready to learn when they enter kindergarten. These learning opportunities focus on the seven domains of early learning. Throughout the day, integrated instruction will include social foundational skills, language and literacy, scientific thinking, mathematical thinking, social studies, fine arts, and physical development and well-being. Students will engage in reader’s workshop, developmentally appropriate mathematics instruction, and purposeful play opportunities in an effort to fully prepare them for kindergarten readiness.

To be eligible for Washington County’s public pre-kindergarten, a child must be four years of age on, or before, September 1 of the current school year. Families must live in Washington County and must meet State-of-Maryland income eligibility criteria. All income and age eligible children who apply must be enrolled first; however, if there are spaces remaining, other children may be enrolled based on school readiness needs. Enrollment is limited due to eligibility, and schools may have waiting lists. Public pre-kindergarten may not be used as an alternative to kindergarten.
Early Admission Process for Kindergarten

To be eligible for consideration for early admission to kindergarten, the child must be five years of age by October 15. To begin the early admission assessment process, parents/guardians must complete the on-line application. The application must be returned to the Office of Early Learning by June 1. Early admission assessments will be scheduled with parents/guardians and will be completed during the summer.

Pre-Kindergarten Regional Sites

All K-5 elementary schools offer opportunities for Pre-K participation. The Pre-K location for Fountaindale Elementary is at North High and is a collaboration between Pre-K and the NHHS Teacher Academy.

Elementary Reading/English Language Arts

The WCPS elementary reading/language arts framework integrates the five components of a balanced literacy program into reading and writing. Teachers begin in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten to lay the foundation of these components, which include developing concepts of print, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. As the student continues through his/her academic career, emphasis is placed on engaging the learner in independent reading for purpose and pleasure. These reading skills and strategies are taught in formats such as read-alouds, interactive read-alouds, shared reading, guided reading, independent reading, daily message, interactive spelling, and word study.

Writing instruction is also incorporated into the language arts framework and includes teaching the writing process, the traits of effective writing, and the characteristics of the different writing genres. It is important to remember that reading and writing develop along parallel paths. The integration of reading and writing into all subject areas provides students with a strong literacy education.

Students work to master the following literacy skills:

**Pre-kindergarten**
- Developing basic concepts of print.
- Recognize, discuss, and retell elements of stories and poems.
- Recall information, make predictions, and answer questions.
- Identify and recognize most uppercase and lowercase letters, and associate sounds to letters.

**Kindergarten**
- Identify words beginning with same sounds.
- Expand word choice to communicate and relate experiences.
- Understand concepts of print (track words, identify parts of a book, and coordinate one-to-one matching of spoken words to written words).
- Write simple sentences.

**Grade One**
- Combine sounds and word parts to form words.
- Read with expression.
- Use thinking strategies before, during and after reading a text.
- Write independently using simple and compound sentences.

**Grade Two**
- Explore multiple meaning words while reading.
- Utilize reading strategies to read text accurately and with expression.
- Use the writing process to write independently for a variety of purposes.

**Grade Three**
- Utilize context cues, phonics skills, prefixes, and suffixes to read and determine meaning of words.
- Acquire new vocabulary through reading and context clues.
- Read texts for different literary purposes.
- Use the writing process to develop multiple paragraphs.

**Grade Four**
- Use knowledge of word parts and root words to determine meaning and relationships.
- Read fluently for full comprehension.
- Utilize cues to draw conclusions, infer relationships, identify theme and story elements, and recognize cause and effect.
- Use the writing process to write effectively for a variety of purposes.

**Grade Five**
- Acquire and expand vocabulary through reading a variety of genres.
- Read for a variety of purposes.
- Write for a variety of audiences and purposes.
- Utilize correct capitalization, punctuation, language use, and spelling when writing.
- Apply research skills to investigate, communicate, and present in both oral and written form.
Elementary Math

WCPS uses the Maryland College and Career-Readiness Standards (MCCRS) for mathematics as the primary curricular resource for instruction. The MCCRS are based on the Common Core State Standards which include eight (8) Standards for Mathematical Practice. These practices rest on processes and proficiencies with long-standing importance in mathematics education that educators should seek to develop in their students.

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively.
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.
4. Model with mathematics.
5. Use appropriate tools strategically.
6. Attend to precision.
7. Look for and make use of structure.
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

Number sense is fundamental to all mathematical learning. Students begin to build number sense in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten. Number sense is strengthened and reinforced in all grades. Developing number sense provides many opportunities for students to recognize relationships between numbers, identify patterns and determine the reasonableness of their work.

Conceptual understanding is built through concrete experience in which children use manipulatives. Students must first develop a concrete understanding of number relationships by constructing and exploring.

Emphasis on computational fluency is also an essential component of elementary math instruction. Computational fluency is defined as having and using efficient and accurate methods for computing. Students should be able to perform computations in multiple ways, including mental calculations, estimation and paper-and-pencil calculations using mathematically sound algorithms. Computational fluency develops in tandem with understanding at all grade levels.

The students will develop and apply an understanding of:

**Pre-K**
- Mathematizing their environment.
- Comparing and counting in their environment.
- Making sense of the environment by exploring numbers, shapes, and measurements.
- Putting numbers together and breaking numbers apart while demonstrating number sense.

**Kindergarten**
- Math Fluency.
- Counting & Cardinality: Knows number names and count sequence. Counts to tell the number of objects.
- Operations & Algebraic Thinking: Solve addition and subtraction word problems within 10.
- Numbers & Operations in Base Ten: Gain foundations in place value with numbers 11-19.
- Measurement & Data: Understands concepts of measurement and data.
- Geometry: Understands concepts of geometry.

**Grade 1**
- Math Fluency.
- Operations & Algebraic Thinking: Represent and solve problems involving addition and subtraction.
- Numbers & Operations in Base Ten: Understands place value and properties of operations to add and subtract.
- Measurement & Data: Understands concepts of measurement and data.
- Geometry: Understands concepts of geometry.

**Grade 2**
- Math Fluency.
- Operations & Algebraic Thinking: Represent and solve problems involving addition and subtraction.
- Gain foundations for multiplication.
- Numbers & Operations in Base Ten: Understands place value and uses place value understanding and properties of operations to add and subtract.
Measurement & Data: Understands concepts of measurement and data.
Geometry: Understands concepts of geometry.

**Grade 3**
- Math Fluency.
- Operations & Algebraic Thinking: Understand the meaning and properties of multiplication and division.
- Find products of single-digit multiplication and related quotients.
- Numbers & Operations in Base Ten: Understands the place value system through 1,000.
- Understands the properties of operations to add and subtract multi-digit numbers.
- Numbers & Operations – Fractions: Understands and represents the meaning, equivalence, and comparison of fractions.
- Measurement & Data: Understands concepts of measurement.
- Geometry: Understands concepts of geometry.

**Grade 4**
- Operations & Algebraic Thinking: Use addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division to solve problems.
- Numbers & Operations in Base Ten: Understands place value and uses place value understanding to add, subtract, multiply, and divide.
- Measurement & Data: Understands concepts of measurement and data.
- Geometry: Understands concepts of geometry.

**Grade 5**
- Operations & Algebraic Thinking: Write and interpret numerical expressions and analyze patterns/relationships.
- Numbers & Operations in Base Ten: Understands the place value system.
- Represents and solves problems involving addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of whole numbers and decimals.
- Numbers & Operations – Fractions: Represents, explains, and solves problems involving fraction computation.
- Measurement & Data: Understands concepts of measurement and data.
- Geometry: Understands concepts of geometry.

**Elementary Science**

The elementary science curriculum includes the integration of the three (3) dimensions of the Next Generation Science Standards. The three (3) dimensions include the Disciplinary Core Ideas, Crosscutting Concepts, and Science and Engineering Practices. All three (3) dimensions follow a conceptual progression of understanding beginning in the primary grades and becoming more sophisticated in the intermediate grades.

Students will think like scientists by using the Crosscutting Concepts to develop an understanding of the natural and designed world. The Crosscutting Concepts include patterns; cause and effect; systems and system models; structure and function; energy and matter; stability and change; and scale, proportion, and quantity.

Students will work like scientists by engaging in the Science and Engineering Practices. Students are expected to demonstrate grade-appropriate proficiency with asking questions, developing and using models, planning and carrying out investigations, analyzing and interpreting data, designing solutions, engaging in argument from evidence, and obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information. Students are expected to use these practices to demonstrate understanding of the Disciplinary Core Ideas.

The Disciplinary Core Ideas are from four (4) areas: physical sciences; earth and space sciences; life sciences; and engineering, technology, and applications of science. The students will develop and apply an understanding of:

**Pre-K**
- Weather and living things in the natural world.
- Matter and sound in the natural and designed world.
- External structures and behavior of living things.

**Kindergarten**
- Motion as push, pull, and collisions.
- Variations and changes in weather.
- Needs of plants, animals, and humans.
Grade 1
- Properties of light and sound.
- Movement of objects in the day and night sky.
- Structures and behaviors of plants and animals.

