Washington-Wilkes Elementary Mission Statement:

At Washington-Wilkes Elementary School, we will maintain high expectations, provide quality instruction, explore academically challenging experiences, and encourage self-directed learning while providing a safe, supportive environment to promote life-long learning and develop respectful, productive, and responsible members of society.

Washington-Wilkes Elementary Belief Statements:

1. We believe that a safe, orderly, academic, and professional environment promotes learning.
2. We believe all children can learn when a variety of effective instructional strategies are employed, and adequate time is provided.
3. We believe the classroom climate should be highly effective yet academically challenging.
4. We believe that effective learners are disciplined learners.
5. We believe parental support and community involvement are essential for optimal learning.
6. We believe that learning is a lifelong process that begins in the home.

Washington-Wilkes Elementary School Motto

We are a TEAM at WWES, because **T**ogether **E**veryone **A**chieves **M**ore!
At WWES, we will:

Accept responsibility for our actions and our learning,
Challenge ourselves each day to do our best,
Have high expectations for everyone,
Involve home, school and community in our learning,
Engage in active learning and teaching in our classrooms,
Value, appreciate, and celebrate each other's differences,
Expect quality work from everyone – everyday, every time.

Washington Wilkes Elementary Vision Statement:

*"We are a **TEAM**, and we will **ACHIEVE** our goals by putting students first and working together for their success."*

General Information

School Hours

School Opens 7:30
School Day Begins 7:50
Students are Tardy 7:50 *Students arriving after 7**:50** must be signed in and are marked tardy.
Students are Dismissed 3:05 *Students leaving before **3:05** must be signed out in the office.

* Students who arrive after 11:30 will be counted absent for the school day.
* Students who leave before 11:30 will be counted absent for the school day.

School Calendar

Wilkes County Schools
System Calendar
2026 - 2027

Preplanning	Monday-Thursday	Jul 27-30
First Day of School	Friday	Jul 31
Labor Day Holiday	Monday	September 7
Early Release Day	Wednesday	October 7
Fall Break	Thursday-Tuesday	October 8-13
In-service Day	Wednesday	October 14
Thanksgiving Holidays	Monday-Friday	November 23-27
Early Release Day	Friday	December 18
End of Semester	Friday	December 18
Winter Break	Monday-Friday	Dec 21 -Jan 1
In-Service Day	Monday	January 4
Students Return	Tuesday	January 5
MLK Holiday	Monday	January 18
Early Release Day	Friday	February 12
President's Day Holiday	Monday	February 15
In-service Day	Tuesday	February 16
In-Service Day	Monday	March 15
Spring Break	Monday-Friday	April 5-9
Early Release Day	Friday	May 21
Last Day of School/Graduation	Friday	May 21
Post Planning	Monday-Tuesday	May 24-25
Memorial Day	Monday	May 31

Early Release Days are for students to leave at noon. This will provide time for Parent Conferences, Grading, Student Records, etc.

Instruction

****Instruction takes place from 7:50 until 3:05 each day. Please have your child at school on time and do not pick them up early unless they have a scheduled appointment.**

Attendance

School is in session for 180 days. Punctual and regular attendance is important and expected. Regular attendance in school is the joint responsibility of the student and his/her parents/guardian. Attendance is governed by the policies and procedures set forth by the **Wilkes County Student Attendance Protocol***.

3.2 Process for Excusing an Absence

To excuse an absence, the school must receive written documentation explaining the reason for the absence. Documentation must be submitted to the school **within three (3) school days** of the student's return.

Acceptable forms of documentation may include a **parent/guardian written excuse, a doctor's note, hospital or medical documentation, an obituary for an immediate family member, court documentation, or official government documentation** verifying the reason for the absence.

