

2025-2026 WHITWELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK

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Whitwell, TN 37397

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Principal: Ms. Nicole Condra, email: ncondra@westigers.com, phone ext. #3
Assistant Principal: Mrs. Tammy Minter, email: tminter@westigers.com, phone ext. #4
Office: wesoffice@mctns.net

Mission:
Together: We Teach, We Learn, We Love

On behalf of the staff of Whitwell Elementary School, we are happy to welcome you to the 2025-2026 school year! We are looking forward to a productive partnership with you to ensure our children can achieve their highest potential. We recognize that in order to be successful, our children need support from both the home and school. We know a strong partnership with you will make a great difference in your child's education. As partners, we share the responsibility for our children's success and want you to know that we will do our very best to carry out our responsibilities.

DAILY OPERATIONS

School Hours: Our school day runs from 7:25 am - 2:45 pm, with student drop off beginning at 6:50 am. All students should be dropped off at the car rider door at the front of the building. We are not responsible for any student left at school before 6:50 a.m. Students arriving between 6:50 and 7:15 a.m. should go to the cafeteria for breakfast or to the gym. *If your child arrives after 7:15 he/she will be given a "to go" breakfast for them to take to their classroom.* Students arriving after the 7:25 a.m. bell will be counted tardy and must be checked-in at the office by an adult before reporting to the classroom; If you drop your child off after 7:25 a.m. **you will need to walk your child to the door.** The front door will no longer be unlocked for access to the lobby, there is a security camera and bell that will need to be pressed for access to the office.

Early Checkout: If a student must leave school early, an authorized adult must come into the office to sign out the student. The student information form will be checked to ensure the responsible party is allowed to pick-up. If the party is not named, a written note or email from parent/guardian must be presented. No one will be allowed to go to the student's room. Students will be considered an early check out if someone comes inside to get them before 2:25.

Car Rider Procedure

Student safety is the top priority at Whitwell Elementary School. In order to ensure every student is dismissed safely and in a timely manner, the following procedures will be used:

Identification of Students

- When picking up your child(ren), please place the car rider tag on your rearview mirror. Make sure the name is visible for the staff member on duty to see the assigned number.
- Students will ONLY BE RELEASED TO CARS DISPLAYING A WES ISSUED CAR RIDER TAG.
- You may not create your own tag.

Drop-off/Arrival 6:50am-7:25am

- One lane drop off
- Parent/guardian pulls up into the right side car lane, pulling forward to the cone, alongside the curb.
- Students should be ready to get out when the car stops.
- When the Parent/Guardian reaches the designated drop-off area, students can exit the vehicle.
- **Parents should stay in the vehicle in the drop-off circle**, if you need to get out please park in the parking lot.
- Child(ren) should be accessible from the curb side of the car. For safety reasons, we encourage that your child(ren) do(es) not exit from the flagpole side. If a child must exit from the flagpole side, they should walk around the front of the vehicle.
- Once the child(ren) has/have exited, the vehicle should safely pull forward and exit the carpool lane.
- PREK students will drop off in the bus circle starting at 7:50, two lines, pulling up to the mailbox, teachers will assist in getting the student out and have you sign them in.

Pick-Up/Dismissal

- At the designated time, parent/guardian will pull up into the designated areas, **two lines**, pulling forward as much as possible alongside the curb.
- Before entering the carpool lane, Parent/Guardian is asked to please place the car rider tag (issued by WES; cannot create your own) on your rearview window. Make sure the name is visible for the teacher staff member on duty to see.
- Please remain in the car or stand beside your car. For safety reasons, please do not attempt to walk up to pick up your child(ren).
- If you send someone to pick up your child who is missing/forgot the tag but is authorized to pick-up your child(ren), that person will need to show ID to pick up. They may be asked to go to the office.
- If you send someone who does not have the tag AND is not on the list, they will have to go to the office and the school will call you to verify the identity of the person. The call can be avoided by sending a note to the school or emailing the wesoffice@mctns.net before 1:30 pm.

Afternoon Dismissal (times and locations are subject to change at the discretion of the principal)

- **PreK** - back parking lot at 1:45 p.m.
- **Bus dismissal** @ 2:25pm. in the front circle
- **Kindergarten car riders and siblings**- bus circle, two lines, pull up to the end of the sidewalk we will start loading students at 2:25 p.m.
- **1st - 4th grade car riders and siblings** - front circle, two lines, pull around as buses leave, we will start loading at 2:30 p.m.
- **Unique Needs Dismissal** - you will be contacted individually.
- **WMS and/or WHS walkers** - will be released to an adult at 2:40 p.m.
- Front Parking Lot will be used for emergency pick-ups or other needs based on the principal's discretion only.
- We will not be dismissing car riders to the parking lot, you will need to be in the car rider line.
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Dismissal Changes: If a student is to go home in a different way than normal, a note signed by the parent/guardian OR an email sent to wesoffice@mctns.net must be received **by 1:30** on the day of the change. When this request involves bus transportation, the note must be signed by an administrator then given to the bus driver by the student. If these requirements are not met, ALL students are expected to dismiss at their scheduled times.

Short Days: (caused by severe weather, snow, ice, plumbing, electrical problems, etc.) In case of a shortened school day, parents will be notified by announcements on the Remind APP, WES FaceBook Page, and television stations. Sign up for Remind notifications. The Schoolwide Remind Notification are listed below:

Text the following code in the message box to the number 81010

PreK - @824df6

Kindergarten - @gd23ea

1st grade - @gab44f

2nd grade - @ad3f4c6

3rd grade - @ge4hh2

4th grade - @26a6g6

Each student will have a short day section on the registration form out at the beginning of each school year. This form is very important. If anything changes, please make sure the office and classroom teacher are notified. We must have confirmation from an adult before we allow students to leave the building. For everyone's safety, if we do not have confirmation, the student will remain in the building with us.