Grade 2
- Properties of materials.
- Physical characteristics and changes of Earth.
- Interaction of plants and animals in different habitats.

Grade 3
- Forces and interactions.
- Weather, climate, and natural disasters.
- Growth and development of plants and animals and environmental impacts on plants and animals.

Grade 4
- Properties of waves, conservation of energy, and energy transfer.
- Physical characteristics and changes to the Earth’s landscape.
- Structure, function, and information processing of plants and animals.

Grade 5
- Matter and chemical reactions.
- Components and interactions of earth systems and space systems.
- Flow of matter and energy in ecosystems.

Elementary Social Studies

The WCPS elementary social studies program supports the development of responsible citizenship through the study of the social, economic, and political systems that support and shape the democratic way of life. Students learn the fundamental values and rights of society and the democratic process that leads to a better understanding of the similarities and differences that make up the diversity of the United States. They will study how geography influences cultures, technology and human activities. Through hands-on activities and cooperative learning groups, students learn to develop questions and plan inquiries, apply disciplinary tools and concepts, evaluate sources and use evidence to communicate conclusions and take informed action.

Pre-K and Kindergarten
The content focus is on Self and Others. The purpose of a Pre-K and Kindergarten curriculum is to begin the development of civic identity.

Grade 1
The content focus is on School and Local Communities. The purpose of the grade 1 curriculum is to continue to strengthen a child’s identity as an American citizen.

Grade 2
The content focus is on Communities Across the United States and World. The purpose of the grade 2 curriculum is to help students understand that American citizenship embraces all kinds of people, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, and national origin.

Grade 3
The content focus is on Town and County. The purpose of the grade 3 curriculum is to teach students about the history and civics of their local town and county.

Grade 4
The content focus is on Maryland. The purpose of grade 4 is to study the history, geography, and people of Maryland. This includes the three regions of Maryland and the indigenous peoples that first populated the area.

Grade 5
The content focus is on the United States. The purpose of the grade 5 curriculum is to give students their first concentrated study of the formative years of U.S. History.
Middle School Overview

In the middle school, students are interacting with many more students and with more adults than they did in elementary school. Middle school students often have a different teacher for each subject. The instructional program for grades six to eight reinforces skills learned in elementary school and prepares students for the more complex work that will be required in high school, college, and career readiness.

Middle school students who enroll in high school courses taught at the middle school will receive high school credit upon passing the course. Students are eligible for credit in Algebra I and full credit world language courses. The student’s high school transcript will indicate the course taken and credit awarded. Credit awarded in middle school will not be calculated in the student’s high school grade point average (GPA). Only grades earned for courses taken in high school will be used in the calculation of a student’s high school GPA. For more information you may request a copy of the Middle School Guide.

Middle School Reading/English Language Arts

The middle school English Language Arts curriculum continues to lay a solid foundation of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and critical thinking skills as students move toward college and career readiness. In grades 6-8, students read more complex texts, including novels, literary non-fiction, and informational texts. They engage in classroom discussions centered around these rigorous texts and work both independently and with their peers to research self-selected and assigned topics. Sixth, seventh, and eighth graders write increasingly more complex compositions, especially pieces that they use to persuade/argue, inform, and explain using evidence from multiple sources. Using both the full writing process and timed writing experiences, students learn to organize information coherently and use language and mechanics correctly in their compositions.

Mathematics

WCPS will use the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (CCRS) for mathematics as the primary curricular resource for instruction. The CCRS are based on the Common Core State Standards, which is a state-led initiative coordinated by the National Governor’s Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers.

The Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards for mathematics include eight (8) Standards for Mathematical Practice. The Standards for Mathematical Practice describe varieties of expertise that mathematics educators at all levels should seek to develop in their students. These practices rest on important processes and proficiencies with long-standing importance in mathematics education.

1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others
4. Model with mathematics
5. Use appropriate tools strategically
6. Attend to precision
7. Look for and make use of structure
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

The middle school mathematics curriculum extends topics students study in elementary school and introduces new concepts and skills that are needed for success in high school and beyond.

The major mathematics work of Grade 6 includes:
- Application and extension of previous understandings of multiplication and division to divide fractions by fractions
- Application and extension of previous understandings of numbers to the system of rational numbers, including negative numbers
- Understanding ratio concepts and using ratio reasoning to solve problems
- Application and extension of previous understandings of arithmetic to algebraic expressions
- Reasoning about and solving one-variable equations and inequalities
- Representing and analyzing quantitative relationships between dependent and independent variables
- Fluently dividing multi-digit whole numbers
- Fluently adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing multi-digit decimals
The major mathematics work of Grade 7 includes:

- Application and extension of previous understandings of operations with fractions to add, subtract, multiply, and divide rational numbers
- Analyzing proportional relationships and using them to solve real-world and mathematical problems
- Using properties of operations to generate equivalent expressions
- Solving real-life and mathematical problems using numerical and algebraic expressions and equations

The major mathematics work of Grade 8 includes:

- Working with radical and integer exponents
- Understanding the connections between proportional relationships, lines, and linear equations based on concepts of similarity
- Analyzing and solving linear equations and pairs of simultaneous linear equations
- Defining, evaluating, and comparing functions
- Using functions to model relationships between quantities
- Understanding and applying the Pythagorean Theorem

**Social Studies**

The middle school social studies curriculum emphasizes instruction in Maryland’s core learning goals for Social Studies-History, Geography, Economics, Political Systems, and Peoples and Nations of the World. The WCPS curriculum is built on the foundations of Maryland’s State Curriculum. Teachers utilize the History Alive!-Social Studies Alive! approach which challenges and engages students through reading, discussion, writing, and participation in skill building exercises, collaborative problem solving, visual discovery, and experiential activities. Students improve their skills and increase and extend their knowledge of history, politics, geography, economics, and culture.

In sixth grade, students study World History from the earliest cultures and civilizations to the middle ages. Students learn historical thinking skills, critical thinking skills, and social studies skills including constructing timelines, reading and analyzing primary and secondary sources, using atlases and globes, and interpreting visual sources. They use a variety of sources of information to understand historical events, the process of social change, and the impact of individuals. They learn to analyze historical issues and relate them to current events. Modules of study include:

- Early Settlements & Geography
- Research & Historical Investigations
- Empires: Roles of Citizens and Government
- Medieval World and Economics
- Transitions Americans and Exploration

In seventh grade, students study World Geography and Cultures. Students learn about cultures around the world through a regional approach that considers geographic, political, historical, social, and economic issues as well as the customs, traditions, and other unique characteristics of people within their cultures. Students continue to build and extend their skills by drawing and interpreting maps, constructing timelines, reading primary and secondary sources, using atlases and globes, and interpreting cultural artifacts. Modules of study include:

- The World in Spatial Terms
- Regional Adaptations
- Population
- Economics & Consumption Patterns
- Pollution & Human Impact on the Environment
- Global Politics

Additionally, students complete a student service learning project in seventh grade social studies class.

In eighth grade, students study American History. Students learn about the important people, ideas, and events that brought about the formation of the American nation and shaped the culture and the political and economic institutions through the Civil War and Reconstruction. Students develop their understanding of the history of their country through the reading of historical narrative and biography, discussion, and writing. They further develop their historical thinking skills, critical thinking skills, and social studies skills by constructing timelines, reading primary and secondary sources, drawing and interpreting maps, using atlases and globes, interpreting political cartoons, gathering historical data, and formulating historical interpretations. Students learn to apply historical understanding to current issues and events. Modules of study include:

- Settlement of the Americas
- The American Revolution
- Foundations of Government
Science

The middle school science curriculum follows a conceptual progression model in which students interact with life science, earth science, physical science and engineering concepts in each grade. In this curriculum teachers guide students to develop science understandings through the integration of the three (3) dimensions of the Next Generation Science Standards. These three (3) dimensions involve Disciplinary Core Ideas, Science and Engineering Practices, and Crosscutting Concepts. Through the use of these standards students learn to think and work like scientists, as their understanding of science concepts grows in sophistication from grade 6-8. Students work collaboratively to learn science by asking questions, designing investigations, collecting data, analyzing data, and communicating results. Students are encouraged to apply their knowledge of science and engineering to develop solutions to real-world issues.

High School Overview

WCPS High School Grades and Honors

WCPS high schools provide students the opportunity to meet Maryland High School graduation requirements and much more. Washington County high schools offer comprehensive programs of study that address the needs of high school students by ensuring a well-rounded educational experience that helps prepare students for assuming the responsibilities of adult citizenship, the world of work, and postsecondary education.

Grading System for Secondary Schools

I. Purpose

The purpose of Policy IKA is to establish the process to be followed to calculate a secondary school student's grades, grade point average, and class ranking.

II. Background

The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility for assuring the practice of regularly reporting the progress of students as they proceed through their formal educational experiences. Such reporting has several purposes: 1) to inform students of their progress and needs with regard to the instructional program, 2) to give parents needed insights into the teaching-learning process and how it is affecting their son or daughter with regard to achievement and effort, 3) to provide teachers with information about the progress and needs of students in their classes, and 4) to inform colleges or prospective employers of the nature and achievement of a student's educational program.