It is the policy of the Board to excuse students from school for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness or attendance in school that endangers a student's health or the health of others.
2. A serious illness or death in a student's immediate family necessitating absence from school.
3. A court order or an order by a governmental agency, including pre-induction physical examinations for service in the armed forces, mandating absence from school.
4. The observance of religious holidays, necessitating absence from school.
5. Conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to student health or safety.
7. Registering to vote or voting in a public election, which shall not exceed one day.
8. A student whose parent is in military service in the armed forces of the United States or the National Guard, and such parent has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be granted excused absences up to a maximum of five school days per school year to visit with his or her parent prior to such parent's deployment or during such parent's leave. A student whose parent or legal guardian is currently serving or has previously served on active duty in the U.S. armed forces or in the Reserves or National Guard on extended active duty may be granted excused absences, up to a maximum of 5 school days per school year, not to exceed 2 school years, for the days missed from school to attend military affairs sponsored events, provided the student provides documentation prior to the absence. The documentation must come from a care provider at or sponsored by a U.S. Veterans Affairs medical facility or from an official of an event sponsored by a veteran's organization that qualifies as a 501 (c)(19) tax-exempt corporation under the IRS Code. In determining whether to grant or deny a request for absence under this provision, the principal or designee may consider the student's attendance record.

9. Any other absence not explicitly defined in this policy but deemed to have merit based on circumstances as determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

3.2.1 Doctor's Excuse

Absences verified by a licensed healthcare provider will be recorded as medically excused. Documentation should include the date(s) of the absence and be submitted to the school upon the student's return.

A doctor's note is required to excuse absences when:

- A student is absent three (3) or more consecutive days due to illness, or
- A student has reached five (5) handwritten parent/guardian notes, or
- A student has accumulated ten (10) total days absent (excused or unexcused).

After these thresholds are reached, absences will remain unexcused unless a doctor's note is submitted.

There is no limit on the number of medically excused absences a student may have during the school year. However, additional documentation may be requested when medically excused absences exceed 10 days. At that time, a medical release form may be sent to the parent/guardian to allow the school to verify absences with the healthcare provider if necessary.

3.2.2 Parent/Guardian Excuse

Parents or guardians may submit a written excuse explaining the reason for the student's absence. Parent/guardian excuses must be submitted within **three (3)** school days of the student's return.

Up to **five (5) parent/guardian handwritten notes** may be accepted to excuse absences for personal illness or other allowable reasons. After five notes or once a student reaches ten total absences, a doctor's note will be **required** for additional absences to be excused.

Absences without appropriate documentation within the required timeframe may be recorded as unexcused.

A parent excuse template form is available for families who would like to use it when submitting a written absence excuse for their child; however, use of this form is optional and not required.

3.2.3 Out of School Suspension

Does not count as excused absences, but do not count towards the student's total number of absences when counting absences towards truancy charges.

3.2.4 Makeup Work

An excused absence is required before middle and high school students can make up work. All work should be completed satisfactorily by the due dates specified by the classroom teacher. Asking for make-up work is the responsibility of the student/parents.

Section 4.0 Wilkes County School System (K-12) Attendance Procedures

Regular and punctual school attendance is important and expected. Ensuring consistent attendance is a shared responsibility between the student and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s). While the following procedures outline the required contacts made by the school, the principal or designee may contact parents/guardians by phone, mail, or in person at any time when attendance becomes a concern. Each school will establish an Attendance Support Team (AST). The school principal will appoint an administrator to serve as the Attendance Support Team Coordinator. AST meetings will be led by the Attendance Support Team Coordinator. The district attendance officer will be invited to all AST meetings and may attend when requested by the school.