Emails: Please make sure you neatly write your email address on the Registration Form.

Telephone: There is only one line available for student use at school. This telephone line is a business phone and will not be used to make arrangements to go home with friends. These plans should be made at home. We also do not interrupt the learning environment for parent/teacher phone calls. We are more than happy to take a message and ask the teacher to contact you on his/her planning time. Contacting the teacher by email is a preferred form of contact. All email addresses can be found at www.westigers.com under the STAFF section.

Change of Address, Phone, etc.: The school must have current addresses, phone numbers, and emergency information. Please notify the office if there are changes in your physical OR mailing address, phone numbers, and place of employment, babysitter, guardian, or emergency numbers. Make sure your child's short day form is up-to-date. You **MUST** come into the office or send a handwritten note to make changes on the registration form.

First Aid Emergencies: First aid for minor injuries will be given at school (minor cuts and scrapes will be washed off and a Band-Aid applied, if necessary). In case of serious accidents or sudden illnesses, the parent will be notified. **IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE EMERGENCY NUMBER ON THE STUDENT'S FORM BE UP-TO-DATE.** WE ENCOURAGE PARENTS TO HAVE AT LEAST 5 EMERGENCY NUMBERS LISTED ON THE EMERGENCY FORM.

Illness: Children who run a fever, vomit, experience diarrhea, or have a cold/flu are not ready for a rigorous day of school. They need at least 24 hours rest before returning to school.

Fever Policy: Your child should be kept home from school any time he/she has a fever and should not be sent back to school until he/she has been fever-free for 24 hours without medicine. A fever is considered any temperature over 100.1.

Recess: Kindergarten - 4th grade students are required to receive a 40 minute per day recess break. Most recess will be outdoor but during inclement weather (rain, extreme heat or cold) students may use GoNoodle or other indoor recess. Students will not be expected to go outside if the heat index is above 100°F or if the wind chill is below 35°F.

Emergency Card Information: For safety reasons, students will not be allowed to leave the care of WES with anyone who isn't a custodial or legal guardian unless this person is listed as an emergency contact. This is for the safety of your child.

Custody: Updated and current custody information must be on file in the office. We are not responsible for any custody situations that have not been filed properly. This includes, but is not limited to, divorce decrees with parenting plans, power of attorney, order of protection, etc.

Room Donations and Books: Room donation for each homeroom is \$20. Homeroom donations may be made in \$5 payments or financial arrangements can be made with the bookkeeper. This money is necessary for instructional materials and copy paper, etc. Donations may be paid by cash or check. Marion County furnishes school textbooks. A student is responsible for any books lost or damaged. These textbooks are expensive, so please take care of them.

Holiday Celebrations: As a safety and security precaution all Marion County schools will not be inviting guests to any schoolwide holiday celebrations during school hours; Halloween, Christmas and Valentine's Day will be the three main celebrations. There will be a special snack to celebrate at this time. For the safety of all students, snacks must be store bought, not homemade. A small snack can be sent to celebrate your child's birthday.

Dress Code:

Students should wear clothing that is clean and appropriate for school. Students who come to class dressed inappropriately will be required to change. Offensive slogans, obscene words or graphics on tee shirts and other clothing or accessories will not be allowed. Shirts may be sleeveless but not spaghetti straps. Shorts should be at least fingertip length when standing. All students must wear shoes at all times. To help prevent injuries, ALL STUDENTS MUST WEAR SHOES WITH A BACK OR STRAP. Due to the safety of your children we highly recommend wearing tennis shoes on a daily basis. Students will wear no caps, hats, toboggans, etc. in the building unless special fundraisers or functions allow for them. Refer to Marion County Board Policy 6.310, Dress Code at www.marionschools.org or a copy may be requested through our front office.

Lost and Found: It is important that you label your child's coat, lunch box, etc.

Each year many lost items are turned in to the office. If a child's name is on the item, it can be returned easily. Unclaimed items will be donated to various charities periodically.

Cell Phones/Smart Watches

If a student has a phone or smart watch, it must be turned off and turned into the teacher or office. It should not be taken out at school. Marion County Schools assume no responsibility for any of these items. Refer to Marion County Board Policy, 6.312 *Use of Personal Communication Devices in School* at www.marionschools.org a copy may be requested through our front office.

Water Bottle Policy:

- The container must contain water and water only. No juice, soda, tea, addables, or energy drinks.
- The container must have a closable lid; this will be a screw on lid or a push top. No cups with straws are allowed.
- The student will be responsible to fill the water bottle between classes, we have water bottle filling stations. A student may not leave class to fill a bottle.
- Bottles are not in close proximity to any technology; therefore water bottles will not be allowed in computer labs and the library.
- Water bottles are not to be played with on school grounds. This includes throwing the bottle or pouring the contents of the bottle onto another student or teacher.
- Water bottles should be left in the designated area on the playground/bus circle during recess and/or TGIF. They shall not be thrown, flipped or played with during outside play.
- Students may not share water bottles
- Any failure to follow the policy will result in the student losing the privilege of having water in the classrooms.