III. Policy Statement/Procedures

A. High School and Middle Schools

Grade reports (grades included in the determination of final grades) will be issued four (4) times during the school year at approximately nine (9) weeks, 18 weeks, 27 weeks, and 36 weeks. Final grades will be based on the average of the four (4) grade reports for year-long courses, two (2) grade reports for semester-long courses, and one (1) grade report for partial-semester courses. Interim reports (grades that are not included in the determination of final grades) will be issued at the approximate mid-point of each of the four (4) grading periods.

Final exams, which include a written component, are required in every high school course that does not participate in the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). Final exams will be calculated as no less than 10% and no more than 20% of the final marking period for each high school course.

Academic achievement will be reported as percentages with the following meanings:

- 90-100% indicates performance that consistently exceeds Washington County standards and requirements
- 80-89% indicates performance that consistently meets and occasionally exceeds Washington County standards and requirements
- 70-79% indicates performance that meets Washington County standards and requirements
- 60-69% indicates performance that minimally meets Washington County standards and requirements
- 0-59% indicates failure to meet Washington County standards and requirements

Additionally, student effort will be reported each marking period.
B. High School: Grade Point Average

1. High school students take all the courses required to earn a WCPS high school diploma and elective courses. Students will receive a credit(s) for successfully passing each course. Every course a student takes is recorded on the student’s transcript, regardless of whether or not the student passes the course. Students are awarded quality points, ranging from 0.0 to 5.0 for each course attempted. Quality point values are based on the rigor of the course and the final grade earned in the course. Quality points are used to calculate Grade Point Averages (GPAs) and class ranking. The total of quality points earned is divided by the number of courses attempted in high school. A student failing or not completing a course will receive a failing grade, earn no credit, and receive 0.0 quality points that will be calculated into the student’s GPA.

2. Any student-requested course change after the fifth class period of the course, will be recorded as a “W” (withdrew from the course) on the student’s transcript, resulting in no credit and the assignment of 0.0 quality points to be calculated into the student’s GPA. In extenuating circumstances, the principal has the final authority on class changes and grading issues.

3. Accelerated weighted courses are those courses approved through the Curriculum Development, Adoption, and Review process for additional quality points reflecting the greater rigor of course requirements.

4. Advanced Placement (AP) weighted courses are those courses that WCPS offers that have been identified by the College Board as Advanced Placement (AP) weighted courses.

5. GPA will be computed using the following quality point values:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Non-Weighted Quality Point Value</th>
<th>Accelerated Quality Point Value</th>
<th>Advanced Placement Quality Point Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-89</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-59</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. High School: Class Ranking

1. Only Maryland High School Diploma students’ GPA will be used to determine class rank. Maryland High School Certificate students’ GPAs will not be included in ranking. Certificate students are eligible for school honors and graduation honors.

2. Class rank will be determined by calculating GPAs to the thousandths of a percent and rounding to the nearest hundredth. Based on this computation, student rank in class will be recorded on the transcript following the final marking period of the student’s senior year.

3. For purposes of designation of class and student honors, with the exception of valedictorian and salutatorian, and for college admission information, the cut-off date for computation of class honors will be the end of the third marking period. The process for designation of valedictorian and salutatorian is set forth in Policy IKD, entitled “Honor Rolls and Graduation Honors.”

**Honor Rolls and Graduation Honors**

A student must have 80% and above in all subjects to be on the Honor Roll. To be on the Distinguished Honor Roll, a student must have all 90’s and above in all subjects. Academic honors designation at commencement will be awarded as follows:

**Highest Honors**: minimum 4.0 GPA, at least fourteen credits in courses taken in high school (grades 9-12) identified as Honors, AP, and/or IB, and the completion of University of Maryland requirements.

**High Honors**: minimum 3.75 GPA, at least twelve credits in courses taken in high school (grades 9-12) identified as Honors, AP, and/or IB.

**Honors**: minimum 3.5 GPA
Maryland Scholars Program

The Maryland Scholars Program is designed to encourage students to complete a rigorous course of study in high school to ensure that they are well prepared to succeed in college, the workplace, and in life. Students who participate in this course of study will contribute to a more highly skilled and productive workforce and a stronger, more prosperous economy. The course of study is:

- 4 credits of English
- 3 credits of Math (Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II)
- 3 credits of Science (Biology, Chemistry, and one additional lab Science—Physics preferred)
- 2 credits of the same World Language
- Minimum 2.5 GPA

WCPS High School Diploma

Graduation Requirements

The minimum requirements for graduation from WCPS adhere to but are not limited by the standards established by the state of Maryland.

To earn a WCPS Diploma students must:

★ Earn a minimum of twenty-four (24) credits
  English—4 credits
  Social Studies—3 credits
    1 United States Studies II
    1 Local, State, and National Government
    1 World History
  Mathematics—4 credits
    Students must enroll in a mathematics course in each year of high school
    1 Algebraic Concepts
    1 Geometric Concepts
    2 Additional Mathematics Credits
  Science, laboratory-based—3 credits
    1 Biology
    2 Additional Science Credits
    Integrated Physics and Chemistry
  Fine Arts—1 credit
  Technology Education—1 credit
  Physical Education—1 credit
  Health/Life Skills—1 credit
  Electives—6 credits

★ Meet the Maryland High School Assessment requirement
★ Complete a minimum 75 hours of Student Service Learning
★ Earn credits to satisfy the requirements of the University System of Maryland Completer Program and/or a Career and Technology Education Completer Program (requirements follow)

Maryland High School Assessment Requirement

All students must take and pass the Biology high school assessment. Students entering the ninth grade in 2013-2014 or later must take and pass the Government high school assessment. All students must take the English 10 and Algebra 1 PARCC assessments, but if they took/take those assessments during the 2014-2015 or 2015-2016 school years, they are not required to pass.

Those students who do not pass all of the required assessments may also meet the graduation assessment requirement by earning a combined score equal to the minimum total passing score for the required tests, or earning a passing score on approved substitute tests, or meet the assessment requirements through successful completion of the Bridge Plan.
Completer Programs
Students are required to complete requirements in at least one of the following two programs: University System of Maryland or Career Technology Education.

University System of Maryland
The Washington County Board of Education certifies that the following courses meet the minimum requirements for students seeking admission to institutions in the University System of Maryland. Additional advanced courses are recommended.

Writing, Reading, and Literature - 4 credits
  English 9 to 12
History, Social Science - 3 credits
  United States Studies II
  Local, State, National Government
  World History
Science (Lab-based) - 3 credits
  Biology
  Chemistry
  Physics
  Anatomy and Physiology
  Earth and Space Science
World Languages - 2 credits
Mathematics - 3 credits
  Algebra I
  Algebra II
  Geometry

Career Technology Education
The Career Technology Education Completer Programs meet the Maryland graduation completer program requirement. The course sequences, listed in the High School Program of Studies booklet, must all be completed to earn completer program credit.

Multi-Tier Prevention System
WCPS believes that increased student learning requires the consistent practice of providing high quality instruction matched to student needs. In a high-quality educational environment, student academic and behavioral needs are identified and monitored continuously by using documented student performance data, to make instructional decisions. Unique needs are addressed, parents are informed and involved, and all staff work toward the common goal of raising achievement. Response to Intervention (RTI) is a general education framework through which a school creates a high-quality educational environment by screening the needs of all students; differentiating core instruction for all students; applying research-based interventions to address specific needs of individual students; and continually monitoring progress to ensure success. High quality education requires collaborative efforts from all district staff including general educators, special educators, and bilingual/EL educators to facilitate that process.

Tier 1 Intervention:
  ● Includes ALL students
  ● Instructional Practices:
    ➢ Whole group instruction aligned with Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards (MCCRS) provided by teachers of core content who are “highly qualified” and knowledgeable in all aspects of the curriculum
    ➢ Universally designed teaching and learning practices
    ➢ Re-teaching and pre-teaching of core skills in small, needs-based groups
    ➢ Differentiated Instruction
  ● Progress monitoring and frequent communication with parents
**Tier 2 Intervention:**
- Student is not making adequate progress within Tier 1 instruction and supports. A Personal Learning Plan (PLP) will be developed by the appropriate school-based team.
- Implemented in or out of the general education setting.
- Instructional Practices:
  - Small group work in addition to core instruction provided by teachers of core content who are “highly qualified” and knowledgeable in all aspects of the curriculum
  - Universally designed teaching and learning practices
  - Re-teaching and pre-teaching of core skills in small, needs-based groups
  - Differentiated Instruction
- A referral to the appropriate school-based team for additional supports may be necessary if student is not making progress
- Progress monitoring and frequent communication with parents

**Tier 3 Intervention:**
- Student is not making progress with Tier 1 and Tier 2 instructional supports, a referral to the appropriate school-based team should be made
- Ongoing documentation on the Personal Learning Plan (PLP)
- Instructional Practices:
  - Instruction typically occurs outside general education by a highly skilled teacher
  - Instruction is intensive and targets individual skills and does not necessarily align with common core standards for that grade level
- Progress monitoring and frequent communication with parents

**Additional High School Learning Opportunities**

**Advanced Placement Courses**
Students have the opportunity to participate in Advanced Placement (AP) programs sponsored by the College Board. Students taking an AP course are expected to take the AP exam offered for the course. AP exams are administered nationwide in May. WCPS pays half the cost of the exam with the balance charged to the student. Other financial support may be available. Students may receive college credit from participating colleges and universities by taking and earning a proficient score on the AP exam. For more specific information on AP courses and examinations, consult a school guidance counselor.