4.1 Procedure for Excessive Absences

1. The Notice of the Georgia Compulsory Attendance Law pursuant **to O.C.G.A. Code 20-2-690-1** and Wilkes County School System attendance procedures and expectations can be found in the school's student handbook. Parents/guardians will be required to sign off on this information in the student handbook.
2. A daily automated text or call will be sent when a student is absent. The school is encouraged to make a human contact via designated staff member if a student reaches 3 consecutive absences.
3. When a student reaches **five (5) absences (excused or unexcused)**, the school will notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) by letter of the Georgia Compulsory Attendance Law, attendance procedures, and possible consequences and penalties related to absences. As required by law, after two reasonable attempts have been made to contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) with no response, a letter will be sent via certified mail with return receipt.
4. When a student reaches **seven (7) absences (excused or unexcused)**, an Attendance Support Team (AST) meeting will be requested. The meeting may include the AST Coordinator, school administration, school counselor, system attendance officer, school nurse, teachers, and other relevant staff. The parent(s)/guardian(s) and students age 10 or older will be asked to sign an attendance contract. If the parent(s)/guardian(s) are unable to attend, the AST Coordinator will attempt to contact them by phone to review the contract and will send it home for signature.
5. When a student reaches **ten (10) or more absences (excused or unexcused)**, the school may refer the student to the district attendance officer or student support facilitator for additional review and support. Continued unexcused absences after contact from the district attendance officer may result in a Juvenile Court referral for truancy. If appropriate, a referral to the Department of Children and Family Services may also be made.
6. For students age **16 and older**, a letter will be mailed at five (5) unexcused absences, and the student will be referred for a meeting with the attendance coordinator at seven (7) unexcused absences.
7. For parents of students at **WWMS/WWCHS**, please review your student's student handbook in the code of conduct section for discipline consequences of tardies.

**A complete copy of the Wilkes County Student Attendance Protocol is on file in the school office.*

Bus Notes

Students will be placed on the regular bus unless a written note is sent by the parent/guardian. Each day, notes will be collected during homeroom, approved by the school office and then returned to the student. School personnel are not allowed to write bus notes. If a change of bus is made during the day, a note should be brought to the school office or faxed to 678-7826.

***Requests over the phone for bus changes will not be accepted except in the case of rare emergencies, and then only at the discretion and approval of the principal.**

****ALL Request for Bus Changes or Car Rider Changes must be made by 2:30 each day.**

Cafeteria Policies

Washington-Wilkes Elementary School is pleased to be part of the USDA Community Eligibility Option which provides breakfast and lunch to its students at no cost. A second meal, if wanted, will be at the adult cost with no charging for this meal. A la carte items are available to students. Students cannot charge for a la carte items.

Healthy breakfast and lunch meals are served in the school cafeteria daily at no cost. Meal choices include regular a menu entree, pizza, deli sandwich, or salad bar. Students who bring their lunches from home will be offered a Lunch Buddy meal. All meals should be consumed during the designated time and should not be taken out of the cafeteria.

Students with food allergies must submit a physician's prescription for their food allergy to the school nurse and School Nutrition Director. The Parent Request for Food Allergy form is available in the school office and/or with the School Nutrition Director at the Board of Education. We cannot offer soy milk, juice or water as an alternative for milk without proper documentation.

A well-balanced meal is encouraged at WWES. Students may not bring gum or sodas in lunch boxes. It is suggested that students drink juice or water. No foods from outside vendors or commercial establishments may be brought in for meals.
Ice cream, chips, and Switch juice will be sold each day during lunch. Students are not allowed to charge these items.

A student who is in the Behavior Control Room (BCR) may not purchase ice cream or specialty drinks on that day.

A student that has been moved to another table due to not following cafeteria rules will not be allowed to purchase ice cream or drinks.

Birthday Policy

A parent may bring cupcakes for a student's birthday. This can be done during non-instructional time. You may bring cupcakes for your child's class. Please do not bring chips, drinks, and/or ice cream. Please contact your child's teacher for more information.

Car Drop/Off – Pick/Up

Please stay in your vehicle and follow the directions of school personnel on duty in the parking lot and street area when dropping off and picking up students. Pull up to whomever is on duty and allow them to assist your child in and out of your vehicle.

In the morning, please avoid parking and allowing your child to walk across the parking lot to enter the building. This is extremely dangerous! School personnel will be present in the morning and in the afternoon to assist your child in and out of your vehicle.