Toys:

Toys should be left at home. This includes trading cards, fidgets (unless approved), slime, etc. Students are **not** to buy, sell, or trade items with other students at school.

School-Sponsored Activities:

School-sponsored activities include field trips, athletic contests, academic competitions, home or away social activities, workshops, after-care, tutoring programs, and any other school-related functions held on campus or off the campus. Each student who participates or attends is a representative of WES and Marion County Schools and will conduct himself/herself as such. Students who violate regulations at these activities are subject to disciplinary action as defined in the Student Code of Conduct.

Searches:

Tennessee laws authorize the Principal and his/her designee to conduct searches of students **and any visitor** entering the building for reasonable suspicion of any violation of illegal drugs, weapons, or items not allowed by school rules. This law extends to cover the search of all automobiles driven to school by visitors. All automobiles, lockers, book bags, purses, or items brought onto school grounds are subject to search by school officials, police, or bomb-sniffing dogs at any time. (T.C.A. 40-6-420)

PARENTS/GUARDIANS AS PARTNERS

Every child needs to see the parent/guardian and teacher working together as a team. Please make a special effort to meet your child's teacher and help build a positive working relationship for your child's total education. We need each other's support to ensure your child succeeds in school. At WES, our door is always open. **If you have any questions, concerns, praises or comments please reach out to our teachers and/or administration. If the person you need to speak to is not immediately available, he or she will make every effort to get back to you within 24 hours.**

Our coordinators are Mrs. Jessica Holloway, email jholloway@westigers.com and Mrs. Grace Pickett Grayson, email gpickett@westigers.com. Please refer to our Family/Community Engagement Plan and Partnership Promise posted on our website, www.westigers.com for details.

Parent-Teacher Conferences: We have regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences. The tentative dates this year are October 23 and January 15. If you need a conference with your child's teacher at another time, please call, email, or send a note to make an appointment. Each teacher has an email address that he or she should provide, which can also be found on the school staff section of our website at www.westigers.com

Parent-Teacher Communication: If you need to talk with your child's teacher, make an appointment at a time convenient for both of you so instruction time is not lost. Teachers are not available to conferences anytime they are supervising students. We encourage notes from home or emails to inform the teacher of any immediate concerns or problems, such as sickness, death in the family, problems with schoolwork, changes in a child's normal routine, etc. When needed, your child's teacher will contact you as soon as possible.

Volunteers: If you would like to volunteer your time at our school, please let us know.

Visitors: During school hours, (6:50a.m.-2:45p.m.) all visitors will report to the school office when entering the school. Visitors must be listed as an authorized visitor on the registration form and present a valid state issued photo id. Visitor passes shall be issued for all persons other than students and employees of the school. This is to ensure the safety of every child. The principal or designee can deny or delay entry into the building in order to preserve instructional time. Due to safety concerns and available space, students will not be permitted to have visitors for lunch.

CURRICULUM

In Marion County Schools, we use high-quality researched based curriculum materials. Teachers use differentiated instruction and a variety of resources to meet the individual learning needs of students.

English Language Arts:

PK - Connect 4 Learning

K-3 - CKLA Skills and Knowledge

4 - EL

Math:

K-4 - Savvas

Textbooks and Library Books: Students are responsible for any textbooks lost or damaged. This includes library books. Tennessee law authorizes schools to withhold grade cards and transcripts if students have outstanding balances. This includes payments, lost textbooks, library books, lunch money, picture money, fundraisers, etc.

Grade Cards: Grade Cards are issued at the end of each nine weeks. These dates are listed in the school calendar.

WES Grading Scale for 3rd-4th grades beginning 2025-2026

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	Below 60

WES Grading Scale for K-2nd grades:

3	Meets
2	Approaching Grade Level
1	Below Grade Level

Principal's List/Honor Roll: Students in the 3rd and 4th grades are eligible for Principal's List/Honor Roll. These lists will be printed in the local newspaper and posted at www.westigers.com after each grading period. The requirements are as follows:

Principal's List: 90 - 100 - Every subject must be an A.

A/B Honor Roll: 80 and above - Every subject must be an A or B.

Homework Policy: In order for your child to be successful in school, we need to work together to ensure they are prepared.

- If homework is given, it will be on Monday for the week and be due on Friday of that week.
- Homework will be based on skills and/or standards they are working on.
- PreK - 4th grade students should read or be read to, for 20 minutes each night.
- Studying for tests is expected.

Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²)

(State Law 0520-01-10) Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²) recognizes the importance and power of high-quality, rigorous, on-grade-level instruction for all students through Tier I and also provides structured support that is tailored to meet students' individual needs through Tier II and III interventions. Our mission is to ensure that all students receive the instruction and focused time necessary to be successful in and beyond K-12. At Whitwell Elementary, all students will take three benchmark tests to help place them into academically leveled Tiers based on

their test scores. Each student will receive individualized instruction and intervention consistent with those deficits identified in the benchmark testing.

<https://www.tn.gov/education/educator-resources/rti2-manual-redirect.html>

CAFETERIA POLICY

Breakfast Program: Our cafeteria serves a nutritious breakfast each morning. Breakfast is free for all students. A la carte items can be purchased if a student wants more. Students are not permitted to have visitors at breakfast.

Lunch Program: Lunch is also free for all students. A la carte items can be purchased if students want more. Only school lunches and sack lunches from home may be eaten in the cafeteria. In order to stay in compliance with the National School Lunch Program, students may not have food labeled from a restaurant. Carbonated beverages, and energy drinks for students are prohibited and will be taken up. Due to safety concerns and available space, students will not be permitted to have visitors for lunch.