**School-based Course Offerings**
There are a variety of course offerings at each high school. Contact the individual school guidance counselor for exact course offerings. Some of the courses described in this catalog are not offered at every high school.

**Evening High School**
WCPS Evening High School program provides course offerings and follows standards established for all WCPS high schools. Students may earn up to two (2) credits toward graduation requirements each semester. Generally, students who attend Evening High School remain enrolled at their home school, while some are enrolled only at Evening High. Evening High School classes are held at Washington County Technical High School, Monday through Thursday from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. For more information, call 301-766-8776 or 301-766-8460.

**Student Internship/Mentorship Program**
The Washington County Student Internship/Mentorship Program is a direct product of the Maryland Career Connections Initiative and strives to link workplace skills to classroom knowledge. Internships with mentors enable students to:
1. Clarify personal interest in their chosen career cluster and determine if a career is compatible with their personal interests, skills/aptitudes and life goals;
2. Observe and participate in real-world work activities within their chosen career cluster;
3. Apply classroom knowledge to real-world problems;
4. Apply work experience to classroom endeavors;
5. Develop positive work ethics;
6. Create a network of contacts within the local business community; and
7. Experience “All Aspects of Industry.”
A student internship is a paid or unpaid career focused experience with a local business partner. Students become directly involved in the daily activities of a local business, government office, research, or social service organization for a defined period of time. All business partners assign an employee to each student intern as a mentor.

“Early College” - “Early Support for Students to Enter College Education”
WCPS collaborates with Hagerstown Community College to offer a variety of opportunities for students to take college courses. Students can take concurrent courses and earn credits solely at the respective institutions or take dual-credit courses and earn credits at both institutions. Additional information about early college opportunities is available from the high school counseling department and is explained in detail in the WCPS High School Program of Studies booklet, which can be found at www.wcpsmd.com/documents.

Student Service Learning: A Graduation Requirement

What is the service graduation requirement?
Students will need to complete 75 hours of service learning, which will include proper preparation and reflection. Students will meet this requirement following the approved county plan. Furthermore, all activities completed through the county plan must meet Maryland's seven best practices for successful student service. Finally, all Student Service Learning hours will be recorded and approved using the Washington County Student Service Learning Record of Participation Sheet. This form may be obtained from the high school guidance counselor, or high school SSL Coordinator.

Why is it called service-learning instead of community service or volunteering?
Service learning is a method of experiential learning. In most cases, service learning projects are a natural outgrowth of the curriculum. Students study their communities and understand the many ways that their academic studies are related to being involved as a citizen. They also evaluate, discuss, and reflect on their service in order to make the connection between their academic subjects and effective action. The term “community service” carries connotations of restitution for committing a nonviolent crime. It does not address the vital learning that takes place. Volunteering refers to a person demonstrating good will to offer time and energy to address a need, rather than a structured learning experience.

What will my child get out of fulfilling the student service-learning requirement?
Students involved in service learning typically demonstrate social, personal, and intellectual growth and development. They increase their teamwork and problem-solving skills, as well as leadership and initiative. Their self-respect increases as they see that they can tackle tough problems and succeed. It also helps them see their roles as citizens and as active participants in the solution of community problems.

Won’t this requirement take class time away from the basics?
Teaching students how to be involved citizens is a basic and has traditionally been one of the primary purposes of public schools. The State Board of Education passed the requirement in support of the “book learning” that occurs daily in our schools.

Service learning is also a method for improving classroom learning. The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development has endorsed required service learning. There is now an understanding that many students learn best, not through lectures and seat work, but through active, purposeful experiences. For instance, when students study chemistry, they can test a local stream for its acidic content. Based on their evaluation, they may decide how best to help clean up the stream or advocate for better water quality as a matter of public policy.

Student Service Learning Approved County Plan
Overview of Service Learning Delivered Model: Each middle school grade has service activities connected to regular curricular initiatives. Sixth grade is connected to science around the theme of “Ecology;” seventh grade is connected to social studies in various areas pertaining to citizenship and eighth grade is connected to the curricular initiatives in English/Language Arts. Students earn 15 hours for completing the activities of each grade. Students must complete 15 hours individually, in the community after the end of eighth grade, and complete the 15 hours connected to the curriculum of the Grade 10 Health Education/Life Skills required class. Students not completing the connected portions must perform the equivalent number of individual hours in the community after completing eighth grade. Middle school students can earn 15 individual hours by completing an “exemplary” project and applying to the county SSL coordinator for approval. The project must meet the Maryland Best Practices Standard. These hours may be in addition to those earned by completing the curriculum based activities.

How many credits should a new student to the county be required to complete?
If a student enters from another state or private school and has never been in the WCPS, they are required to complete: 75 hours when entering as a ninth grader, 55 hours when entering as a tenth grader, 35 hours when entering as an eleventh grader, 15 hours when entering as a twelfth grader in the first semester, 5 hours when entering as a twelfth grader in the second semester. If a student enters WCPS from a school system outside Maryland, public or private, that has a service learning requirement, they may apply to the county service learning coordinator for the hours to be credited. The transferred hours must meet the Maryland Best Practice Standard. If a student enters from another Maryland county
and they have documentation that they have completed the requirement, WCPS accepts this documentation to fulfill the requirement. If they enter without this documentation, then the student must complete all 75 hours, prior to graduation. If a student is entering from another state or private school and has previously been enrolled in a Washington County high school, they are required to complete according to the above, and 20 hours for every year that they were previously enrolled - even if only for one month. For example, if a student is enrolling as a first semester senior and was previously in a Washington County high school for one (1) year of ninth grade, three (3) months of tenth grade, and five (5) months of eleventh grade, they would be required to perform 15+20+20+20=75 hours.

Service learning is indicated on report cards. Completion of service learning is indicated on the transfer sheet when a student withdraws.

Overview of Pre-K–12 Programming

Health Education Pre-K–12

In WCPS, Comprehensive Health Education includes instruction in the following seven content areas:

- Alcohol, Tobacco, Heroin, and Other Drug Use Prevention;
- Disease Prevention and Control;
- Family Life and Human Development;
- Mental Health;
- Nutrition and Fitness;
- Personal and Consumer Health;
- Safety and Injury Prevention.

In addition to these topics, the health education program includes components from school health services, food services, counseling and school psychology services, and healthful school environments.

Since health education is multidimensional, it has application in many disciplines. Therefore, responsibility for delivery also is shared and/or reinforced in science, social studies, language arts, guidance, family life, physical education, and family and consumer science.

At the elementary level, health education is taught primarily by physical education teachers. In middle schools, health education generally is taught as a rotation in Unified/Related Arts or in physical education. In high schools there is a one credit graduation requirement in the course Health Education/Life Skills.

Family life is taught in grades 5-10. The topics include physical and emotional maturation, consent, reproduction, physical and sexual abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS instruction and information on pregnancy prevention with emphasis on abstinence. Students may be excused from this unit of the program upon written request from a student’s parent or guardian.

Physical Education Pre-K–12

The WCPS physical education curriculum provides opportunities for students to mature physically through activities designed to develop fitness, skill, concern for safety, knowledge of key facts, and positive attitudes toward personal health and physical activity. The physical education program designs activities, instruction, and resources to help students develop physically from early childhood to young adulthood. The basic activities in Pre-kindergarten through grade nine include the development of skills and strategies in game situations relating to fitness and exercise through individual, team and lifetime sport activities. At various checkpoints in elementary, middle, and high school, each student’s progress is measured to help teachers better help students grow. These results are used to target areas needing further development. Success in physical activities stimulates a lifelong interest in maintaining health and fitness. Physically educated students will continue to promote these competencies through a lifetime of activities.

Elementary School

The elementary physical education program teaches students basic physical skills. Each skill is divided into parts. Repetition and review are often used in instruction, as each skill must build upon skills that have been developed earlier.
Middle School
The middle school physical education program emphasizes skill development, fitness, team sport participation, and social and emotional growth. Teachers introduce a variety of activities such as individual, dual, and lifetime sports. Games are used to improve student fitness, skill, application of safety measures, knowledge, and attitudes. Instruction and expectations increase as students progress through the middle school grades. WCPS does not organize middle school athletic teams; however, area recreation and youth leagues offer opportunities for middle school youth to participate in organized sports programs.