In the afternoon, students will not be dismissed from the "car riders" area to anyone who parks and walks up to get their child. Anyone picking up a child must wait in the car rider line. Anyone cutting in line will be asked to move to the end of the line before picking up their child. This policy is strictly enforced for your child's safety.
In the afternoon when you pick up your child always exit the parking lot to the right.

Cell Phones and Personal Electronic Devices

In accordance with Georgia law and district policy, students at Washington-Wilkes Elementary School may not access or use personal electronic devices during the school day. Personal electronic devices include cell phones, smart watches, tablets, earbuds, headphones, and any other device used for communication, recording, or internet access.

If a student is found using or displaying a device, it will be confiscated and turned in to the principal's office. A parent/guardian will be contacted, and the device may be picked up in accordance with school procedures. Students violating this rule will be subject to a progressive discipline plan that includes:

First Offense: Official Warning and device will be taken to the office for parent pick up.
Second Offense: 1 hour in the BCR and device will be taken to the office for parent pick up.
Third Offense: 2 hours in the BCR and device will be taken to the office for parent pick up.

Repeated violations may result in additional disciplinary consequences. Exceptions may be made for students with an IEP, Section 504 plan, medical plan, or other school-approved reason.

Parents, guardians, and visitors are asked to refrain from using cell phones while in the school building, on campus, or while chaperoning field trips. Please place cell phones on silent or vibrate before entering the school.

Computer Use By Students

WWES students are encouraged to use computers if their parent/guardian has filled out a Wilkes County Computer Usage Agreement. A student's continued use of computers at school is contingent upon the student's adherence to the terms of the Usage Agreement and may be revoked at any time by the school when the agreement is violated or in the discretion of the administrator. A copy of the user agreement begins on page 45 of the handbook.

Communication - Parents and Teachers

Frequent communication between the home and the school is highly encouraged at WWES. Parents and teachers often communicate through Rooms, the student agendas, notes, phone calls, conferences, and classroom visits. The school website will have important events posted. The use of email may be used to communicate at times with parents. No third-party information (doctors, tutors, etc.) should be sought electronically. Please make sure to sign up with your child's teachers about joining Rooms.

Dress Code

Most children enjoy wearing whatever clothing styles are popular at any given time. They enjoy expressing their individuality and usually feel special when they have something new to wear. It is important that we teach our children early on that certain clothes are appropriate for some situations and settings but not for others. Simply put, there are clothes that are appropriate for school and there are clothes that are not appropriate for school. The school is a learning environment, and students should dress comfortably and appropriately so that learning can take place without any distractions or hindrances.

The following items of clothing are not acceptable and should not be worn to school:

1. Gym shorts, cut-off shorts and/or any shorts or pants that are extremely tight fitting in design. Also, any shirts or tops that are body-hugging in nature.
2. Leggings and bicycle shorts should not be worn unless the proper attire is worn over them.
3. Dresses, skirts, skorts, or shorts that are not of an appropriate length. **Note: Garment should be long enough to reach the fingertips of a student standing in an upright position <u>or</u> should not be higher than 2 inches above the knee.**
4. Pants or shorts that fall below the waistline, or that expose undergarments. There should also be **no** words or writing across the rear of pants, shorts, skirts, etc.
5. **Hats, caps, hoods, bandannas, or other such headwear mat not be worn in the building.**
6. Clothing that advertises drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, or anything that may be considered sexually suggestive, obscene, violent, gang related, or otherwise offensive. This includes clothing bearing pictures of individuals who are bare-chested or otherwise inappropriately exposed or scantily dressed.
7. Garments with open or frayed holes or cuts that expose bare skin or undergarments. If holes are present you must have leggings on underneath the garment.
8. Any garments that are see-through in nature.
9. Shirts/tops/blouses that do not reach the waistline, exposing bare skin. **Note: A good test is to raise your arms over your head – if your shirt is not long enough to cover your belly and back, then it is too short to wear to school.**
10. Shirts/tops/blouses and dresses that are low-cut, so as to expose the chest area.
11. Tops or dresses with very thin straps, unless a sleeved shirt is worn underneath at all times while at school. Sleeveless tops are acceptable, but should not be loose or low enough under the arms so as to expose the chest area or undergarments.
12. Muscle shirts, tank tops/dresses or mesh/jersey-type shirts or dresses with large holes and/or loose arm holes and necks unless a sleeved shirt is worn underneath while at school.
13. Pajamas are not allowed except on "Pajama Day" specified by school personnel.
14. Shoes must be tied and any straps must be fastened at all times.
15. **Belts are not required, but must be worn when needed to hold up one's pants. When**