SCHOOL COUNSELOR

6.400

The school counselor, Sharon Billingsley, provides periodic classroom instruction, as well as, small group and individual counseling. Students benefit by having a professionally trained counselor to assist with academic, emotional, social problems, etc. Please sign the release for the counseling form located in the beginning of the year packet.

Project Basic

Project B.A.S.I.C. is a school based service that helps children improve self-esteem, problem solving skills, and dealing with feelings through Volunteer Behavioral Health Care System.

MEDICINES AT SCHOOL

6.405

ALL MEDICINES MUST BE CHECKED IN WITH THE SCHOOL NURSE!

No school official or teacher will routinely dispense medication to students except in unique situations in which the child's health is dependent upon medical aid. If under exceptional circumstances a child is required to take oral medication during school hours, and the parent cannot be at school to administer the medication, only the Principal or the Principal's designee will administer the medication in compliance with the following regulations:

Written instructions signed by the parent will be required and included:

- 1. Child's name.**
- 2. Name of medication.**
- 3. Name of physician and signature.**
- 4. Time to be administered.**
- 5. Dosage and directions for administration.**
- 6. Possible side effects, if known.**
- 7. Termination date for administering the medication.**

The medication must be delivered to the main office, in person, by the parent or guardian of the student unless the medication must be retained by the student for immediate administration (i.e. student with asthma). The medication must be brought to school in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician.

Unless these requirements can be met, medication will not be administered at school. The administrator/designee will:

1. Inform appropriate school personnel of the medication being administered.

2. Keep an accurate record of the administration of medication.
3. Keep all medication in a locked cabinet except medication retained by a student per physician's order.
4. Return unused prescriptions to the parent or guardian only.

The parent or guardian is responsible for informing the designated official of any change in the student's health or change in medication. Forms must be completed and returned to the main office before medication can be administered.

ATTENDANCE: PLEASE READ COMPLETELY!

Marion County Board of Education Attendance Policy 6.200

Attendance is a key factor in student achievement and therefore, students are expected to be present each day school is in session. Continued unexcused tardiness and /or skipping school classes are considered a violation of compulsory attendance. Unexcused tardiness includes any late arrival when the student fails to bring an acceptable note upon arriving. Excused and unexcused absences are the only two (2) types of excuses recognized by the Marion County School System. Students and parents must accept full responsibility for regular school attendance. It is the student's responsibility to monitor his/her unexcused absences and tardiness. Students not in attendance during at least 50% (3:50 hours) of the school day are not allowed to participate in afterschool programs. The attendance supervisor shall oversee the entire attendance program which shall include: I

1. All accounting and reporting procedures and their dissemination;
2. Alternative program options for students who severely fail to meet minimum attendance requirements;
3. Ensuring that all school age children attend school;
4. Providing documentation of enrollment status upon request for students applying for new or reinstatement of driver's permit or license; and
5. Notifying the Department of Safety whenever a student with a driver's permit or license withdraws from school.

Student attendance records shall be given the same level of confidentiality as other student records. Only authorized school officials with legitimate educational purposes may have access to student information without the consent of the student or parent/guardian.

GRADES K-12 The building principal, in determining excused and unexcused absences, may use some discretion. The school office will need approved excused notes turned in and filed to aid the attendance supervisor in documenting attendance. All excuses must be turned in within 3 days of the student returning to school. For the purpose of record keeping, late check-ins and early check-outs are considered as tardies. Five (5) tardies will accumulate into one (1) day absent. Six (6) parent discretionary days will be allowed per one hundred eighty (180) days. Once these parent discretionary days are exhausted, absences due to illness shall require a doctor's or dentist's excuse. These parent discretionary days are accepted at the principal's discretion. The following shall be accepted by any certified employee of the Marion County School System as an excuse for absences, tardiness and early dismissal.

Excused absences shall include.

1. Medical reason: a. Only six (6) parent discretionary days, whether consecutive or not, can be excused in the one hundred eighty day (180) school year. b. All absences due to illness must be accompanied by a medical note.
2. Illness of immediate family members; a. An immediate family member refers to a person's parent(s)/guardian(s) or sibling. (Principal's Discretion)
3. Death in the immediate family: absences not to exceed three days: (parent, guardian, step-parent, brother, sister, grandparent, aunt, uncle, or any other family member that resides in the student's house. Principal's discretion is allowed in extreme circumstances.
4. Legal, (court order, attorney, subpoena, summons, truancy board, etc.)
5. A one day excused absence shall be granted for students whose parent or guardian is leaving for active military duty or returning from active military duty. Documentation must be provided to student's school
6. School Bus Transportation Issue (Must be verified with the Director of Transportation)
7. Religious observances (Not to exceed three (3) total days)
8. School-sponsored activities or school endorsed activities College Visits, Field trips

9. Other excuses for "good cause" shall be granted, provided prior approval is obtained from the principal. Anticipated absences shall be excused in advances by the building principal. Forms will be available from the principal's office.
10. For grades nine through twelve (9-12) where eighteen weeks constitutes one full credit, more than three (3) total unexcused absences per eighteen (18) week session shall constitute failure for the session. Where thirty-six (36) weeks constitutes one full credit, more than three (3) total unexcused absences per 18- week session shall constitute failure of the session in courses.
11. The parent shall notify the school of the absence of the child before 8:30 AM each day the student will be absent.
12. School sponsored fishing team events, which includes pre-fishing days for TSSAA sponsored tournaments. (Not to exceed three (3) total days) Absences caused by fishing in tournaments that are not sponsored by the TSSAA will not be excused.

