

# DeKalb West School

101 Bulldog Lane  
Liberty, TN 37095

Telephone (615) 536-5332 Email (fax)- dwsfax@dekalbschools.net

**www.dws.dekalbschools.net**

Mrs. Sabrina Farler, Principal

2026-2027

Mrs. Cindy Snow, Assistant Principal

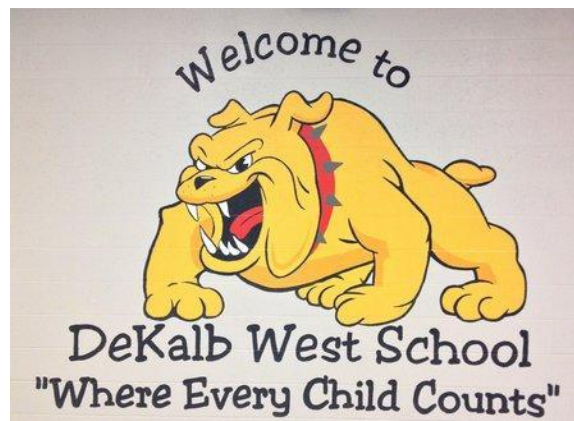
Dear DWS Families,

It is a pleasure to welcome you to DeKalb West Elementary School. The faculty and staff join us in saying we are happy to have you as part of the DeKalb West family. We look forward to a wonderful year of learning and academic growth for all of our students.

Students in fourth through eighth grade use agenda books, and kindergarten through third grade students receive a folder to aid in communication between home and school. This handbook contains important information that will help familiarize you and your child with our policies and procedures. We suggest that you review these pages together.

The DeKalb West School agenda book has been designed to assist your child in organizing his/her assignments. We hope to help improve organizational skills and promote responsible, independent learners. We feel this book will serve as a useful source of continued communication between school and home. We ask for your participation and support as we work together to educate the children of our community.

Sincerely,  
Sabrina Farler



"Every Student Matters. Every Moment Counts."

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

# Welcome to DeKalb West School

## Home of the Bulldogs

We believe you will find your classes both challenging and enjoyable. An important factor in the educational process is keeping citizens and parents informed about their school. This handbook has been designed to answer the most frequently asked questions about our school. We strive to provide sound academic training with constructive discipline as the first steps in the development of character and preparation for the difficult task of living peacefully as productive members of society. Since the education of the student is the mutual concern of the parents and the school, we request and hope for cooperation and support in maintaining the standards of our school and community.

### **Beliefs**

We, the faculty and staff of DeKalb West School, believe that:

1. Administrators, teachers, parents, and community partners work together to assure that all decisions made at DWS are student centered and provide a clear purpose and direction for students.
2. DWS provides a safe, comfortable environment that stimulates student learning and encourages appropriate behavior.
3. DWS holds high expectations for all students. Students should respect others and assume personal responsibility for their own decisions and actions.
4. Each student should have the opportunity to learn and achieve at a pace in accordance with his/her own potential.
5. Quality instruction should be taught by highly qualified teachers to enhance learning at all levels that utilizes researched based information and data driven decisions.
6. Students should be provided with skills necessary to function in an ever-changing technological society.
7. Students should be encouraged to develop socially, emotionally, academically, artistically, and physically.
8. Students learn best when they have appropriate opportunities to succeed.
9. Educators should maintain high standards for learning, behavior, and attendance.
10. Collaborative decision-making will foster a strong instructional team, promoting the use of shared decision-making processes.
11. We, as a school community, agree to meet policies set forth by state, district, and federal governing bodies that align policies and procedures to maintain a focus on achieving the school's goals for student learning.
12. DWS provides quality instruction that utilizes a variety of teaching strategies and assessments.

If you have any concerns or problems regarding your child, please reach out to the classroom teacher(s). If you need additional help or have further concerns, you should then contact the school administration. The teacher and/or school administration can answer questions and solve most problems. However, if you feel a satisfactory solution to the problem has not been reached, you may contact the Director of Schools.

### **Attendance/Absences and Tardiness**

Regular attendance and punctuality are essential for success in school as well as any vocation chosen in life. Classes begin at 7:35 a.m. and are dismissed at 2:35 p.m. Children should not arrive at the school before 7:10 a.m. Please use the carline to drop-off students prior to 7:35 a.m. If your child is late, please come to the main entrance and sign-in the student. A student is tardy if he or she arrives after 7:35 a.m. or leaves before 2:35 p.m. Classes are interrupted when students come to school late or leave early. Parents are encouraged to schedule doctor and dentist appointments after school hours when possible. Students are expected to be in attendance each school day. A student can only qualify for perfect attendance if he/she is present at school from 7:35 a.m. till 2:35 p.m. every day.

When a student has five (5) unexcused absences, they will be referred to the Attendance Supervisor, and a meeting will be scheduled. Upon seven (7) unexcused absences, the student will be considered TIER II, and a school employee will complete an individualized assessment detailing the reasons a student has been absent from school. A student will be moved to TIER III if interventions in TIER II are unsuccessful. These interventions shall be determined by a team formed at each school. The intervention shall address student needs and shall be approved by the Director of Schools/designee.

The student should bring a note signed by the parent or guardian to the office explaining his/her absence when he/she returns to school. An excused absence will be given in the case of sickness, death in the family, or an authorized activity. A physician's note will be required after five parent notes. In lieu of a doctor's statement, the student may see the DeKalb West School nurse for an excused absence. Students will be permitted to make up missed work, but it is the student's responsibility to meet with each teacher and arrange for make-up of class work and tests. A reasonable length of time will be given for the student to complete his late work.

If a student needs to leave school during the day, the parent or guardian must come into the office and request that the child be excused. Parents/Guardians may not sign out their child through the front office after 2:20 pm. ***After 2:20 pm, all parents/guardians must pick up their child through the carline.*** Students may NOT be picked up by anyone other than parents or guardians unless the school has been given permission from the parents by listing that person as an emergency contact in Skyward.

We recommend that all students and parents visit [www.dekalbschools.net](http://www.dekalbschools.net) and review DeKalb County Board of Education policy 6.200. If you have any questions, please contact your child's school or the DeKalb Co. Schools Attendance Department.

## Cafeteria

The cafeteria, besides being a lunchroom, is also a place where good human relations and social skills can be developed. Here each student is expected to practice the general rules of good manners, which one should find in the home. Some simple rules of courteous behavior, which would make the lunch period pleasant and relaxed, are:

1. Observing good dining room standards at the table;
2. Leaving the table and the surrounding area clean and orderly;
3. Putting trash in the proper containers;
4. Not leaving the cafeteria while eating or carrying food or drink;
5. Returning all trays, dishes, and eating utensils to the cleanup counter.

Breakfast and lunch are free to all students for the 2026-2027 school year. Breakfast will be served from 7:10 to 7:35. 2nd through 8th grade students that enter the building after 7:32 will be provided the Grab-N-Go option.

No energy drinks, coffee, etc., are permitted.

## Cafeteria Visitors

Parents and legal guardians are welcome to enjoy lunch with their child at school when space, schedules, and staffing allow. To help keep our school safe and organized, the following procedures must be followed:

1. All visitors must enter through the front office. A valid photo ID is required for check-in, and you must wear a visitor badge at all times.
2. Lunch visits will take place in the designated visitor area. Visitors may not go to classrooms, playgrounds, or other school areas.
3. Parents/guardians may not photograph or supervise other students.
4. Lunch visits may be limited during testing, special events, or due to school safety needs. **These visits are allowed Mondays through Thursdays. (No lunch visits will be permitted on Fridays.)**
5. All visitors must sign out at the office before leaving campus.