pants will not stay at the waist parents will be called for a change of clothes or a belt. The office will no longer "pin-up" pants that are falling down. No exceptions.

*Student attire will be inspected at the beginning of each school day. If a student violates the dress code, a parent/guardian will be called to bring an appropriate change of clothing. If no change of clothing is available, the student will spend the day in the Behavior Control Room (BCR). **Repeated violations will be subject to stronger disciplinary measures.**

****A good rule of thumb is "If you really have to think about whether you should wear it to school or not, then you probably should not."***

Discipline

We expect students at WWES to exhibit positive behavior at all times. The WWES Behavior Plan is described in detail on pages 17 – 26.
** **Parental involvement is required for students with discipline problems per Georgia Law L.C.G.A. 20-2-765, 20-2-766, and 15-11-62.**

Early Arrivals

Students should not arrive at school prior to 7:30 a.m. No one will be here to supervise them! When students arrive, they should report to the cafeteria to pick up their breakfast and then go directly to their homeroom class. Breakfast is served from 7:30 -7:50 a.m. daily.

Early Dismissal (During the School Day)

A student who must leave early is required to bring a note signed by the parent/guardian stating the time and reason for the early dismissal. No one will be allowed to take a student from a classroom without a pass from the office. Only persons designated by the parent/guardian will be allowed to pick up a student from school.

***Students who leave before 11:30 will be counted absent for the school day.**

An early dismissal may be considered excused for any of the following reasons:

1. When personally ill and when attendance in school will endanger their health, the health of others, or for medical, dental, or counseling appointments.
2. When in their immediate family there is a serious illness or death which will reasonably necessitate an early dismissal from school.
3. When mandated by governmental agencies, child protective services, or by Court order.
4. When prevented from school attendance due to conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to their health or safety.

Parents/guardians will receive a letter or be contacted by the school when there are five early dismissals in a particular grading period. When there are 10 early dismissals in a particular grading period, a referral will be made to the School Social Worker who will contact the parent/guardian.

Early Dismissal is governed by the policies and procedures set forth by the **Wilkes County Student Attendance Protocol.** A complete copy of the Wilkes County Student Attendance Protocol is on file in the school office.

Emergency Drills

Emergency drills are held throughout the year. Teachers will review the rules and signals for each drill. Students should remember to walk quickly and quietly to the designated area. **There is to be NO TALKING during emergency drills.**

End of Day Dismissal

Students who are picked up after school should wait in front of the gym with the supervising teacher. Anytime there is a change, a note must be sent by the parent/guardian. Students riding buses will report to the bus ramp when their bus number is announced over the intercom. If there are bus changes, a note must be sent by the parent/guardian.

*****Please make any changes in transportation by 2:00.**

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (F.E.R.P.A.)

Your child's right to privacy and the privacy of his/her educational records are protected under F.E.R.P.A. (20 U.S.C. 1232g). Personally identifiable information about your child will not be distributed from the school without your written consent. Please note that all student records will be sent to another school or school district if a student is seeking or intends to enroll in that school.

**From time to time, the names and/or pictures of students will be in published on the school website, school newsletters and other school publications and/or the local newspaper to publicize school events, awards, honors, and/or programs/events. If you object to the publicity, please notify the school in writing at the beginning of the school year. A permission form will be sent home at the beginning of the school year for your signature.