The first six absences a student acquires, when an acceptable excuse note is not turned into the office within three (3) days, will automatically be counted as excused and will eliminate one of their parent discretionary days.

1. A written excuse from a doctor, dentist, or dentist, or other medical professional must have the following: the date and time of the appointment must be specified. **Only dates specified on the note will be excused as medical.** Doctor's excuses from a doctor's office will only be accepted if the diagnosis and treatment is within the area of the doctor's certification. Students who have office visits not involving an illness (ex; tests, physicals, visits to the dentist, or health department) are expected to return to school and will be excused for reasonable travel time. All notes from doctors/clinic visits are subject to be checked and confirmed by the attendance supervisor or school. Any fraudulent/forged notes will be turned over to the doctor's office/clinic and local law enforcement.
2. If a student is sent home from school by an administrator or nurse for illness, that day will be counted as an excused early dismissal. If the child is absent the next day because of the illness, the school will excuse this day as well. Any absences after these 2 days will require a doctor's note or the parent will need to use a parent discretionary day.

The Principal or their designee shall be responsible for ensuring that:

1. Attendance is checked and reported daily for each class;
2. Daily absentee sheets contain sign in/sign out sheets and indicate students present or absent for the majority of the day;
3. All student absences are verified;
4. Written excuses are submitted for absences are verified;
5. System -wide procedures for accounting and reporting are followed.

Truancy

General Students shall be present at least fifty (50) percent of the scheduled school day in order to be counted present. Students receiving exception Education services may attend part-time days, alternating days, or for a specific amount of time as indicated in their Individualized Education Plan.⁸ If a student is required to participate in a remedial instruction program outside of the regular school day where there is no cost to the parent(s) and the school provides transportation, unexcused absences from these programs shall be reported in the same manner.⁹ Students who are absent five (5) days without adequate excuse shall be reported to the Director of School/designee who will, in turn, provide written notice to the parent(s)/ guardian(s) of the student's absences. The Director of Schools /designee shall also comply with state law regarding the reporting of truant students to the proper authorities. If the student accumulates a total of five (5) unexcused absences, then he/she is subject to referral to juvenile court.^{1°} The Director of Schools/designee shall develop appropriate administrative procedures to implement this policy.

Progressive Truancy Intervention Plan

**** If doctors, dentists, or other medical professional notes appear to be excessive ten (10) days, this will result in

referral of the student to the Truancy Review Board for further review. Because there are scheduled breaks throughout the year, i.e. fall break, Thanksgiving break, Christmas break, and spring break. Family vacations and skip days will not be excused.

Progressive Truancy Intervention Plan

Marion County Schools

Attendance Intervention Tiers

Tier 1: 3 unexcused absences

- Implement proactive attendance procedures that identify students with a chronic attendance issue. (letters, phone calls, home visits, meetings, conference).
- Handbooks will provide parent/guardian/students written notice of the law at the beginning of each school year.
- Monitor attendance data.
- Establish a positive and engaging school culture.
- Letters are to be sent home after 3 days of unexcused absence
- Schedule a conference with parents/students.
- Develop and sign a contract stating the specific expectations and additional penalties, if warranted.
- Student Progress will be monitored on a regular basis and additional communication with the home (calls, meetings, home visits) will be scheduled as needed.

Tier 2: 5 unexcused absences

- Conduct an individual attendance assessment to identify the barriers impacting attendance.
- Develop an intervention plan to address the barriers.
- Refer the student to school based services which may include counselor, nurse or special education. (if needed)
- Utilize Centerstone Service within the school setting where available.
- Letter will be sent home at 5 days of unexcused absences.
- Referral made to Truancy Board.
- Possible Home Visits to check-on student welfare

Tier 3: 5+ Days Unexcused (also excused)

- Letter will be sent home at 15 days of total absences.
- Review the barriers identified in the intervention plan.
- Current intervention plan and contract submitted to the Office of Pupil Services.
- Petition filed with Juvenile Court.
- Coordinate with a probation officer or service agency assigned by the court.
- Make additional recommendations to parent(s) based on the outcome of judicial intervention.
- Make a referral to the Department of Children's Service, if attendance is impacting academic growth at the level of educational neglect.
- Refer the student to district based services which may include Family Resource Centers, Coordinated School Health, School Psychologist.

**** If doctors, dentists, or other medical professional notes appear to be excessive ten (10) days, this will result in referral of the student to the Truancy Review Board for further review. Because there are scheduled breaks throughout the year, i.e. fall break, Thanksgiving break, Christmas break, and spring break. Family vacations and skip days will not be excused. 11 TCA 49-6-3007; TCA49-6-3009; Public Acts of 2017; Chapter No.379

Military Service of Parent/Guardian

School Principals shall provide students with a one-day excused absence prior to the deployment of and a one day excused absence upon the return of the parent or custodian serving active military service. Principals shall also allow up to ten (10) excused cumulative absences per year for students to visit a parent/guardian during a deployment cycle. The student shall provide documentation to the school as proof of his /her parent's/guardian's deployment. Students shall be permitted to make up schoolwork missed during these absences.

Make-up Work

The length of time for completion of make-up work shall be two (2) days per day missed.