The school reserves the right to deny or end visits that disrupt the learning environment or do not follow school procedures.

## Cell Phone Policy

Students may possess personal communication devices and personal electronic devices so long as such devices are turned off and stored in backpacks, purses, or a personal carry-all. Such devices include, but are not limited to, wearable technology such as eyeglasses, rings, or watches that have the capability to record, live stream, or interact with wireless technology such as cell phones, chromebooks, laptops, tablets, headphones, and MP3 players. (*Smart watches may only be used to tell time. Other uses will result in the same consequences as a cell phone listed below.*) The principal or his/her designee may grant a student permission to use such a device at his/her discretion per school board policy 6.312.

First offense – Device taken up by teacher/staff, issued warning and given back to the student at the end of class/day

Second offense – Device turned into office and parent/guardian MUST come to school to pick up the phone.

Students are not allowed to have a phone at school for 5 days.

Third offense – Device turned into office, and parent/guardian MUST come to school to pick up the phone.

Students are NOT allowed to have a phone at school for 10 days and will serve 10 days of lunch detention.

Fourth offense – Device turned into office, and parent/guardian MUST come to school to pick up the phone.

Students are NOT allowed to have a phone at school for 20 days and will serve 2 days of ISS.

Fifth offense - Device turned into office, and parent/guardian MUST come to pick up the phone.

Students are NOT allowed to have a phone at school for the remainder of school year and will serve a 1-day suspension.

Use of cameras on personal devices is strictly prohibited on school property or at school functions. A student in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action.

## Conduct and Discipline

School discipline is simply a matter of courtesy, manners, and attitudes on the part of the students. Teachers are employed to teach state standards and approved curriculum, and students are expected to be in school to learn and to conduct themselves in a manner conducive to learning. The school reserves the right to take appropriate disciplinary action in the case of any students guilty of misconduct during school, field trips, athletic events, and all school functions. Students at DeKalb West School will not be allowed to refuse to carry out instructions or reasonable request(s) of a teacher, staff member, or administrator. If this should happen, the student will be sent home until he/she returns with parent(s) and/or guardian(s) and agrees to carry out the instructions of the teacher involved.

### **Field Trips**

Students whose behavior is unacceptable will not be allowed to participate in field trips. Student suspensions will be on case by case policy. A referral to Alternative School will automatically keep your child from attending field trips. Excessive absences and non-passing grades will also void field trips.

Parents are not allowed to ride school buses per the Transportation policy.

### **Fighting/Unruly/Bully Behavior**

DeKalb West School will be a safe place for all students. Fighting among students is a form of violence and will not be tolerated at school. Fighting could result in a suspension for up to ten (10) days or being remanded to alternative school. DeKalb West School is a safe school, free of violence and threats of violence. Bullying is a violent behavior that will not be tolerated at DWS. Any student engaging in bullying behavior will receive disciplinary action ranging from verbal reprimand to expulsion. We have adults available at all times to intervene in bullying or abusive behavior. Any fighting/bullying could be referred to the SRO officer, and he/she will either handle it with an unruly petition or return it to DWS administration.

Please let us stress to you and your child how important it is not to use physical violence to solve his/her problems. Please make us aware of any potential harassment or other problems that we need to know about in order to keep these situations from escalating.

### **Threatening, Harassing, Intimidating, and Bullying**

Every student has the right to feel safe at school. Threatening, harassing, intimidating, or bullying another student will not be tolerated. A student found guilty of threatening, harassing, intimidating, or bullying another student will be subject to disciplinary action ranging from verbal reprimand to suspension and/or expulsion dependent on the severity of the offense and the offender's prior record. (T.C.A. 49-6-1014 – 1019)

Bullying/Intimidation/Harassment is an act that substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, and the act has the effect of:

- Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property;
- Knowingly placing a student or students in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage to the student's property;
- Causing emotional distress to a student or students; or
- Creating a hostile educational environment

### **School Buses**

All transportation rules and regulations set forth by the state and county will be observed by students. Each student is expected to treat each bus driver with respect and to follow his/her instructions. Discipline issues could result in bus privileges being denied and/or revoked.

### **Suspension of Pupils by Administration**

The principal or assistant principal of any public school in this state is authorized to suspend a pupil from attendance at such school, including its sponsored activities or from riding a school bus, for good and sufficient reasons. Good and sufficient reasons for such suspensions may include, but shall not be limited to:

1. Willful and persistent violation of the rules of the school or truancy.
2. Immoral or disreputable conducts of vulgar or profane language.
3. Violence or threatened violence against the person of any personnel attending or assigned to any public school.
4. Willful or malicious damage to real or personal property of said school or the property of any person attending or assigned to said school.
5. Inciting, advising, or counseling of others to engage in any of the acts herein before enumerated.
6. Marking, defacing or destroying school property.
7. Possession of a pistol, gun, or firearm on school property.
8. Possession of a knife and other weapons, as defined in § 39-17-1301 on school property.
9. Assaulting a principal or teacher with vulgar, obscene, or threatening language.
10. Unlawful use or possession of barbitol or legend drugs, as defined in § 53-10-101.
11. Two (2) or more students initiating a physical attack on an individual student on school property or at a school activity, including travel to and from school.
12. Making a threat, including a false report, to use a bomb, dynamite, any other deadly explosive or destructive device, including chemical weapons, on school property or at a school sponsored event.
13. Any other conduct prejudicial to good order or discipline in any public school.
14. Off-campus criminal behavior that results in the student being legally charged with a felony and the student's continued presence in school poses a danger to persons or property or disrupts the educational process.

### **Damage to School Property**

Parents are held responsible by law for any damage or loss of school property caused by their child. Parents will be notified of any damage caused by their child.

## **Discrimination**

### **Sexual, Racial Ethnic, Religious Discrimination/Harassment**

Students shall be provided a learning environment free from sexual, racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination/harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee or any student to discriminate against or harass a student through disparaging conduct or communication that is sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious in nature. The following guidelines are set forth to protect students from discrimination/harassment.

Student discrimination/harassment will not be tolerated. Discrimination/harassment is defined as conduct, advances, gestures, or words either written or spoken of a sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious nature which:

1. Unreasonably interfere with the student's work or educational opportunities.
2. Create an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment.
3. Imply that submission to such conduct is made an explicit or implicit term of receiving grades or credit.
4. Imply that submission to or rejection of such conduct will be used as a basis for determining the student's grades and/or participation in a student activity.

Alleged victims of sexual, racial, ethnic and religious discrimination/harassment shall report these incidents immediately to a teacher, counselor, or building administrator. Allegations of discrimination or harassment shall be fully investigated by a complaint manager. The privacy and anonymity of all parties and witnesses to complaints will be respected. However, because an individual's need for confidentiality must be balanced with obligations to cooperate with police investigation or legal proceedings, to provide due process to the accused, to conduct a thorough investigation or to take necessary action to resolve a complaint, the identity of parties and witnesses may be disclosed in appropriate circumstances to individuals with a need to know. A substantiated charge against an employee shall result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. A substantiated charge against a student may result in corrective or disciplinary action up to and including suspension. There will be no retaliation against any person who reports harassment or participates in an investigation. However, any employee who refuses to cooperate or gives false information during the course of any investigation may be subject to disciplinary action. The willful filling of a false report will itself be considered harassment and treated as such. Any student disciplined for violation of this policy may appeal in accordance with disciplinary policies and procedures. This policy shall be published in the parent/student handbook distributed annually to every student. Building administrators are responsible for educating and training their respective staff and students as to the definition and recognition of discrimination/harassment.