Food, Drink, Gum, Candy

No food or drink will be eaten on campus except in the cafeteria during lunch. Students should not bring candy or gum to school. Students may be rewarded by their teacher with food, drinks, gum or candy.

Hallways

Students should be in the halls only at the beginning and closing of school and while moving from one class to another, unless they have special permission or duties that require them to be there. Students are asked to be courteous at all times and to keep to the right when moving in the halls. **Every effort will be made for there to be no talking in the hallways as students move**

from one location to another. Running and shouting in the halls is never permitted, except in the case of a serious emergency.

Health and Other Records

Each student must have on file copies of the Georgia Department of Human Resources *Certificate of Immunization, Certificate of Ear, Eye and Dental Examination, and Birth Certificate.* In accordance with state policies, no student will be permitted to remain in school unless current certificates are on file.

Illness or Injury

Teachers may refer sick or injured children to the nurse. Parents/guardians will be called if further treatment is warranted, and the school reserves the right to call for emergency assistance whenever deemed appropriate.

Any student leaving school due to illness or injury must check out through the office.

Students should not attend school if their illness is contagious, are vomiting, have diarrhea or have a fever of 100 or higher**. Students should not return to school until the fever and/or vomiting/diarrhea have subsided for 24 hours without medication.**

The school nurse or a member of the office staff will call parents, guardians, or other designated adults when a student becomes ill or has a serious injury. A parent will not receive a call for an injury that requires basic first aid.

Lost and Found

Anytime you find an article that does not belong to you, tell your teacher. Your teacher will tell you a good time for taking it to the school office. If you have lost something, check and see if it has been turned in at the office. Unclaimed clothing is periodically collected and donated, normally at the end of each semester (December and May).

Students are strongly encouraged to leave valuables including jewelry, keepsakes, and large amounts of money at home. Electronic devices of any type should never be brought to school. The school cannot assume responsibility for these items.

Media Center

The Washington-Wilkes Elementary School Media Center seeks to provide: support for instructional programs of the school, enrichment through literature appreciation, an environment rich in learning resources, access to information, and encouragement for students, faculty, and staff to live as lifelong learners.

Fourth and Fifth grade students have open book checkout. Students may visit the Media Center during checkout hours between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. to choose a new book. Students are allowed to checkout two books at a time. Students also rotate through the Media Center as part of their activity schedule.

Overdue notices are sent home when books are held past their due date. Requests for payment are made for long overdue or lost books.

Parents are charged the **cost for replacement of the lost book**, which includes any shipping charges and sales tax. Students will not receive a report card until fines for lost or damaged books are paid. Refunds are given if a parent pays for a lost book then locates and returns it to the media center. Students who turn in books that are damaged beyond repair will be charged the lost book rate.

We encourage the use of the Mary Willis Library for parents to check out books for themselves and their children.

Medication

We encourage parents to give medication(s) at home, if possible. However, we realize that some medications must be given during the school day if provided by the parent and only after the following requirements are met:

1. All medications, both prescription and non-prescription, **must be brought to school by the parent or guardian**. Parent must fill out the Request for Administration of Medication Form.
2. All medication must be in the **original child-proof container. Prescription medications must be in the original labeled prescription bottle.**
3. If your child takes a medication that must be refilled monthly, a new bottle will be expected each month in order for the medicine to be given.
4. Medications in anything other than the original bottle, i.e., envelope, baggie, etc., will not be administered.
5. All medications (prescription and non-prescription) must be taken directly to the clinic for safe storage.
6. A written request by the parent or guardian must be made in order to have medication administered by the school. Telephone requests will not be accepted.
7. Students in possession of any medication during the school day in violation of the policy set forth above may be subject to punishment and discipline for unauthorized possession of medication/drugs.

- ***Students who must use auto-injectable epinephrine may carry their epinephrine kits with them while at school or on school property.***
- ***Students with asthma may carry inhalers if needed.***
- ***Parents/guardians must provide a written statement from a physician including the name of the medication, method, amount, and time schedules for administration; a release authorizing school officials to contact the medical doctor; and a release from civil liability if the student suffers an adverse reaction from the medication.***
- ***Students who misuse such medication shall be subject to disciplinary action.***

Head Lice

The following protocol has been set for dealing with cases of head lice:

If a child shows signs of head lice, the teacher brings the child to the school nurse and the child's head is examined in private.