Attendance Hearings

Students with excessive (more than 5) unexcused absences or those in danger of credit/promotion denial shall have the opportunity to appeal to an attendance hearing committee appointed by the Director of Attendance and Principal. If the student chooses to appeal, the student or his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be provided written or actual notice of the appeal hearing and shall be given the opportunity to address the committee. The committee will conduct a hearing to determine if any extenuating circumstances exist or to determine if the student has met the requirements that would allow him/her to pass the course or be promoted. Upon notification of the attendance committee decision, the principal shall send written notification to the Director of Schools/designee and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student of any action taken regarding the excessive unexcused absences. The notification shall advise parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to appeal such action within two (2) school days to the Director of Schools/designee.

The appeal shall be heard no later than ten (10) school days after the request for appeal is received.

Within five (5) school days of the Director of Schools/designee rendering a decision, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) may request a hearing by the board, and the board shall review the record. Following the review, the board may affirm or overturn the decision of the Director of Schools/designee. The action of the board shall be final.

*** The Director of Schools /designee shall ensure that this policy is posted in each school building and disseminated to all students, parent(s)/guardian(s), teachers, and administrative staff. TCA 49-6-3017(c) TRR/MS 0520-01-02-17 Legal References: Cross References: 1. TRR/MS 0520-1-3-.08(1)(a) Extracurricular Activities 4.300 2. TRR/MS 0520-1-3-.03(15); TCA 49-6-2904 Reporting Student Progress 4.601 3. TCA 49-2-203(b)(7) Promotion and Retention 4.603 4. TCA 49-6-3006 Recognition of Religious Beliefs 4.803 5. TCA 49-6-3002 Student Records 6.600 6. TCA 49-6-3007; 3008 7. TCA 49-6-3009; 3010 8. TRR/MS 0520-1-3-.06(2)

Note: pre-assigned papers, projects, and other such assignments are not classified as make-up work.

IMPORTANT: Only notifying your child's teacher with a text message, email, Remind 101, or other means is not considered a written excuse. We must have the excuse in the office via written note, email to wesoffice@mctns.net, or fax to 423-658-0306.

Marion County Board of Education Promotion and Retention Policy

4.603

All students (including those enrolled in dual enrollment classes) will normally progress annually in sequential order from grade to grade with promotion being recorded at the end of each school year with the presentation of final report cards. The professional staff will place students at the grade level best suited to them academically, socially and emotionally. Retention may be made when, in the judgment of the teacher, such retention is in the best interest of the students. Decisions to retain are subject to review and approval of the principal after consultation with the teacher.

In order to prevent a student from being retained, students with problems shall be identified as early as possible in the school year and a retention identifier checklist completed. Parents/Guardians shall be notified when problems are identified and shall be informed within fifteen (15) days of said checklist being completed.

An Individualized Promotion Plan (IPP) shall be created for each student when retention is being considered. A copy of this document shall be included in the student's permanent record file, along with any additional documentation deemed necessary by **February 1st**.

The following factors shall be considered in making a decision on promotion and retention:

1. Mastery of essential competencies. Students shall have mastered essential skills sufficiently to ensure a likelihood of success at the next grade level.
2. Special procedures for special students. Students who have been identified as having special problems, including high risk students and others with special needs, shall be given special consideration. Placement of students with IEPs shall be determined by the IEP-Team. Retention of English learner (EL) students shall not be based solely upon level of English language proficiency (Section I, Part G, Guidelines to Satisfy Legal Requirements of Lau v. Nichols). Retention policies for EL students should not be based on one specific piece of data alone or any sole criterion.
3. Flexible placement. Use of conditional promotion, remedial summer programs, assignment to transitional classes, and other approaches to meeting the needs of students shall be given consideration.
4. Attendance. Attendance shall become a relevant factor only when excessive absenteeism becomes an educational problem.
5. Conduct. Retention shall not be used as a disciplinary measure.
6. Previous retention. Except under unusual circumstances, students shall not be retained more than once in the same grade.
7. Grade level. Retention shall be considered more appropriate in grades K-3.
8. Remediation/Intervention. Opportunities that were offered did not demonstrate sufficient gains to be successful to the next grade level.
9. Students do not demonstrate social or emotional maturity to be successful at the next grade level.

Once the decision to retain has been made, no later than February 1st an Individualized Promotional Plan (IPP) will be established, and a final Academic Retention Plan (ARP) will be completed prior to the end of the current school year where a retention board will make a final decision:

1. A report of each student retained shall be made to the director of schools.
2. A copy of the IPP should be provided to the parents/guardians within ten (10) days of creation.
3. Documentation verifying student deficiencies shall be placed in the student's record;
4. If an ARP provides for summer remediation, the retention team will meet on or by July 1, to determine if retention, a placement or promotion will occur, and parents will be informed. If the ARP does not provide for summer remediation, the retention team will notify the parent of their decision by the end of the current school year.
5. The progress of a retained student shall be closely monitored during the school year of retention.
6. The Director of Schools shall receive from each school and keep an annual record of each student who is retained. Any student may repeat any course as long as space is available. The first grade earned in the course shall be the grade of record unless the student is repeating the course has been retained. (This does not supersede the curriculum requirements for math.)

3rd grade Promotion/Retention State Law

The Tennessee General Assembly passed two key pieces of legislation during the 1st Extraordinary Session of the 112th General Assembly—the Tennessee Literacy Success Act and the Tennessee Learning Loss Remediation and Student Acceleration Act. As part of this legislation, the General Assembly updated the state's third grade promotion law, T.C.A. § 49-6-3115, to ensure students receive additional support before promotion to fourth grade. In 2023, the Tennessee General Assembly made additional updates to T.C.A. § 49-6-3115 that have implications for promotion and retention for students in kindergarten through grade four.