High School
One (1) credit of physical education is required for students to graduate from high school. In this credit, teachers emphasize the development of physical fitness through a program of individual skills, team-related activities, and additional life time co-educational sports.

Students may choose to take elective physical education courses. In each course, students work on fitness, skill, safety, knowledge, and attitudes through a variety of structured activities. Weight Conditioning is an elective physical education course that provides weight training, body conditioning, and fitness-related activities.

All students are encouraged to participate in a physical education program that goes beyond the one credit minimum required for high school graduation. WCPS offers organized individual and team sports at the high school level. For more information, contact the high school athletic director at the school level or see the Washington County Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association Handbook.

School Library Media Program
Every Washington County elementary, middle, and high school has a library media center that provides access to a wide variety of resources and services to inspire curiosity, creativity, and achievement in its students.

Library media center resources are selected not only to support instruction and achievement in all content areas but also to foster curiosity and creativity by appealing to students’ informational and pleasure reading interests. Through the county’s online library catalog and an active interlibrary loan program, students are not limited to just the items housed in their library media center, but benefit from access to thousands of resources available countywide. In addition to print resources and in-school services, the library media program provides 24/7 access to a library catalog and to a vast array of digital resources through an online information portal located at http://wcpsmd.follettdestiny.com.

All WCPS students now have access to Washington County Free Library (WCFL) resources through special RAIL (Raising Access to Improve Literacy) accounts. With their RAIL number, students can access WCFL online resources, get free homework help, and check out up to three print items with no fines! The RAIL number works just like a regular library card only there is no card to carry, it is virtual. A student’s RAIL number is made up of 4 letters (RAIL) plus the student’s ID number (example: rail123456).

Library media specialists model and teach information literacy skills through their work with all grade levels and all content areas to build a community of lifelong learners. Many of the library media specialists are also providing their students opportunities to engage in coding, robotics and computational thinking activities through their “maker” spaces. While striving to provide these advanced opportunities, librarians continue to instill the more traditional values of literature appreciation and the joy of reading.

The school library media program, the library media centers, and the library media specialists proudly serve the students and teachers of Washington County. Together we build a community of information literate individuals who are informed decision-makers, ethical/responsible consumers of ideas and information, and creative users of digital tools, who will use their skills throughout school, college and life.

Visual and Performing Arts Programs Pre-K-12

Elementary
Visual art instruction is available to all students in grades Pre-K-5. The program involves drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, collage, construction, modeling, art history, and discussions about art. Student works are displayed within the schools, at the Center for Education Services, during the Elementary Arts Festivals, through various community contests and at the Washington County Museum of Fine Arts during the annual elementary art showcase.
WCPS has established a cooperative program with the Washington County Museum of Fine Arts in conjunction with the WCPS Literacy Initiative. The program provides students the opportunity to travel to the museum to view, discuss, and reflect upon professional artworks in a formal public setting to enrich and enhance the art curriculum and build student literacy.

Music instruction also is available to students in grades Pre-K-5. The program involves experiences in voice, Orff, and recorder. Music history, reading/notation, and choral performance opportunities are developed within the curriculum. Kindergarten and pre-kindergarten students may attend Kinder Konzerts which are made available through a partnership with the Maryland Symphony Orchestra and Hagerstown Community College. Citicorp sponsors the Maryland Symphony Youth Concerts which are hosted and performed by the Maryland Symphony Orchestra at the Maryland Theatre and are designed for third and fourth grade students.

Large choral ensemble experiences are available for interested students in many schools. Instrumental programs are offered in every school. A program in dance is available in selected schools.

**Secondary Visual Arts**

The middle school visual arts program provides a fundamental study of a variety of art media, art history, critical thinking, and visual problem solving. Student art works are displayed within schools, at the Center for Education Services, through various community contests and at the Washington County Museum of Fine Arts during the annual secondary art showcase.

At the high school level, course offerings begin with Art I and progress through Art IV. Photography classes are available, and studio art classes may be offered in specialty areas. Opportunities also exist to earn advanced placement credit in studio art. Student art work is displayed within schools, at the Center for Education Services, throughout the community and in conjunction with various contests and at the Washington County Museum of Fine Arts during the annual secondary art showcase.

**Secondary Performing Arts**

In grades 6-8, students have both choral and instrumental music opportunities and students may participate in choral and instrumental performances. In addition to in-school performances, students may be involved in parades, community concerts, ensemble festivals, and All-County and/or All-State events.

In grades 9-12 students have choral and instrumental music opportunities that include marching band, concert band, jazz band, orchestra, chorus, musical theater, dance, guitar, and piano lab. Music classes also include music theory and AP Music Theory. Individual student and group performance opportunities not only are available locally, but also statewide and regionally. These include, but are not limited to: All-County and All-State groups; Swingin' in the Park (Jazz); special request performances; the WCPS Large Ensemble Assessment Festivals; and the WCPS Solo and Ensemble Festival.

**Barbara Ingram School for the Arts**

WCPS officially opened Barbara Ingram School for the Arts in the fall of 2009. The school is a four-year program, grades nine (9) through 12, for up to 300 students. The Barbara Ingram School for the Arts provides young people with intensive, pre-professional training in the arts within the context of a college preparatory academic curriculum. Students are accepted by either audition or portfolio. The Barbara Ingram School for the Arts experience results in the development of an individualized artistic skill set that assists students in the pursuit of a professional or college bound career. The physical building design devotes one floor to each of the various art disciplines, and the academic program for the 300 students is provided in a separate facility, located within the downtown Hagerstown area. Through its design, the school serves as an arts resource for Washington County by offering performances, educational workshops, and extensive after-school training opportunities in the arts.
Students' Rights and Responsibilities

WCPS
Washington County Public Schools
INTRODUCTION

This summary of Students’ Rights and Responsibilities has been developed by parents, teachers, students, and administrators in the Washington County community and is supported by Federal Constitutional Law, Maryland Statutory Law, judicial decisions, and the Public School Laws of Maryland. It is designed to assist the school community in recognizing the responsibilities and rights of students in the schools and to avoid confrontation which may be caused by misunderstanding and lack of information.

All persons involved in the educational process – students, parents, teachers, administrators, staff, and the elected Board of Education – have the responsibility to protect the rights and to promote the responsibilities which are guaranteed by this document.

Responsibility is inherent in the exercise of every right. Students have the responsibility to respect the rights of all persons involved in the educational process. The responsibility of implementation of the Students’ Rights and Responsibilities rests with the school principal.

I. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RIGHTS</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. All persons who are five years old or older and under twenty-one shall have the right to attend a public school in the state of Maryland. Free and appropriate educational programs and related services for all handicapped children from birth through age twenty are provided to those found to be in need of special education services.</td>
<td>1. Students have a responsibility to obey compulsory school attendance laws. Compulsory Attendance – Every child between five and sixteen years of age who resides in the state is required to attend public school regularly during the entire period of each school year unless the child is elsewhere receiving regular, thorough instruction or the superintendent or designee excuses cases of necessary absence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Students shall have the right to a free public education. The denial of that right may occur only for just cause and in accordance with due process of law.</td>
<td>a) Penalty – Any person violating any provision of this section may be subject to a misdemeanor charge and may be fined and/or sentenced to ten days in jail for each offense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Students have the right to be legally excused from school for the following reasons: (Reference: 13A.08.01.03 of the Public School Laws of Maryland)</td>
<td>b) Inducing absence – Any person who induces or attempts to induce a student to be absent unlawfully from school or employs or harbors a student while school is in session shall be referred to authorities for appropriate action.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
a. Death in the immediate family. The school principal/designee shall determine what relationships constitute the immediate family.

b. Illness of the student. The principal or a pupil personnel worker shall require a physician’s certificate from the parent or guardian of a student reported continuously absent for illness.

c. Court summons.

d. Hazardous weather conditions. Hazardous weather conditions shall be interpreted to mean weather conditions which would endanger the health or safety of the student when in transit to and from school.

e. Work approved or sponsored by the school, the local school system, or the State Department of Education, accepted by the local superintendent of school or school principal, or their designees as reason for excusing the students.

f. Observation of a religious holiday.

g. State emergency.

h. Suspension.

i. Lack of authorized transportation. This does not include students denied authorized transportation for disciplinary reasons.

j. Other emergency or set of circumstances which, in the judgment of the Superintendent or designee, constitutes a good and sufficient cause for absence from school.