1. If you notice signs of head lice, keep your child at home, check with the Health Dept. or your physician for confirmation. If head lice are confirmed, call and notify school officials so that proper precautions may be taken.
2. When head lice are detected at school the parent will be informed by the school nurse.
3. Parents are instructed to wash the hair of every person in the home with prescription or over-the-counter shampoo prescribed by the pharmacist; wash bed linens, pillows, blankets, spreads, etc. and dry with the dryer on high heat; vacuum/clean carpet and dispose of vacuum bag; and spray with insecticide.
4. **Students must have clearance from the family doctor or the Wilkes Co. Health Department to return to school**. Parents must present evidence of treatment for clearance…such as empty shampoo bottle, box bottle came in, etc. The student/family must be retreated in seven (7) days.
5. When a case is detected in the classroom or reported to the school, a letter will be sent home to the parents of the students in that classroom. The letter will inform parents of a case of head lice and the signs for which to watch. The name of the child with lice will not be revealed.
6. If a number of cases are detected or reported, a letter will go out to all parents of the school informing them of the presence of head lice and the signs.
7. The classroom of students found to have head lice will be fogged with insecticide---specifically for head lice.

Moment of Silence

In each Georgia public school classroom, the teacher in charge shall, at the opening of school upon every school day, conduct a brief period of quiet reflection, for not more than 60 seconds with the participation of all pupils therein assemble. At WWES, the Moment of Silence is conducted during Morning Announcements.

MTSS

The multi-tiered support system is implemented in order to provide students with supports to be successful. Students are given a universal screener 3 times a year in order to determine if they need extra support in the area of reading and/or math. Under the umbrella of MTSS you have RTI (Response to Intervention) and PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports).

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher conferences will be held at regular intervals throughout the school year. Parents wishing to schedule additional conferences with a teacher should call the school office at 678-7124 and leave a message with the school secretary to be forwarded to the teacher. **When concerns arise, parents are asked to contact the teacher first. If the concerns are not resolved, then a conference with administrators can be arranged.**

Parent Teacher Group (PTG)

WWES is fortunate to have a very active parent organization. The PTG oversees school and community projects, including fundraising projects. PTG will meet occasionally throughout the school year. Parents/guardians will be notified ahead of time for meeting times and dates.

Restrooms

Do not linger or socialize in restrooms. There is usually no need to talk while in the restroom. Do not damage the restroom in any way such as writing on the walls or doors or standing on the toilets. Flush toilets after use, wash your hands, and return to your classroom quickly. Help keep our restrooms clean by putting trash in the trash containers.

School Closings

In case of bad weather, school cancellations will be announced through the Wilkes County Schools App, through Rooms, and over the local radio (WLOV), on the school system website, One Call Now, and/or television stations (WJBF Ch. 6 or WRDW Ch. 12).

School Clubs and Organizations

Parents or legal guardians have the right to withhold permission for their child to join or participate in extra-curricular clubs and organizations.

Special Events

Throughout the school year, special events are held at WWES. These events include local and out of town field trips, school assemblies or performances, good behavior celebrations, academic celebrations, and annual events such as Field Day and Big Shuffle Day. The majority of our special events are planned for all students. These include most field trips, school assemblies and performances, Field Day, and Big Shuffle Day. Other events are open to all students, but they must qualify based on the requirements of the individual events.

Information on field trips will be sent home to parents each time a field trip is planned for your child's class. You will also be notified about upcoming assemblies and performances. Big Shuffle is scheduled for May of each year so that students can visit their new schools. Field Day occurs during the last week of the school year.