More information can be found at [www/tn.gov/education/learning-acceleration.html](http://www.tn.gov/education/learning-acceleration.html)

MARION COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

6.313

Any principal, principal-teacher or assistant principal (herein called principal) may suspend/expel any student from attendance at school or any school-related activity on or off campus or from attendance at a specific class or classes, or from riding a school bus, without suspending such student from attendance at school (in-school suspension), for good and sufficient reasons.¹ Student offenses are in four categories as prescribed in Board policy. Most of these are listed below. Administrators responsible for discipline will classify any offense not listed below unless directed by the

Board.

CATEGORY I

Offenses to be administered by the school that may result in detention, loss of privilege, demerits, corporal punishment or suspension due to severity of incident.

1. Refusing to do assigned work
2. Tardiness (class or school)
3. Refusing to participate in required school activities (wellness activities, reading, instruction, etc.)
4. Minor violations of school or classroom rules
5. Conduct which disrupts the peace or good order of the school or the learning environment (impudence, profanity, disorderly conduct, and no regard for authority, etc.)
6. Inappropriate dress or appearance considered disruptive to the school.
7. Unauthorized use of copying machines, computers, phones, or printers.
8. Loitering (no student should remain at school beyond last bus departure)
9. Inappropriate public display of affection
10. Open food or drink in school without permission

CATEGORY II offenses that may result in suspension or referral outside the school. *** If any student is placed in TSS or is in OSS he/she will not be allowed to participate in any school function including field trips, athletic practices or contests.

First Time Category II Offense: 5 days suspension

Second Time Category II Offense: 10 days suspension

Third Time Category II Offense: Referral to Board of Education for expulsion

1. Fighting (both parties, unless one was attacked for no apparent reason)
2. Use of foul or abusive language
3. Disrespect to employee
4. Harassment
5. Bullying, threatening, hazing or intimidating behavior

TENNESSEE LAW CONCERNING SUSPENSION

6.316

The Administration of Marion County Schools is authorized to carry out disciplinary and related procedures necessary for successful operation of the school under Tennessee law concerning suspension and disciplinary action. Tennessee law allows Principals to suspend students for up to ten (10) days for **good and sufficient reason** upon satisfaction of due process. All Category III offenses can result in long-term suspension by the Principal or expulsion by the Marion County Board of Education.

MARION COUNTY SCHOOLS BUS RULES

6.308

Bus Rules: Rule 6, Rules and Regulations, formulated by the State Board of Education:

"A pupil shall become ineligible for public transportation when his/her behavior is such as to cause dissension on a school bus or when he/she disobeys state or local rules and regulations pertaining to pupil transportation."

1. Be on time at the designated school bus stop. Be at the bus stop prior to the bus arriving. Help keep the bus on schedule.
2. Do not stand or play in the roadway while waiting for the bus.
3. Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before attempting to enter or leave the bus.
4. Do not, at any time, extend your arm, head, or any part of the body out of the bus window.
5. Do not leave your seat or move about while the bus is in motion.
6. No loud talking or yelling that could divert the driver's attention from operating the bus. Be absolutely quiet when approaching or crossing railroad tracks or traveling up and down a mountain.
7. **No profane or immoral language, smoking or use of tobacco, drugs, or intoxicating beverages in any form, or any improper conduct will be tolerated.**
8. **Keep books, packages, coats, and all other objects out of the aisles. Do not, at any time, throw any object on the bus or throw anything out of the bus window.**

9. Do not in any way damage seats or anything inside of the bus. Person(s) responsible for damage of any kind to the bus will be made to pay the cost of repairs, and bus privileges will be denied.

10. Pupils must obey the driver at all times, and the bus driver has the authority to assign seats to pupils.

11. Pupils must not cross the road in back of the bus.

Always cross in front of the bus.

12. In case of a road emergency, remain in the bus until the driver gives instructions.

13. No eating or drinking permitted while on the bus. No chewing gum is allowed.

14. Fighting is a major offense which will result in immediate removal from the bus.

15. Any other actions that disrupt the normal procedures of bus transportation could result in disciplinary actions.

16. Cell phones are not to be out or used at any time, unless the driver has granted permission for an emergency. Students will follow the current cell phone policy.

17. Students placed in Alternative School are denied bus privileges, unless the Transportation Supervisor gives approval for modified service.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Minor Offenses

1st Time: Bus driver talks to child about misbehavior

2nd Time: Bus driver sends Bus Conduct Report home with student to the parent(s) guardian(s), and a copy to Central Office.

3rd Time: The bus driver will complete the bus conduct report and the principal suspends students from the bus for 5 days.

4th Time: The bus driver will complete the bus conduct report, and the Principal suspends the student from the bus for ten (10) days.

5th Time: The bus driver will complete the bus conduct report and the principal suspends students from the bus until parent/guardian request a DHA hearing with the Marion County Schools Transportation Office telephone number (423-942-0945 Ext: 110). DHA members will reconsider future bus privileges. The Director of Transportation will not be a voting member of the DHA committee or chair the meeting but will be there to support drivers and the contractors.

Major Offenses

Rules #7, 8, 9, 14, and 15 (with 15 being at the discretion of the principal)

1st Time: The bus driver will complete the bus conduct report and the principal suspends students from the bus for 5 days.

2nd Time: The bus driver will complete the bus conduct report and the principal suspends students from the bus for ten (10) days.