### **Discrimination/Harassment Grievance Procedures**

#### **1. Filing a complaint:**

Any student of this school district who wishes to file a written or oral discrimination/harassment grievance against another student or an employee of the district may file a written or oral (recorded, if possible) complaint with the complaint manager. Students may also report an allegation of discrimination/harassment to any teacher or other adult employed in the school who shall inform a complaint manager of the allegation. The complaint should include the following information:

- a. Identity of the alleged victim and person accused.
- b. Location, date, time, and circumstances surrounding the alleged incident.
- c. Description of what happened.
- d. Identity of witnesses.
- e. Any other evidence available.

#### **2. Investigation:**

Within twenty-four (24) hours of receiving the student's complaint, the complaint manager shall notify the complaining student's parent/guardian and the principal who shall inform the Director of Schools. The parent/guardian shall be given the right to attend an interview of the student in a non-intimidating environment in order to elicit full disclosure of the student's allegations. This interview shall take place within five (5) school days from the time the complaint was first made. If no parent/guardian attends the interview, another adult, mutually agreed upon by the student and the complaint manager, shall attend and serve as the student's advocate. After a complete investigation, if the allegations are substantiated, immediate and appropriate corrective or disciplinary action shall be initiated. The complaint and identity of the complainant will not be disclosed except (1) as required by law or this policy, or (2) as necessary to fully investigate the complaint, or (3) as authorized by the complainant. A school representative will meet with and advise the complainant regarding the findings, and whether corrective measures and/or disciplinary action were taken. Copies of the report will be sent to the student, principal, Federal Rights Coordinator and Director of School. One copy shall be kept in the complaint manager's file for one (1) year beyond the student's eighteenth (18) birthday. The Director of Schools shall keep the Board informed of complaints.

#### **3. Decision and Appeal:**

If the complaint is not in agreement with the findings of fact as reported by the complaint manager, an appeal may be made within five (5) workdays to the Director of Schools. The Director of Schools will review the investigation, make any corrective action deemed necessary and provide a written response to the complainant. If the complainant is not in agreement with the Director of Schools finding of facts, appeal may be made to the Board of Education within (5) working days. The board shall, within thirty (30) days from the date of appeal was received, review the investigation and the actions of the Director of Schools and may support, amend, or overturn the actions based upon review and report their decision in writing to the complainant.

The Director of Schools shall appoint at least two complaint managers, one of each gender. The Federal Rights Coordinator may serve as a complaint manager. The Director of Schools shall insert into this policy the names, address and telephone number of current complaint managers.

This policy shall be published in the parent/student handbook distributed annually to every student. Building administrators are responsible for educating and training their respective staff and students as the definition and recognition of discrimination/harassment.

The current complaint manager is:

Mr. Joey Reeder  
110 South Public Square  
Smithville, TN 37166  
615-215-2102

### **Nondiscrimination Notice**

DeKalb West School does not discriminate in employment and student services on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, handicap, or age. Grievances should be addressed to the Director of Schools Office, 110 South Public Square, Smithville, TN 37166.

School policies set forth on these pages are applicable during regular school, sports events, field trips, and other activities.

## **Dismissals and Changes in Transportation**

Please display carline tags in your car window during dismissal. If you DO NOT have your carline tag displayed, you may be asked to go to the back of the line while verifying pickup information. If the person picking up your child is NOT listed on the Skyward Emergency Contacts list, they will not be able to pick up the student. Also, Tennessee is a Hands-Free state with regards to mobile devices...TCA 55-8-199 prohibits drivers from holding or physically supporting a cell phone or mobile device with any part of the body while driving. Please help keep our car line safe by refraining from using your cell phone during car line dismissal.

When a student is going home with another student, written permission from both of the students' parents is required. This should be turned in to the office before 8:00 a.m. If a student is to ride a bus different from the usual bus, please send a note informing us of this change. **INFORM YOUR CHILD OF CHANGES IN YOUR ROUTINE PRIOR TO LEAVING IN THE MORNING RATHER THAN CALLING THE SCHOOL EXCEPT FOR EMERGENCIES.**

When a student exits from the bus or car, etc. on the school grounds, he or she is expected to immediately enter the school and is not allowed to leave without a dismissal note from the office until 2:35 p.m. The faculty and administration must emphasize to parents that if we are to be responsible for their child from the time of departure for school until he or she arrives back home in the afternoon, then there needs to be a mutual cooperation among parents and the school to ensure their child benefits from the educational opportunities offered at DeKalb West School. Employees of the DeKalb Co. Board of Education are not responsible for students before the first bus arrives in the morning and after the last bus leaves in the afternoon.

In the event of a Tornado Warning, students will not be released until the warning has expired.

## **Dress Code**

Everyone at DeKalb West School is expected to dress each day as though they are ready to learn. All attire must meet normal standards and pose no threat to safety, health, or call attention in any way, which disrupts the academic process. Students should observe the following guidelines:

### **PreK - 2<sup>nd</sup> Dress Code**

- Cleanliness and personal hygiene are essential at all times.
- **HEADWEAR** -Hats, bandanas, and sunglasses are not to be worn at school except on occasions designated by the principal. Accommodations will be made for documented religious or medical reasons.
- **SHIRTS, TOPS, BLOUSES** - No bare midriffs. No disrespectful T-shirts/clothing (tobacco, drugs, alcohol, skulls, wrestling, derogatory comments, etc.).
- **PANTS AND SLACKS** - No exposed underwear. Clothing should be no more than one size too small or one size too large. Baggy coats cannot be worn in school building.
- **FOOTWEAR** -Proper gym shoes are required for P.E. daily. **NO FLIP FLOPS** will be allowed because of safety issues.

### **3<sup>rd</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup> Dress Code**

- Cleanliness and personal hygiene are essential at all times.
- **HEADWEAR** -Hats, bandanas, and sunglasses are not to be worn at school except on occasions designated by the principal. Accommodations will be made for documented religious or medical reasons.
- **SHIRTS, TOPS, BLOUSES**-The back, shoulders, chest area, and mid-section of the body are to be covered at all times. Spaghetti straps, low cut, or strapless tops are not permitted. Tank tops must have a shoulder strap that is 3 inches wide. Clothes that are too tight or revealing are not permitted. Clothing with scenes of violence including wrestling shirts, vulgarity, sex, alcoholic beverages, tobacco, gang or drug depiction, derogatory or negative remarks will not be allowed. For security reasons, baggy coats must be removed during the school day and kept in the lockers. Mesh/see-through clothing is not to be worn at school.
- **JEWELRY** - Body piercing jewelry other than earrings is prohibited. Clothing accessories such as chains or something that would cause a distraction or present a danger are prohibited.
- **PANTS AND SLACKS** - Excessive baggy pants are not to be worn to school. Trousers and shorts must be worn at the waist and secured at the waistline. Jeans are not to be shredded or patched in areas 5 inches above the knee. Please make sure shirts and pants cover exposed areas when seated or bent over.
- **SKIRTS, SHORTS, DRESSES** - Shorts, skirts, and dresses must be no shorter than 5 inches from the middle of the knee. Leggings, spandex shorts, and any other body hugging apparel will be considered an undergarment and must be covered by another garment that meets the 5 inch rule.
- **MAKE-UP** - Extreme make-up is not permitted.
- **FOOTWEAR** – Proper gym shoes are required for P.E daily. Flip flops can be worn in school building, but must not be a distraction in the hallway or classroom. No high heels.
- **ACCESSORIES**- Personal bags such as purses, belt bags, fanny packs, etc. cannot be worn as an accessory (i.e. worn constantly during the school day) to a student's attire. Backpacks may not be taken into the restrooms.