2. Students have the responsibility to attend school daily during the prescribed school year except when lawfully absent.
II. FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS

The First Amendment of the United States Constitution provides that:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RIGHTS</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITIES</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Inquiry and Expression</strong></td>
<td><strong>A. Inquiry and Expression</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Freedom of Press</strong></td>
<td>1. <strong>Freedom of Press</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| a. **Student publications** – In compliance with the First Amendment and the Code of Ethics of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, and as a learning experience, students shall be free to express themselves through student publications. The school’s censorship of such publications shall deal with materials that are libelous, inflammatory, obscene, or disruptive to the educational environment. | “A person may not willfully disturb or otherwise willfully prevent the orderly conduct of the activities, administration, or classes of any institution of elementary, secondary, or higher education.” (Reference: Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, Sub-Section 76-101)

a. **Student publications** – Students shall have the responsibility to: (1) respect the rights of all persons who are involved in the educational process; (2) adhere to the orderly operation of their respective school(s); and (3) avoid the use of foul, vulgar, or obscene language and gestures.

b. **Source of materials** – Distribution of partisan or political literature supporting and/or opposing political candidates and/or public issues in any general or municipal election is prohibited on school property. This does not prohibit students from wearing badges or buttons for said candidates or causes.

c. **Access to Materials** – Students have the responsibility to ensure that all printed materials are deemed appropriate and have been approved by the teacher and principal/designee.

d. **Non-school sponsored publications** – Distribution of materials shall be in accordance with Washington County Public Schools Policy KHC.

2. **Student Expression**

a. **Petition and appeal** – Students shall have the right to petition and to present appeals to the principal or designee and to receive a reply within five school days, excluding weekends and holidays. When the principal’s decision is appealed, students have the right to a response from the Superintendent or his/her designee.

a. **Petition and appeal** – Students have the responsibility to respect the rights of others while moving through the petitioning process and to utilize the appropriate steps.
b. **Guest speakers** – Student organizations and classes may, with approval, invite and hear any person(s) whose presentation may contribute to the overall learning experience. Students have the right to learn the reason(s) for refusal if a speaker is not permitted to speak.

c. **Plagiarism** – Students have the right to express their thoughts in their own words. To plagiarize is to take ideas or words of another and pass them off as one’s own. (Reference: Washington County Schools Handbook and Guide Academic Integrity)

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**B. Student Organizations and Extracurricular Activities**

All student organizations that desire to conduct school-related activities in public school buildings and on public school grounds shall be allowed to conduct such activities only if permitted to do so by authorized school personnel, and shall thereafter be subject to the supervision of the administration and the faculty of the school.

1. Students shall be permitted to form organizations through which they can communicate their interests, talents, ideas, and suggestions to the school community. Standards for forming any new organizations shall be previously stated and published by the school administration.

2. Students have the right to seek and hold office and to vote in school elections according to the democratic process.

3. Students have the privilege to participate in all extracurricular activities and/or organizations of the school for which their interests and credentials make them eligible. Students may lose eligibility through the violation of school rules or through violation of rules applicable to the extracurricular activity. (Reference: Washington County Public Schools Policies IGDK and IGDH)

4. Students shall not be excluded from extracurricular activities and/or organizations on the basis of race, religion, ethnic background, or gender, except where specific predetermined competencies, such as a minimum level of scholastic achievement, are stated.

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b. **Guest speakers** – Students have the responsibility to seek the approval of the classroom instructor, or the advisor to the organization, and the principal prior to obtaining a guest speaker.

c. **Plagiarism** – Students have the responsibility to acknowledge the source of ideas, expressions, and facts used in their written work. Students may not submit under their name any paper or project that is written in whole or in part by someone else; this action is considered plagiarism. Plagiarism is academic dishonesty, or cheating, and is a violation of the discipline code. (Reference: Washington County Schools Handbook and Guide Academic Integrity)

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**B. Student Organizations and Extracurricular Activities**

1. Students desiring to form organizations and conduct activities must be authorized by the school administration. (Reference: Bylaw 13A.08.01.09 of the Public School Laws of Maryland)

2. Students shall not interfere with the normal and orderly operation of the school. (Reference: Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, Sub-Section 26-101)

3. Students shall not discriminate against others.

4. Students have the responsibility to obey the rules and regulations governing participation on athletic teams and extracurricular activities. Failure to abide by these rules will result in being suspended from participation and/or being ruled conduct ineligible.
### STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RIGHTS</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **C. Assembly and Petition**  
Students have the right to organize and assemble peacefully. | **C. Assembly and Petition**  
Students have the responsibility to consult with school administration to arrange the time and place for student assembly, following the procedures developed by the school administration. |
| **D. Religion**  
Students shall be free to express their religious views, concepts, and/or beliefs in an orderly and respectful manner. | **D. Religion**  
Students expressing their religious views may not interfere with the rights of others, or disturb the educational process. |
| **E. Hair and Dress**  
Students have the right to choose their manner of dress and grooming in accordance with the established school policy. | **E. Hair and Dress**  
Students have the responsibility to dress and groom themselves in a manner that is safe, healthy, and non-disruptive of classroom and school procedures.  
| **F. Ceremonies and Oaths**  
Schools will provide an opportunity for a flag salute and other patriotic exercises daily but shall not require participation in these exercises of any student who objects to them.  
(Reference: Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, Sub-Section 7-105) | **F. Ceremonies and Oaths**  
Students who decline to participate in patriotic exercises will respect the rights of others who do participate. |

### III. USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

(Reference: Board Policy KG, Board Regulation KG-R, and the Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, Sub-Section 7-108, 110)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RIGHTS</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. All recognized and approved student organizations shall have the right to request the use of school facilities from the school administration. Rules and regulations concerning the use of school facilities shall be published and available through the school administration.</td>
<td>1. Students have the responsibility to follow guidelines, rules, and regulations. All rules in effect during the school day apply to after school activities. Violations of guidelines, rules, and regulations shall be cause for revoking permission for use.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2. Students shall have a responsibility to obey laws and school rules relative to tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.  
(Reference: Bylaw 13A.08.01.08 of the Public School Laws of Maryland) | 2. Students shall have a responsibility to obey laws and school rules relative to tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.  
(Reference: Bylaw 13A.08.01.08 of the Public School Laws of Maryland) |
| 3. Students and other persons requesting the use of school facilities have a responsibility for restoring the cleanliness of the facility and for all damages to the property. | 3. Students and other persons requesting the use of school facilities have a responsibility for restoring the cleanliness of the facility and for all damages to the property. |
## IV. NON-DISCRIMINATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RIGHTS</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There shall be no discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, size, age, disability or any other protected category. The right to non-discrimination applies to school enrollment and all school related activities.</td>
<td>Students have the responsibility not only to refrain from discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, size, age, disability or any other protected category but also to accurately report incidents of discrimination to appropriate staff members and respond in an appropriate manner.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation**

Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Reporting Forms may be obtained in the school’s main (front) office, counselor’s office, and other locations determined by the school. The forms may be submitted by a student, parent, close adult relative, or staff member to a school administrator. A student may request assistance from a staff member to complete the form if the student wishes.

1. Students are entitled to a safe and secure learning environment.
2. Students are entitled to a learning environment free from bullying, harassment, or intimidation on school property or at school-sponsored functions.

(Reference: Washington County Public Schools Policies JFH, JFH-R, JFH-E[11])

**Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation**

1. Students have the responsibility to abide by school rules which aid in providing a safe and secure learning environment.
2. Students have the responsibility to report any situations and circumstances which would create an unsafe learning environment.
3. Students are prohibited from engaging in bullying, harassment, or intimidation on school property or at school-sponsored functions or through the use of electronic technology.
4. Students have the responsibility to report any situations of bullying, harassment, or intimidation using the appropriate procedures.

## V. STUDENT REPRESENTATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RIGHTS</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITIES</th>
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</table>
| 1. Students are entitled to peer representation. For example, Student Government or other student organizations provide an avenue through which their voice will be communicated.  
2. Students shall have the right to be notified reasonably in advance of implementation of rules and regulations. | 1. Students have the responsibility to work through the established process for representation.  
2. Students have the responsibility to become familiar with and adhere to school rules and regulations. |
## VI. RIGHT TO PRIVACY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RIGHTS</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Records</strong></td>
<td><strong>Student Records</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A student’s parent/guardian and a student at the age of majority retain the right to review his/her own official school records with appropriate personnel.</td>
<td>Students have the responsibility to adhere to established procedures for viewing their official school records.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(Reference: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 1975)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Police in the Schools</strong></td>
<td><strong>Police in the Schools</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Students have the right not to be questioned by police on school grounds unless in connection with a crime committed on the premises or in connection with an investigation which, if not immediately permitted, would compromise the success of the investigation or endanger the lives or safety of the students or other persons. A school official should be present throughout the questioning.</td>
<td>Students must recognize that questioning by police is lawful under the conditions stated in Bylaw 13A.08.01.13 of the Public School Laws of Maryland.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Search and Seizure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Search and Seizure</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students, their personal property, and the school property assigned to them shall not be subjected to unlawful search or seizure.</td>
<td>Student must recognize as legal the search and seizure practices described in the Bylaw 13A.08.01.14 of the Public School Laws of Maryland and the Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, Sub-Section 7-308.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| ![Image of police officer and dog performing search](image.jpg) | a. Authority to search student  
1. A principal or designee of a public school may make a reasonable search of a student on the school premises or on a school sponsored trip if there is reasonable belief that the student is in possession of an item, the possession of which is a criminal offense under the laws of this state or a violation of any other state law or a rule or regulation of the school system.  
2. The search shall be made in the presence of a third party.  