3rd Time: The bus driver will complete the bus conduct report and the principal will suspend the student until the Parent(s)/guardian requests a DHA hearing with the Marion County Schools Transportation Office number (423-942-0945 Ext: 110). DHA members will consider future bus privileges. The Director of Transportation will not be a voting member of the DHA meeting or chair the meeting but will be present to support the driver and the contractors.

Major Offenses: Once the discipline report is signed by the principal, students will be off the bus and have to contact parent/guardian for transportation home at the end of the School day.

*** Any student denied bus privileges will be denied privileges on all other buses.**

CUSTODY/PARENTAL ACCESS

6.209

The Board presumes that the person who enrolls a student in school is the student's custodial parent. Unless a Tennessee court specifies otherwise, the custodial parent shall be the one whom the school district holds responsible for the education and welfare of that child.

Parents or guardians shall have the right to receive information contained in school records concerning their minor child. The Board, unless informed otherwise, assumes there are no restrictions regarding the non-custodial parent's

right; the custodial parent shall be requested to submit a certified copy of the court order, which curtails these specific rights.

Unless there are specific court-imposed restrictions, the non-custodial parent, upon request, shall be given access to all of the student's educational records including but not limited to the student's cumulative file and the student's education file, if applicable.

No principal or teacher shall permit a change in the physical custody of a child at school unless:

1. The person seeking custody of the child presents the school official with a certified copy of a valid court order from a Tennessee court designating the person who has custody of the child.
2. The person seeking custody gives the school reasonable advance notice of his/her intent to take custody of the student at school.

The individual who has official custody of a child controls access of all the other individuals to the child at school unless a court order specifies otherwise. A copy of all court orders, such as a restraining order, which affects access to a child, shall be on file at the school.

Visitors' Code of Conduct Policy

1.501

Except at school programs, athletic events, open house and similar public events, all visitors must report to the school office when entering any Marion County Department of Education (MCDOE) school and sign a logbook. Passes shall be issued to all persons other than students and employees of MCDOE after submitting approved forms of identification and receiving approval from the school's security monitoring service. The Principal or his/her designee shall exercise discretion in determining the areas of the school that persons are permitted to visit.

To maintain the conditions and atmosphere suitable for learning, no other person shall enter onto the grounds or into the school buildings during the hours of student instruction except students assigned to that school, MCDOE staff members parents of students assigned to the school, and other persons approved by the principal.

Individuals who come onto school premises are expected to behave respectfully and lawfully. Specifically, actions of school visitors that are prohibited include, but are not limited to:

- Cursing and using obscenities;
- Disrupting or threatening to disrupt school operations;
- Acting in an unsafe manner that could threaten the health or safety of others;
- Verbal or written statements or gestures indicating intent to harm an individual or property; and
- Physical attacks intended to harm an individual or damage property.

Any person improperly on the premises of a school or District-owned or leased facility or who violates this Visitors' Code of Conduct shall depart at the request of the school Principal or his/her designee or the Superintendent or his/her designee.

The Principal or his/her designee or the Superintendent or his/her designee shall contact law enforcement officials when he/she believes the situation warrants such measures.

NOTICE*

(1) This Visitors' Code of Conduct shall be posted on the MCDOE website.

(2) This Visitors' Code of Conduct shall be posted at each school entrance along with the telephone number of a member of the school's administration who can answer questions regarding this Visitors' Code of Conduct.

(3) Upon initial enrollment each parent/guardian of students shall be provided with a printed copy of this Visitors' Code of Conduct with the telephone number of the student school administrator who can answer questions regarding this Visitors' Code of Conduct. Each parent/guardian shall sign the Code of

Conduct, acknowledging that the parent/guardian has read and understands it.

INTERNET USE POLICY

The network is provided for students and teachers to conduct research and communicate with others. Independent access to network services is provided to students and teachers who act in a considerate and responsible manner. Access is a privilege, not a right. Access entails responsibility. Violations may result in a loss of access, as well as other disciplinary or legal action. Parent consent forms will be sent home annually.

VIOLENT CRIME POLICY

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, or the attempt to commit one of these offenses as defined under TCA 39-12-101, shall be provided an opportunity to transfer to another grade-level appropriate school within the district. Additional information regarding this option may be obtained by contacting the Marion County Board of Education at 942-3434 (or use your school's name and number).

TRANSFER OPTION FOR STUDENTS VICTIMIZED BY VIOLENT CRIME AT SCHOOL

There are no Unsafe schools in Marion County, but, if a school is considered unsafe, parents or guardians of all students attending the school must be notified that the school has been designated by the Tennessee Department of Education as a persistently dangerous school and provide for all students to be given safe school choice as provided for under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

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 39-12-101, shall be provided an opportunity to transfer to another grade-level appropriate school within the district.

Parents have the right to request (in writing) their child's name, address, and telephone number not be released to a military recruiter without the parent's prior written permission. (Usually, this information is not requested by the military recruiter until high school.)

Trauma-Informed School: Our school is one in which all students feel safe, welcomed, and supported and where addressing trauma's impact on learning on a school-wide basis is at the center of its educational mission. We focus on building relationships with students, to support their emotional and social learning.

Trauma Informed Practices:

- Morning Greetings
- Morning Meeting, we call it Tiger Time.
- Calming Corners, supports self regulation
- Brain Breaks
- De-escalation Strategies
- Recess
- Morning Check-In System
- Social - Emotional Learning with Mrs. Billingsley
- Mindfulness with Ms. Kristi Bumpus