Even though violations of the dress code are rare, when a violation is committed the following procedures will be followed:

- **First violation:** Students may call a parent or guardian to bring appropriate clothing to school, or appropriate clothing will be loaned from the office.
- **Second violation:** Student, parent, teacher, and principal conference
- **Third/Fourth violation:** In-School Suspension
- If continuous violation: suspension (up to 3 days)

The Dress Code should be followed on campus, buses, and for any school activities including field trips. Teachers and administrators will have the final word in the event of controversy over a particular student's attire.

### **Firearm Safety Curriculum**

In 2024, the Tennessee General Assembly passed legislation requiring annual instruction of firearms safety in schools as outlined in Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-6-1016. DWS will provide students with age-appropriate and grade-appropriate instruction on firearm safety.

### **Grading Scale/Report Cards**

A = 100-90      B = 89-80      C = 79-70      D = 69-60      F = 59 or below

Report cards are distributed every nine weeks, with distribution taking place approximately one week following the close of the nine weeks. Recognition will be given for students who earn all A's by being named to the Principal's List, and students who earn a mixture of A's and B's will be placed on the Honor Roll list.

**TCAP-Per board policy 4.700, state-mandated student testing programs shall be undertaken in accordance with guidelines published by the State Department of Education. TNReady and EOC scores shall be weighted as 15% of students' final grades in grades 3 through 8. The DeKalb County School System shall use the following methodology: target score method. The Director of Schools may exclude these scores from students' final grades if results are not received by the district at least five (5) instructional days before the end of the course.**

### **Library**

Library books are loaned for one week and may be renewed at the discretion of the librarian. If the student loses a book, the student must pay for it.

### **Lost and Found**

All lost articles are to be turned in to the office. Students should check in the office for lost articles before and after school. ***All coats, jackets, sweaters, or gym clothes should be marked with laundry ink so that they can be identified and returned to owners.*** Articles that are not identified after thirty days will be disposed of.

### **Medical Policies**

Parents must bring all medicine to the office or school nurse and fill out necessary forms. Reminder: Students cannot bring any type of medicine to school.

DeKalb County Board Of Education has adopted a no nit policy. Students are not allowed at school if nits are present. Contact the office or school nurse for further information.

If you are sending food items to school for classroom parties or birthdays, please only send pre-packaged items with labels and/or nutritional information due to allergy concerns.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

We are delighted to make school visitations and parent-teacher conferences available to you. Our faculty feels that a close working relationship between parents and teachers is of great value to each student. Parent-teacher conferences are held in October and March. During August and September, the faculty will be devoting its energies to helping students to adjust to school procedures and getting to know each student individually. Arrangements for conferences may be made by telephoning the administration of the school (615-536-5332) at least a day in advance so that arrangements may be made with the teacher or teachers with whom you wish to consult. At the appointed time for the conference, please see someone in the administrative office where arrangements will have been made for your visit. If you are unable to come to the school, or if yours is a matter that can easily be taken care of on the telephone, feel free to call the office, and request the teacher to return your call.

## **Privacy, Rights, and Protection Policies and Standards**

### **DeKalb County Board of Education Internet/Picture Policy**

Because Internet publications are available to the entire world, special care shall be taken to protect the privacy of students and staff.

Pictures of students may be included only under the following conditions:

- Individual student pictures may be published on the web site only with written consent of the student's parent/guardian or eligible student.
- Pictures of groups of students involved in a school-related activity may be published without consent; however, the students shall only be identified by the group name.
- Students shall not be individually identified in pictures unless there is a special reason for doing so, such as recognition for receiving an award. In such cases, the student's parent/guardian or eligible student must give written consent.

### **Notification of Rights for Elementary and Secondary Schools**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the School principal [or appropriate official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or eligible student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.]
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

### **Notice for Directory Information**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal Law, requires that DeKalb County Schools, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, DeKalb Schools may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the District to the contrary in accordance with local procedures. This would be in the form of a written letter telling us to allow the schools to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local education agencies receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories: names, addresses, and telephone listings; unless parents have advised the school that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

If you do not want DeKalb County Schools to disclose directory information from your child's education records, you must notify the school in writing by August 31<sup>st</sup>. Signing the cover letter will give your consent for directory information to be released.

## Notice of Parental Rights/Parental Involvement

As a parent of a student at DeKalb West School, you have the right to know...

- DeKalb County School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, age, or handicap in the provision of educational opportunities, activities, or other administered programs
- A parental involvement policy and parent-teacher-student compact will be distributed to parents by each Title I school. A copy of each document may also be obtained by contacting the school office. In schools eligible for Title I funds, a written parental involvement policy will be developed jointly with and distributed to parents of children participating in Title I programs. Each Title I school will also hold at least one annual meeting for parents to inform them of the school's participation in programs funded under the No Child Left Behind Act. All elementary/middle schools in DeKalb County are identified as school-wide Title I schools.
- Parents have access to district and school information and reports through the media (local newspaper and radio), the System/School Report Cards available on the State Department of Education website ([www.state.tn.us/education](http://www.state.tn.us/education)), or at the school or system's administrative offices.
- Parents may visit the State Department of Education website ([www.state.tn.us/education](http://www.state.tn.us/education)) or visit the school to access a description of the Tennessee Curriculum Standards, assessment information, and proficiency levels students are expected to meet.
- Parents must be notified if their child is enrolled in a school identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. Currently no school in DeKalb County has been identified as in need of improvement.
- Under the Tennessee State Board of Education's Unsafe School Choice Policy, any public school student who is the victim of a violent crime as defined under Tennessee Code Annotated 40-38-111(g), or the attempt to commit one of these offenses as defined under Tennessee Code Annotated 30-12-101, shall be provided an opportunity to transfer to another grade-level appropriate school within the district.
- Parents will be notified of their child's eligibility for service in migrant, homeless, or Limited English Proficiency programs.
- Federal law affords parents and students over 18 years of age certain rights with respect to educational records. School Board Policy relating to student privacy and parental access to information is available in the School Board Policy Manual located at each school and at the central office. Notification of Rights and Release of Directory Information under FERPA (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act) will also be conducted through local media announcements.

Public Release of Student Directory Information: Under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), schools may disclose, without consent, "directory information", such as a student's name, address, telephone number and honors or awards. You may, at any time, request in writing to the school that your child's information not be disclosed. (ESEA 8025)

Military Recruiter Access to Student Information: You may, at any time, request in writing to the school that your child's name, address and telephone number not be released to a military recruiter without your prior written consent. (ESEA 8528 (a)(2)(B))

Parent and Family Engagement: DeKalb County School System has developed, jointly with parents from all schools, a district wide parent involvement plan. Each individual school has a written parent and family engagement plan that is located on the district and school website. Our school:

-holds one annual meeting for Title I parents (beginning of the each school year)

-numerous meetings throughout the year

-if you would like to share your comments or concerns about the school's improvement plan or family engagement plan, please visit our district site at [www.dekalbschools.net](http://www.dekalbschools.net), Federal Programs (left hand side), forms, you will find a download under Parent Input.