b. Authority to search school  
1. A principal or designee may make a search of the physical plant of the school and its appurtenances including the lockers and vehicles of students.  
2. The right of school officials to make searches (including lockers and vehicles) shall be published previously in school literature.  

c. Rules and Regulations  
The Maryland State Department of Education shall adopt rules and regulations relating to the searches permitted under this section. |
VII. DISCIPLINE AND CONSEQUENCES
A student may be held accountable by school authorities for any behavior occurring outside school time or off school property including during school-sponsored events, including behavior which is related to an occurrence at school or which derives from an occurrence initiated at school and including students participating in extracurricular programs which may require a particular standard of conduct.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RIGHTS</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Students have a right to learn and grow in an educational environment free from willful disruption of the classroom and the school learning environment.</td>
<td>1. Students have the responsibility to respect the rights of other students and refrain from classroom and school disruption.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Students have the right to discipline procedures that are administered fairly, consistently and systematically and are appropriate to the offense.</td>
<td>2. Students have the responsibility to accept and adhere to the consequences of breaking school rules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Students have the right to a safe, orderly and secure school environment.</td>
<td>3. Students have the responsibility to obey rules designed to protect students and create an orderly environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Students have the right to be informed of the offense and have the opportunity to respond at the school level prior to any suspension or loss of extracurricular privileges.</td>
<td>4. Students have the responsibility to be truthful in all matters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Students have the right to make up missed assignments in a time frame equal to that of the suspension.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

VIII. RIGHT TO DUE PROCESS AND APPEALS
Students shall have the right to due process under the law prior to deprivation of a protected right. Students will be informed of the offense and have the opportunity to respond at the school level prior to any suspension. If disciplinary actions are necessary, written notification of the offense and resulting consequences will be provided to the student and to the parent/guardian.

With regards to extracurricular activities, participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege not a protected right. By way of example but not by way of limitation, extracurricular activities include sports, after-school activities, and graduation ceremonies. Students will be informed of the offense and have the opportunity to respond at the school level prior to any loss of extracurricular privilege. If disciplinary actions are necessary, written notification of the offense and resulting consequences will be provided to the student and to the parent/guardian.

**Short-term Suspensions**
Principals may suspend a student for up to ten (10) days for just cause. Principals or designees may use other disciplinary means to correct student behavior (detention, in-school suspension, etc.) at their discretion, in accordance with school policies and procedures.

Parents and guardians have the right to an informal appeal of the principal’s suspension decision. The informal appeal is a paper review and all requests for appeal must be in writing. The written appeal should include the reason for requesting the appeal and contain any written documents to be considered. During the appeal process, the suspension of the student remains in effect. Through the appeal process, the consequences may be increased or decreased. The following are the steps in the appeal process:

1. Parents or guardians may appeal the decision for the suspension directly to the principal. Such appeals must be submitted in writing to the principal within ten (10) days of the suspension decision.
2. In the event the parents or guardians are not satisfied with the principal’s decision, they may appeal that decision, in writing, to the Supervisor of Student Services within ten (10) days of the principal’s ruling of the appeal. The Supervisor of Student Services shall direct a Pupil Personnel Worker to make a thorough review of the matter. The Supervisor of Student Services, after such review, will render a decision.

3. If parents or guardians are not satisfied with the decision of the Director of Student Services, the parents or guardians may appeal that decision, in writing, within ten (10) days, to the Superintendent in accordance with Washington County Public Schools Policies BEE and BEE-R(1).

4. Further appeal of the decision of the Superintendent may be made in writing in accordance with Washington County Public Schools Policies BEE and BEE-R(1) within ten (10) days to the WCPS Board of Education. The decision of the WCPS Board of Education is final.

A suspension of a student with a disability will be in accordance with current federal and state laws and regulations. In no case will due process rights be abridged.

**Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion**

If a principal finds that a suspension of more than 10 school days or expulsion is warranted, the principal immediately shall report the matter in writing to the Superintendent or designee. The Superintendent or designee shall direct a Pupil Personnel Worker to make a thorough review of the matter when the request for a suspension longer than ten (10) days or expulsion is received. The Superintendent or designee, after such review, determines if a longer suspension or expulsion is warranted and will notify the parents or guardians in writing.

The decision to suspend a student longer than ten (10) days or to expel a student may be appealed. All requests for appeal must be in writing and include the reason for the appeal. Throughout the appeal process, the decision of the Superintendent of Schools or designee remains in place. In the appeal hearings, the parents or guardians and student may bring counsel, witnesses, and may present evidence to support their position. Through the appeal process, the consequences may be increased or decreased. The following are the steps in the appeal process:

1. If the parents or guardians are not satisfied with the Superintendent or designee’s decision, they may file an appeal within ten (10) days of such a decision with the Office of the Supervisor of Student Services. A Hearing Officer will schedule a hearing with the parents or guardians and student to hear the appeal.

2. If the parents or guardians are not satisfied with the decision of the Hearing Officer, the parents or guardians may file an appeal, in writing, within ten (10) days of such a decision, with the Superintendent in accordance with Board of Education Policy BEE and BEE-R(1).

3. If the parents or guardians are not satisfied with the decision of the Superintendent or designee, the parent or guardian may file an appeal, in writing, within ten (10) days of such decision with the Board of Education, in accordance with Board of Education Policy BEE and BEE-R(1).

4. The decision of the Board of Education is final.

**IX. REVIEW AND DISTRIBUTION**

1. The Students’ Rights and Responsibilities will be printed in the Handbook and Guide and a copy will be provided to each student at the beginning of each school year.

2. This document shall be available to the professional staff in each educational facility, to students, to PTAs, to PTSAs, to school advisory committees, and to elected Board of Education members.

3. Copies shall be available in each school and the WCPS Central Office.

4. Presentation of this document shall be included in orientations for teachers.
Meritus Health
Meritus School Health Program

In Collaboration With

WCPS
Washington County Public Schools

School Health Services Handbook for Families
Meritus School Health Program

The School Health Office Staff assists in providing the fullest possible educational opportunity for students by minimizing absences due to illness and creating a climate of health and well-being.

The Registered Nurse is an experienced health professional who is licensed to practice nursing in the State of Maryland and uphold professional standards. Each school has a designated Registered Nurse Supervisor. In addition, each school health office is staffed with either a RN (Registered Nurse), LPN (Licensed Practical Nurse), or CMT/CNA (Certified Medical Technician/Certified Nursing Assistant).

The health office in each school is designated to provide care for students who experience first aid needs, medical emergencies, acute illness, or need care for chronic conditions in the school setting. If your child is ill and needs to leave school, the expectation is for the parent/guardian (or emergency contact) to pick-up the student within 30 minutes of the phone call.

The Meritus School Health Program, in collaboration with Washington County Public Schools, provides health care to all students attending Washington County Public Schools. We take great pride in the care provided in our school health offices, and strive to keep your child in school and learning.

Contact information for the Meritus School Health Program Staff and Health Offices are listed below. Please contact us for any school health questions.

Meritus School Health Administrative Contact Information

Amy Jones, RN, MSN, MPH, NEA-BC
Meritus School Health Program Director
301-766-8771
Amy.Jones@meritishealth.com

Rhonda Stover
Meritus School Health Program Assistant
301-766-8795
Rhonda.Stover@meritishealth.com
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>School Health Office</th>
<th>School Main Office</th>
<th>School Health Office Fax</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antietam Academy</td>
<td>301-766-8466</td>
<td>301-766-8447</td>
<td>301-766-8483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Ingram</td>
<td>301-766-8839</td>
<td>301-766-8840</td>
<td>301-766-8848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bester Elem.</td>
<td>301-766-8004</td>
<td>301-766-8001</td>
<td>301-766-8461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boonsboro Elem.</td>
<td>301-766-8016</td>
<td>301-766-8013</td>
<td>301-766-8944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boonsboro High School</td>
<td>301-766-8026</td>
<td>301-766-8022</td>
<td>301-766-8971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boonsboro Middle</td>
<td>301-766-8042</td>
<td>301-766-8038</td>
<td>301-766-8966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cascade Elem.</td>
<td>301-766-8069</td>
<td>301-766-8066</td>
<td>301-766-8945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear Spring Elementary</td>
<td>301-766-8076</td>
<td>301-766-8074</td>
<td>301-766-8946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear Spring High</td>
<td>301-766-8087</td>
<td>301-766-8082</td>
<td>301-766-8972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear Spring Middle</td>
<td>301-766-8099</td>
<td>301-766-8094</td>
<td>301-766-8967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Russell Hicks Middle</td>
<td>301-766-8117</td>
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Communications between Home and School
Parents and/or guardians are requested to provide the school with a complete and accurate Washington County Public Schools Family Health and Information Form each year. Make sure to keep the health office staff informed of significant illness and injuries. When completing the Washington County Public Schools Family Health and Information Form, please make sure to keep the information current and accurate.