-you will receive a school-parent compact that outlines the responsibilities of your child and the school (ESEA Title I, Part A, 1116 (c))

Report Cards on Statewide Academic Assessment: You can view our annual report card by visiting <https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/foster-care/index.html>. You will be able to find student achievement, accountability and teacher qualifications.

Achievement on State Assessment: You will receive the individual student interpretive, descriptive and diagnostic reports for the state's standardized test. This information includes your child's achievement on academic assessments aligned with state academic achievement standards. (ESEA 1111 (b)(2)(B)(x))

National Assessment of Education Progress: Our district may voluntarily participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). You will be informed before the assessment is administered. Your child may be excused from participation for any reason, is not required to finish this assessment or not required to answer any test question. Please inform the office of your wishes. (ESEA Title VI, Part C, 411 (c)(1))

Schoolwide Programs: All schools in DeKalb's district are considered Title I with a school wide program. Our district plan may be found at <https://eplan.tn.gov>

English Learner Programs: Our school will inform you no later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year if your child was identified for participation in the ESL program.

Homeless Children: Students who are experiencing homelessness have the right to receive educational services that provide full and equal opportunities to succeed in school. Homeless students have the right to immediately enroll in school, even if they do not have proof of residence or any other required school or health records. If any required documentation is missing, it can be obtained after the student is enrolled. Homeless students have the right to remain in their school of origin, if feasible, and receive transportation services. Public notices are located near the office. (ESSA Title IX, Part C 722 (g)(3)(B) **Homeless Liaison- Joey Reeder 615-215-2102**

21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers: The 21<sup>st</sup> Century grant must undergo periodic evaluation to assess its progress toward achieving its goal. The results of evaluations shall be made available to the public upon request, with a public notice of such availability. (ESEA 4205 (b)(2))

Waiver Request: If our school district requests the U.S. Secretary of Education to waive any provision or regulation of the ESEA, we will provide notice and information about the waiver to you in a public notice.

### **PPRA Notice and Consent/OPT-OUT for Specific Activities**

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), 20 U.S.C. 1232h, requires **DeKalb County School System** to notify you and obtain consent or allow you to opt your child out of participating in certain school activities. These activities include a student survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns one or more of the following eight areas (“protected information surveys”):

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

This requirement also applies to the collection, disclosure or use of student information for marketing purposes (“marketing surveys”), and certain physical exams and screenings.

Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State Law; and
3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

Inspect, upon request and before administration or use:

1. Protected information surveys of students;
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from student for any of the above marketing, sales or other distribution purposes; and
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law. DeKalb County schools perform school-wide or grade-level hearing screening, vision screening, and head checks for lice. This is provided as a service to you and your children. If you do not wish for this service to be performed on your child, please notify the school by August 31<sup>st</sup>. DeKalb West School performs school-wide or grade-level hearing screenings, eye screenings, and head checks for lice. This is provided as a service to you and your children. If you do not wish for this service to be performed on your child, please contact the school office.

### **Student Equal Access (Limited Public Forum)**

#### **Student Meetings**

Schools may allow students to form clubs that meet before, during, and/or after the school day. Requests to form such clubs or groups shall not be denied based upon the religious nature or beliefs of proposed club or group. If permitted, school administrators shall ensure that all clubs and groups have the same abilities to access facilities and advertise their meetings.

No funds shall be expended by the school for any such meeting beyond the incidental costs associated with providing meeting space. Groups meeting under this policy may be required to pay a reasonable fee for compensating school personnel in the supervision of the activity. No student may be compelled to attend or participate in a meeting under this policy.

A student or a group of students who wish to conduct a meeting under the policy must file an application with the principal at least three days prior to the proposed date.

The principal shall approve the meeting if he/she determines that:

1. The meeting is voluntary and student-initiated;
2. There is no sponsorship of the meeting or its content by the school, the Board, or its employees;
3. The meeting will not materially or substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of the school's educational activities or conflict with other previously scheduled meetings;
4. Employees of the district are to be present in a non-participatory monitoring capacity; however, no employee shall be required to attend in this capacity if the content of the meeting is contrary to the beliefs of the employee; and
5. Non-school persons will not direct, control, or regularly attend

### **School Sponsored Events**

If the Board or a school principal authorizes an event at which a student is to speak, a limited public forum shall be established for such student speakers. The appropriate administration shall ensure that:

1. The forum is provided in a manner that does not discriminate against a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject;
2. There is appropriate method of selecting student speakers which is based on neutral criteria;
3. Student speakers do not engage in speech that is obscene, vulgar, offensively lewd, indecent or promotes illegal drug use.

To the extent possible and practical, prior to events in which students will speak, notice shall be provided orally and /or in writing that the student's speech does not reflect the endorsement, sponsorship, position, or expression of the Board and its employees.

### **Provisions of Textbooks Policy**

Each student and classroom teacher must be furnished a sufficient supply of textbooks for class study and recitation. Textbooks are available without cost to pupils as a loan. The original cost of these books is absorbed by state subsidy. Parents or guardians shall accept full responsibility for the proper care, return or replacement of textbooks issued to their children. The student's grades will not be entered on his/her transcript until all damages are satisfactorily discharged.

### **Search and Seizures**

The search of lockers, persons, containers, and vehicles may occur when individual circumstances in a school dictate it according to T.C.A. 49-9-404-407.

### **School Visitations/Service Animals/Trespassing**

FOR THE PROTECTION OF YOUR CHILD, WE NEED TO KNOW WHO IS IN THE BUILDING AND WHY! All visitors are required to report to the office where a photo I. D. will be scanned to gain access to the building. Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit but are asked to come by the office first. **DO NOT GO DIRECTLY TO YOUR CHILD'S ROOM TO PICK HIM/HER UP.** STUDENTS MUST BE SIGNED OUT, AND THIS MUST BE DONE IN THE OFFICE. STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BRING GUESTS TO SCHOOL AT ANY TIME.

\*When attending school events/eating lunch with your child, we ask that visitors stay in the designated location for the safety of all students. Please wear a visitors' pass (upper left shoulder) at all times, and do not follow your child to the classroom unless that is the designated area of your visit.

\*Non-school-age siblings are highly encouraged to not attend due to safety and limited space. Additionally, school siblings in different grades/classrooms are not allowed to attend a sibling's class party.

\*No person is allowed to enter the school halls without permission from the office unless they are enrolled as students or are teachers or staff.

\*Any student who is suspended is not allowed on the school property except to come directly to the office on business.

With the exception of service animals, pets are not allowed on campus. This includes events such as, but not limited to, sporting events, Field Day, Parent-Teacher Conferences, and family events.

### **Skyward Database**

The DeKalb County School District uses the Skyward database for the following: attendance, gradebook, and discipline. Family access allows for parents/guardians to see their students' information. If at any time a parent/guardian needs assistance with their username and password, please contact DWS office staff. How to Update Skyward Emergency Contact: Sign in under Family Access. Under family access, select student name, select student info, in the top right corner select request changes, select add emergency contact, fill out first and last name, relationship, phone number, and pick up option then save.

### **Sports and Extracurricular Activities**

#### **Athletic Eligibility**

Students participating in sports must have passed the previous year and not be repeating the same grade. The player should show passing grades to maintain eligibility. Students who participate will be provided a copy of additional rules and regulations. If a student is involved in two or more extracurricular activities that meet at the same time, the student may be forced to make a decision as to dropping one of the

conflicting activities. Dedication, as well as involvement, is important to extracurricular activities. Athletes are responsible for their own insurance. Poor school attendance or misconduct can be grounds for dismissal from school athletics.

### **Ballgames**

Students may not attend home basketball or baseball games without a parent/guardian/adult chaperone who will be supervising you at the event. At home games, students may not leave and return to the game at a later time. At all home ballgames, students are expected to follow school dress code and policies. No personal sports equipment (basketballs, mini footballs, etc.) may be brought into the gymnasium during basketball games. Any student who does not abide by the policies will be asked to leave the game.

### **Extracurricular Activities**

Students must attend school on the day that an extracurricular activity is being held in order to participate in that activity, unless prior approval is given by school administration along with the input of Coaches and Sponsors who are responsible for the event. Activities include, but are not limited to, such things as dances, ballgames, and after school reward events.

### **Fan Expectations**

Fans are requested to take personal responsibility for keeping contests at a high level of sportsmanship. Support the athletes and your school in a positive and sportsmanlike manner, and be a good representative for our school and community. According to the 2025-2026 TSSAA Bylaws to which DeKalb West School athletic programs adhere, the following regulations are in place at sporting events. You can find additional information on the TSSAA website at [tssaa.org](https://tssaa.org). (These regulations are subject to change due to updates in TSSAA policies.)

Article III: Section 9. Unsportsmanlike Conduct by Fans

**A.** For fans coming onto the field or floor during an incident, the school will be fined a minimum of \$250.00. In addition, other non-monetary disciplinary action may occur, including but not limited to probation and/or restrictive probation for the entire athletic program.

**B.** For fans ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct during a contest, the school will be fined a minimum of \$250.00. In addition, other non-monetary disciplinary action may occur, including but not limited to probation and/or restrictive probation for the entire athletic program

- **If any DeKalb West School fan is fined for either of the above unsportsmanlike conduct violations, the fan will pay the allotted \$250.00. The fine must be paid before the fan may return to a sporting event.**

### **TN Literacy Law**

Each LEA and public charter school shall comply with the following additional requirements for promotion and retention of students in grade three (3) and four (4), in accordance with T.C.A. § 49-6-3115. Each LEA and public charter school shall notify parents or legal guardians of all students in grade three (3) and grade four (4) of the following promotion and retention requirements at the beginning of each school year:

(a) A student in grade three (3) shall not be promoted to the next grade level unless the student is determined to be proficient in English language arts (ELA) based on the student's achieving a performance level rating of "on track" or "mastered" (otherwise known as "met expectations" or "exceeded expectations") on the ELA portion of the student's most recent Tennessee comprehensive assessment program (TCAP) test.

(b) Notwithstanding paragraph (7)(a):

1. A student in grade three (3) who is not proficient in ELA, as determined by the student's achieving a performance level rating of "approaching" on the ELA portion of the student's most recent TCAP test, may be promoted to the fourth (4th) grade

if:

(i) Pathway 1: The student is an English language learner and has received less than two (2) full school years of ELA instruction;

(ii) Pathway 2: The student was previously retained in any of the grades kindergarten through three (K-3);

(iii) Pathway 3: The student is retested in accordance with Department guidelines before the beginning of the next school year and scores proficient in ELA;

iv) Pathway 4: The student attends a learning loss bridge camp before the beginning of the upcoming school year, maintains a ninety percent (90%) attendance rate at the camp, and the student's performance on the post-test administered to the student at the end of the learning loss bridge camp, as required under T.C.A. § 49-6-1502(4)(F), demonstrates adequate growth, as defined in the State Board's Promotion and Retention Policy 3.300;

(v) Pathway 5: The student receives high-dosage, low-ratio tutoring for the entirety of the upcoming school year from a Tennessee accelerating literacy and learning corps (TN ALL Corps) tutor. For the purposes of this Rule, "high-dosage, low-ratio tutoring" means a minimum of two (2) thirty (30) minute sessions per week with a one to three (1 :3) teacher to student ratio. TN ALL Corps high dosage, low ratio tutoring may be provided through the following options, in accordance with T.C.A. § 49-6-1507:

(I) A tutor recruited and trained through the Department's TN ALL Corps grant program;

II) A district recruited tutor who has completed the Department's TN ALL Corps training; or

(vi) Pathway 6: Beginning with third (3rd) grade students in the 2023-24 school year, the student demonstrates proficiency in ELA standards based on the student scoring at or above the fiftieth (50th ) percentile on the most recently administered state-provided benchmark assessment, if the benchmark assessment is administered to the student in a test environment, in accordance with Department guidance, and the student's LEA or public charter school agrees to provide tutoring services to the student for the entirety of the student's fourth (4th) grade year.

(I) If a student is promoted to the fourth (4th) grade pursuant to this Pathway 6, then the student's LEA or public charter school shall notify the student's parent or guardian, in writing, of the benefits of enrolling their student in a learning loss bridge camp and encouraging the parent or guardian to do so.

(II) For the purposes of Pathway 6, "state-provided benchmark assessment" means the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener provided by the Department.

(III) The tutoring services provided to the student for the entirety of the student's fourth (4th ) grade year must be high-dosage, low ratio tutoring. For the purposes of this Rule, "high-dosage, low-ratio tutoring" means a minimum of

two (2) thirty (30) minute sessions per week with a one to three (1 :3) teacher to student ratio. TN ALL Corps high dosage, low ratio tutoring may be provided through the following options, in accordance with T.C.A. § 49-6-1507:

I. A tutor recruited and trained through the Department's TN ALL Corps grant program.

II. A district recruited tutor who has completed the Department's TN ALL Corps training.

2. A student in grade three (3) who is not proficient in ELA, as determined by the student's achieving a performance level rating of "below" on the ELA portion of the student's most recent TCAP test may be promoted to the fourth (4th) grade if:

(i) Pathway 1: The student is an English language learner and has received less than two (2) full school years of ELA instruction;

(ii) Pathway 2: The student was previously retained in any of the grades kindergarten through three (K-3);

(iii) Pathway 3: The student retested in accordance with Department guidelines before the beginning the next school year and scores proficient in ELA; or

(iv) Pathway 4: The student attends a learning loss bridge camp before the beginning of the upcoming school year and maintains a ninety percent (90%) attendance rate at the camp, and receives high-dosage, low-ratio tutoring for the entirety of the upcoming school year from a Tennessee accelerating literacy and learning corps (TN ALL Corps) tutor. For the purposes of this Rule, "high-dosage, low-ratio tutoring" means a minimum of two (2) thirty (30) minute sessions per week with a one to three (1 :3) teacher to student ratio. TN ALL Corps high dosage, low ratio tutoring may be provided through the following options, in accordance with T.C.A. §49-6-1507:

(I) A tutor recruited and trained through the Department's TN ALL Corps grant program.

(II) A district recruited tutor who has completed the Department's TN ALL Corps training.

(c) A student who is promoted to the fourth (4th) grade pursuant to paragraph (7)(b)(1)(v) or (7)(b)(2)(iv) of this Rule must show adequate growth on the fourth (4th) grade ELA portion of the TCAP test as further defined in State Board Promotion and Retention Policy 3.300, before the student may be promoted to the fifth (5th) grade.

(d) Notwithstanding paragraph (c), a student shall not be retained in fourth (4th) grade more than once.