A few reminders:
- Provide the names of several contact persons.
- Make sure the contacts are available during school hours.
- Designate contacts that can arrive at the school within 30 minutes after being called.
- Be sure to frequently check answering machines, cell phones, voice mail, etc. for messages from school, and please call back promptly.
- Notify the school if any phone numbers change during the school year.

Communications from the Health Office Staff
- The health office staff will use his/her clinical discretion in promptly calling parents about significant injuries or illness.
- The health office staff does not call the family for every minor health office visit. It is expected that children will inform their family after school if they went to the health office, even if it was for a minor matter.

Communications to the Health Office Staff
Call, write, or email the school health office staff in a timely manner if:
- The child is taking medication at home.
- The child has a confirmed contagious illness.
- The child will be undergoing diagnostic tests, treatments, surgeries, rehabilitation, etc.
- Other pertinent medical or health information is available.

Medication Administration Procedures
A doctor’s order is required for all medications to be administered at school, including over-the-counter, herbal medication, and essential oils. In addition, a parent/guardian signature is required on the Physician Medication Order Form. All physician order forms must match the pharmacy label, on the medication bottle — exactly. The Physician Medication Order form can be found at:

Contact the school health office staff to receive additional forms that are needed for a healthcare provider to complete for any treatments a student may need during the school day.

Students are not permitted to be in possession of any medications, including over-the-counter and herbal medications. Over-the-counter medications must be received in an unopened container and accompanied by the completed physicians medication order form. The medication will be kept in the health office and administered by school health staff.
The health office will not be responsible for cough drops or sunscreen. If you feel that your child needs cough drops or sunscreen please discuss this with your child’s principal and/or teacher. A Physician Medication Order form is not required for these items.

**Medication – Start-of-the-Year Procedures**
At the beginning of each school year, the parent must provide the health office staff with a completed Physician’s Medication Order form which clearly indicates instructions for administration of medication. The completed form will be kept on file in the school. The parent/guardian must provide all medications in a labeled (original) pharmacy container. It may be necessary to ask your pharmacist to fill an extra bottle or container for use at school. All medications that are to be given at school should be brought to school by the parent or a responsible adult. Health office staff will notify the parent/guardian when a medication refill is needed, or if a medication has expired.

**Medication – End-of-the-Year Procedures**
Please note the following parent responsibilities:
- Parent/guardian must come to the school to claim any remaining prescription or non-prescription medications. Please come in by the last day of school.
- We will not release leftover medications to any child to carry back home, nor will we send medications home with bus drivers.

For safety and security reasons, we do not store medications in the school over the summer. Any medications not picked up by the parent/guardian by the last day of school will be promptly and appropriately disposed of immediately following dismissal on the last day of school.

**Illness and Injury: Sick Children – Send to School or Keep Home?**
Deciding when a child is too sick to go to school can be a difficult decision for parents to make. When trying to decide, use the guidelines below to help you.

**Go to School** - If your child has any of the following symptoms, they should probably go to school:
- Sniffles, a runny nose and a mild cough without a fever (this could be an allergic response to dust, pollen, or seasonal changes).
- Vague complaints of aches, pains or fatigue.

**Stay at Home** – If your child has any of the following symptoms, please keep him/her at home or make appropriate child care arrangements:
- ** Eyes** – With pink eye (conjunctivitis) you may see a white or yellow discharge, matted eyelids after sleep, eye pain and/or redness. A student with pink eye may not return to school until they have been cleared to return by their doctor, and have been on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- **Fever** – Temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. Remember that a child must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication before returning to school.
- **Vomiting** – If not associated with other known medical conditions such as: stomach sensitivity, anxiety, migraine, etc.
- **Sore Throat** - Consult your doctor if your child has a sudden severe sore throat with fever. If strep throat is diagnosed, the child may return after being on antibiotics for 24-48 hours.

  If your child shows any of the above symptoms at school, it will be necessary to pick him/her up promptly.

**911 – Emergency Services**
In the event that a student experiences a medical incident at school that the health office staff determines to be emergent, 911 will be contacted.

**Casts/Crutches/Sutures/Wheelchairs**
- If your child has suffered an injury that requires casts, crutches, wheelchair or walker, the parent/guardian MUST provide supporting physician documentation and any needed equipment. Please contact the school health office prior to the student reporting to school with the above assistive devices.
- Parent/guardian MUST provide documentation from the student’s physician identifying any restrictions to the student’s regular activities, the weight-bearing status, level of transfers and any safety concerns.

**Immunization Requirements**
Prior to the first day of school, any new or transfer students must have proof of their age appropriate vaccines, or proof of a doctor’s appointment to receive the needed vaccines. This appointment must be made before or by the first day of school, and within 20 calendar days from the day of the child’s enrollment. Failure to provide proof of immunizations or proof of an appointment to receive these immunizations by the 20th calendar day of the child’s enrollment, may result in your child being excluded from school.

**Required Documents when Enrolling Students**
- All students entering school must have complete immunization records on file, reviewed and approved by the school health office in order to start classes.
- **Physical Examination:** Students must have a physical examination performed by a physician or certified nurse practitioner within a 9 month period before the child enters the school system or within a 6 month period after entering the school system.
- All students must have a Blood Lead Testing Certificate completed when enrolling in Pre-K, K or first grade.

**Screenings**
Vision and Hearing screenings will be performed on all students upon entry into the school system, 1st grade and 8th grade. Screening results are recorded by the school health office staff into the student’s health records. Parent/guardians are informed if the student passes or fails the screening, and the health office staff will recommend that the child be taken for more extensive medical evaluation.
Food Allergies
Be sure to inform the school health office if your child has any known food, latex or other allergies, including environmental or medication allergies. It is important that you inform the school health office if your child has a serious allergy which could be life threatening, such as those which cause anaphylactic shock.

You should also teach your child to do the following if they have a food allergy:
- Only consume his/her own snack or lunch.
- Do not share snacks or lunch with others.
- Do not remove an allergic food from a snack or lunch thinking it is now safe (e.g. do not remove peanuts from “trail mix”, because a residue of the peanut dust may get onto the raisins, etc. and this might cause an allergic reaction in a highly sensitive individual).
- Do not ingest class party food(s) if you are unsure of the ingredients. Keep a supply of safe snacks in the classroom for your child when/if there is a special celebration in progress.

Personal Hygiene
Children should be instructed to use tissues when coughing or sneezing. Fingernails should be kept at a safe length to avoid accidental scratches to others.

Children should not share combs, brushes, hair bands, hats, etc. with other students to minimize the possibility of outbreaks of lice.

You are asked to further remind children to wash their hands after visiting the bathroom and before eating.

Parents should also carefully oversee the health, hygiene and grooming habits of their child, especially in regards to:
- Frequent bathing
- Hair care
- Teeth care
- Toileting and cleanup
- General grooming, including wearing clean and seasonally appropriate clothes to school

If your child has a hygiene concern, such as a bathroom accident, the Health Office Staff may contact you. It is recommended that all elementary students keep a spare set of clothing in their classroom or book bag for accidents. If you have not provided an extra set of clothing we will call you to bring in clean clothes for your child. In emergency situations some schools have a small supply of gently used clothing to lend to your child. It is appreciated that you launder and return the borrowed clothes as soon as possible.

The Health Office does not provide clothing if your child needs to change clothes due to milk or juice spills, or muddy clothes. These are not health related concerns.
**Lice**

If a student is observed with head lice that are live, or there are nits within ½ inch from the scalp, the health office staff will call the parent/guardian to pick up the child from school. When you pick up your child, the health office staff will provide you with the Lice 101 Fact sheet, which lists an overview of head lice, including cleaning and treatment.

Head lice are spread through direct, person-to-person contact, or, less commonly, through contact with an infested person’s personal items. Head lice are commonly spread within households. Head lice crawl. Head lice do not jump or fly, and pets cannot spread head lice. An infested person can continue to spread head lice to other people until he/she has successfully completed a course of treatment that kills all of the head lice and their eggs.

The National Association of School Nurses (NASN) does not recommend that school nurses continue the practice of checking for head lice on all students classroom wide. This will help maintain student privacy, the family's right to confidentiality, prevent stigmatization and won’t disrupt the educational process. According to NASN, by the time a child with an active lice infestation has been identified, he or she may have had the infestation for one month or more. Therefore, it poses little additional risk of transmission to others.

The Meritus School Health staff will check students that have symptoms of head lice, or students that have had active head lice. We will no longer perform classroom wide head checks following NASN, CDC (Centers for Disease Control), and the AAP (American Academy of Pediatrics) recommendations. Routine head checks at home by the parent/guardian is encouraged. Schools do not routinely send home school wide lice notification letters, other than lice information to the specific student(s).

Your child may return to school after you have completed the recommended treatment and nits have been removed from your child's hair. Your child must be checked upon his/her return to school by the school health office staff before returning to the classroom.

Here are some suggested web-sites for further lice information:

http://www.cdc.gov/lice

https://www.nASN.org/nASN/advocacy/professional-practice-documents/position-statements/ps-head-lice