(e) The requirements set forth in paragraphs (7)(a)-(d) do not supersede an LEA's or public charter school's obligation to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq.) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. § 794).

1. In accordance with T.C.A. § 49-6-3115, an LEA or public charter school shall not retain a student with a disability or a suspected disability that impacts their ability to read.

2. Retention and promotion decisions shall be made on a case-by-case basis and in consultation with the student's IEP and/or 504 team to determine whether the student's performance on the ELA TCAP was due to the student's disability. Such consultation includes, but is not limited to, a review of evaluation and eligibility data, input from the student's teachers and parents, benchmark assessments, and classroom performance.

(f) Appeals to the Department.

1. The parent or legal guardian of a student who is identified for retention in third (3rd) grade pursuant to paragraph (7)(a) based on the student's achieving a performance level rating of "approaching" on the ELA portion of the student's most recent TCAP test, may appeal directly to the Department. A parent or legal guardian may provide written consent, on a form provided by the Department to LEAs and public charter schools, for a school principal, guidance counselor, teacher, or other administrator of the student's school to file an appeal for the student on behalf of the parent or legal guardian. The LEA or public charter school shall fully inform the parent or legal guardian of the student's pathways to fourth (4th) grade promotion prior to the parent or legal guardian signing the consent form. Signed consent forms shall be collected by the LEA or public charter school either electronically or on paper and shall be maintained for monitoring purposes by the LEA or public charter school.

(i) A decision to retain a student for any other reason, as set forth in paragraphs (1)-(6) of this rule may be appealed at the local level only, pursuant to the LEA or public charter school's promotion and retention policy.

2. The appeal process for a student who is identified for retention in third (3rd) grade pursuant to paragraph (7)(a) based on the student's achieving a performance level rating of "approaching" on the ELA portion of the student's most recent TCAP test shall be administered by the Department. Information regarding the appeals process and timelines shall be posted on the Department's website. All appeals shall be submitted on the appeal forms provided by the Department and posted on its website. If an appeal is not submitted on the appropriate appeal form, the appeal shall be denied.

3. The Department shall open the appeals window no later than five (5) business days after the Department releases individual student results to LEAs and public charter schools for the ELA portion of the 3rd grade TCAP. All appeals shall be submitted within the appeals window determined by the Department. The Commissioner's designee(s) shall review all properly submitted appeals, make a determination, and issue an electronic notification of the decision to the parent or legal guardian within fourteen (14) calendar days of receiving the appeal. An extension of the fourteen (14) calendar day timeline is permitted if the Commissioner determines exceptional circumstances exist with respect to a particular appeal requiring the Department to request additional information necessary to make a determination.

4. The Commissioner's designee(s) may overturn the identification of a student as at risk for retention in third (3rd) grade pursuant to paragraph (7)(a) and allow the student to be promoted to the fourth (4th) grade if one (1) or more of the following grounds is met:

(i) Ground 1:

(I) The parent or legal guardian of the student agrees they were provided notice of all requirements of a Ground 1 appeal and agrees that their student will comply with all requirements of a Ground 1 appeal if the Commissioner's designee overturns the identification of the student as at risk for retention in 3rd grade;

(II) For the 2023-24 academic year, the student scores at or above the fortieth (40th) percentile on a State Board-approved universal reading screener identified in State Board Universal Reading Screener Policy 3.302 and administered by the LEA or public charter school;

(III) For the 2024-25 academic year and thereafter, the student scores at or above the fortieth (40th) percentile on the Tennessee Universal Reading Screener provided by the Department and administered by the LEA or public charter school;

(IV) The principal of the student's school agrees to develop an academic remediation plan for the student. The academic remediation plan shall be developed in coordination with the student's teachers, IEP or 504 team, if applicable, and may also include input from the student's parents, school counselor, or other appropriate school personnel. The academic remediation plan shall include evidence-based strategies tailored to the student's learning needs. These evidence-based strategies shall include at least one (1) of the following:

- I. Adjustment to current instructional strategies or high quality instructional materials;
- II. Additional instructional time;
- III. Modification to the student's classroom assignment to ensure the student receives instruction from a teacher with a level of overall effectiveness of above expectations (level 4) or significantly above expectations (level 5); or
- IV. Placement of the student in a classroom with a reduced class size.

(V) The student's current ELA teacher and school principal provide a unanimous recommendation that the student be promoted to the 4th grade; and

(VI) The student's LEA or public charter school agrees to provide high-dosage low-ratio tutoring services to the student for the entirety of the student's fourth (4th) grade year. "High-dosage, low-ratio tutoring" means a minimum of two (2) thirty (30) minute sessions per week with a one to three (1 :3) teacher to student ratio. TN ALL Corps high dosage, low ratio tutoring may be provided through the following options, in accordance with T.C.A. § 49-6-1507:

- I. A tutor recruited and trained through the Department's TN ALL Corps grant program.
- II. A district recruited tutor who has completed the Department's TN ALL Corps training.

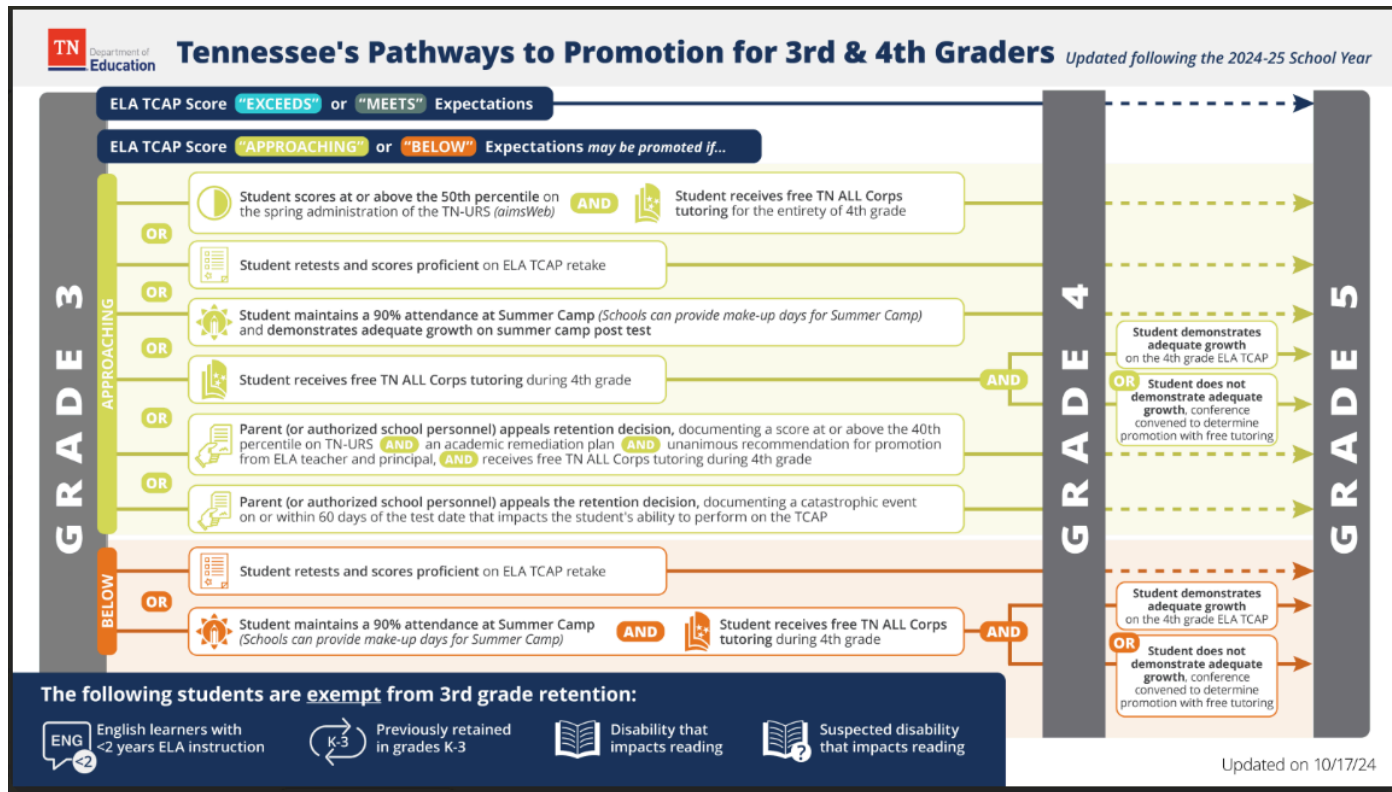
(ii) Ground 2:

(I) The parent or legal guardian of the student identified as at risk for retention in third (3rd ) grade pursuant to paragraph (7)(a), or the school personnel authorized to file an appeal on behalf of the parent or legal guardian, documents that a catastrophic situation occurred on the third (3rd) grade ELA TCAP test date or within sixty (60) calendar days leading up to the third (3rd ) grade ELA TCAP test administration (and any makeup opportunities) that impacted the student and impeded the student's ability to demonstrate the student's current level of knowledge on the test. Examples of a catastrophic situation include, but are not limited to, a death in the immediate family, loss of a family home, or significant medical diagnosis.

5. If the Commissioner overturns the identification of a student as at risk for retention in third (3rd) grade pursuant to a successful Ground 1 appeal under this subparagraph (f), the student may enroll in summer programming opportunities provided by the student's LEA or public charter school if the LEA or public charter school determines sufficient space is available.

6. If the Commissioner overturns the identification of a student as at risk for retention in third (3rd ) grade pursuant to a successful Ground 2 appeal under this subparagraph (f), the student may enroll in summer programming and/or tutoring opportunities provided by the student's LEA or public charter school, if the LEA or public charter school determines sufficient space is available.

For further information, please visit the following website:  
<https://www.tn.gov/education/learning-acceleration.html>



## **Use of Telephone**

If a student is sick, he or she may, with the permission and note of the Homeroom teacher, report to the office. If the office personnel feel it necessary, then the student will be allowed to use the telephone to call his or her parents. Teachers will be called to the telephone during school hours for emergencies only. Students will not be called to the telephone. You may leave a message with the secretary.

## **Use of Water Bottles**

We encourage students to make wise food and beverage choices in order to develop and maintain lifelong healthy eating habits. Students are allowed to bring a water bottle from home. To ensure a safe and distraction-free environment, DWS requests that these water bottles meet the following guidelines: must be able to fit in a lunch box or the side pocket of a backpack, does not have an open straw/top, and utilizes a screw-type lid that remains closed and will not spill when turned upside down. Additionally, water bottles must remain in a student's backpack while traveling through the building and will only be allowed to be taken to lunch if it is inside a lunchbox. This policy helps maintain classroom and cafeteria cleanliness, prevents spills, minimizes classroom disruptions, and facilitates a safe learning environment.

No energy drinks, coffee, etc., are permitted.

## **Weapons**

State law prohibits any type of weapon on school grounds or property. The maximum penalty for violation of this law is up to five years imprisonment and a \$2,500.00 fine. Law enforcement officers will be notified when this law is violated.

## **Withdrawals**

In order to withdraw from DeKalb West in good standing, it will be necessary to complete the following...

1. Bring a written statement from parents stating the date of withdrawal.
2. Report to the office to pick up a withdrawal form.
3. Report to the librarian before going to homeroom in order that your library record may be cleared during the day.
4. Your textbooks are to be returned to your teachers.
5. Report to principal for final clearance.

## **Zero Tolerance 49-6-3401**

In order to ensure a safe and secure learning environment, the following offenses will not be tolerated:

### **1. Firearms (as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 921)**

In accordance with state law, any student who brings or possesses a firearm on school property shall be expelled for a period not less than one (1) calendar year. The director of schools shall have the authority to modify this expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis.

### **2. Drugs (as defined in §§ 39-17-402 - 39-17-415, § 39-17-454, § 53-10-101)**

In accordance with state law, any student who unlawfully possesses any drug including any controlled substance or legend drug shall be expelled for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year. The director of schools shall have the authority to modify this expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis.

\*P.C. 354 State Law requires principals to issue a juvenile court citation to students who unlawfully possess tobacco or tobacco products at school.

### **3. Battery (as defined in § 39-13-102 and § 39-13-101)**

In accordance with state law, any student who commits battery upon any teacher, principal, administrator, school resource officer, or any other employee of the school shall be expelled for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year. The director of schools shall have the authority to modify this expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis.

### **4. Threatens mass violence on school property or at a school-related activity pursuant to § 39-16-517.**

#### **Notification**

When it is determined that a student has violated this policy, the principal of the school shall notify the student's parent or guardian and the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system as required by law.

***WE COULD NOT POSSIBLY LIST ALL THE RULES NEEDED TO PROVIDE AN ATMOSPHERE CONDUCIVE TO LEARNING. THEREFORE, IT IS OUR HOPE THAT STUDENTS WILL ALSO USE "COMMON SENSE" AND SOUND JUDGMENT AS THE BASIS FOR THEIR CONDUCT. THIS HANDBOOK IS AS COMPLETE AS POSSIBLE AT THE TIME OF PRINTING. CHANGES MADE AFTER PRINTING WILL BE ADDED DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR AND SHARED WITH FAMILIES THROUGH MULTIPLE COMMUNICATION AVENUES.***

# DeKalb County Schools 2026-2027 CALENDAR

JULY 2026						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

24 Discretionary Day  
 28 Discretionary Day  
 29 System-wide In-service  
 30 Ind. Schools  
 31 Ind. Schools

JANUARY 2027						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

1 Winter Break  
 4 Students return  
 6 Report Cards  
 18 M.L. King Day – No School

AUGUST 2026						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

3 Registration  
 4 Administrative Day (Teachers Only)  
 5 First Day of School

FEBRUARY 2027						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

15 Presidents' Day – No School

SEPTEMBER 2026						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

7 Labor Day – No School

MARCH 2027						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

5 End of 9 weeks  
 11 Report Cards  
 11 P/T Conf. – All Schools  
 26 Good Friday  
 29-31 Spring Break- No School

OCTOBER 2026						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

2 End of 9 weeks  
 8 Report Cards  
 P/T Conf. ALL Schools  
 12-16 Fall Break

APRIL 2027						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

1-2 Spring Break – No School

NOVEMBER 2026						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

23 - 27 Thanksgiving Break

MAY 2027						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

21 Last Day of School  
 Report Cards  
 Administrative Day

DECEMBER 2026						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

18 Abbreviated Day  
 18 End of 9 weeks  
 21-31 Christmas Break

First Half	Second Half
Aug. 20 days Sept. 21 days Oct. 18 days Nov. 15 days Dec. 15 days Total 89 days	Jan. 19 days Feb. 19 days Mar. 17 days Apr. 20 days May 16 days Total 91 days