Field Trip and Activity Eligibility

Student behavior and attendance play an important role in eligibility for field trips and other school activities. To ensure a safe and positive experience for all students, the following guidelines apply:

- Students who receive **three (3) office referrals** during a semester will become **ineligible to attend field trips** for the remainder of that semester. This includes referrals received on the school bus.

- Absences resulting from **Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)** are considered **unexcused absences**.
- Students who accumulate **more than five (5) unexcused absences** in a semester will be **ineligible to participate in field trips** during that semester.
- Attendance and discipline totals reset at the beginning of each semester.
- Students assigned **Out-of-School Suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion** may not attend or participate in any school-sponsored activities or functions during the suspension period.

PBIS celebrations are planned at the end of each month for those students who have demonstrated our PBIS expectations of being Responsible, Respectful, and Engaged. activities/rewards will also vary each month.

A Positive Behavior Intervention Support System is being used at WWES to reward individual students who exhibit positive behaviors. The students will be rewarded with incentives for special awards and privileges.

In cases of continuously disruptive or extremely inappropriate behavior, the principal reserves the right to take away a student's privilege of attending a special event.

Students that make repeated visits to the BCR (Behavior Control Room) or have repeated suspensions throughout the school year will be denied the privilege to participate in Annual events at the end of the school year. Parents will receive a written notice if their child has made repeated visits to the BC room and will lose the privilege of attending any events or activities at the end of the year. A letter will be sent home with your child informing you that your child will not be participating in any end of the year event.

Tardiness

A student who is tardy is required to bring a note signed by the parent/guardian stating the reason for the tardiness. At Washington-Wilkes Elementary, a student who arrives after 7:50 is considered tardy.

A tardy may be considered excused for any of the following reasons:

1. When personally ill and when attendance in school will endanger their health, the health of others, or for medical, dental, or counseling appointments.
2. When in their immediate family there is a serious illness or death which will reasonably necessitate an early dismissal from school.
3. When mandated by governmental agencies, child protective services, or by Court order.
4. When prevented from school attendance due to conditions rendering attendance impossible or hazardous to their health or safety.

***Students who arrive after 11:30 will be counted absent for the school day.**

Parents/guardians will receive a letter or be contacted by the school when there are five tardies in a particular grading period. After the fifth tardy your child will receive lunch/recess detention each time they are tardy. When there are 10 tardies in a particular grading period, a referral will be made to the School Social Worker who will contact the parent/guardian.

Tardiness is governed by the policies and procedures set forth by the **Wilkes County Student Attendance Protocol.** A complete copy of the Wilkes County Student Attendance Protocol is on file in the school office.

Telephones

The school telephones are business phones and may not be used by students at any time. In cases of ***extreme emergency***, students who bring a note from their teacher may ask a member of the office staff to make a call for them. Needing a change of clothing because you are in violation of the school dress code is an emergency. Needing your homework, books, gym shoes or other supplies because you left them at home is not an emergency.

Visitors

All visitors should report directly to the administrative office to receive a visitor's pass. This pass should be worn at all times while you are at the school. Please do not go directly to your child's classroom or to any other area of the school without a pass.

Water Bottles/Containers

Students may bring a container for water to school. We have water stations where students may fill up their container. They must fill their containers before school or during lunch. The container needs to be a clear. Students may not bring soft drinks or sports drinks to school.

Academics

Grades

Each teacher's grading policy will be explained at the beginning of the school year. When a student is absent, it is his/her responsibility to ask for make-up work**.** You can check your child's grades on Infinite Campus. Graded papers are sent home every 2 weeks to be signed by the parent and returned to school. Students that do not return papers within 2 days after they are sent home will be assigned lunch/recess detention until they return them. **Cheating will not be tolerated at WWES.** Students caught cheating will be referred directly to the BCR (see Behavior section) and then to the school principal, who will immediately contact the student's parent or guardian. The penalty for cheating may range from redoing the assignment or test with a lowered grade to spending time in the BCR and not being allowed to make up the work, thus receiving a zero. This penalty will be at the discretion of the school principal.

Homework

The students are provided with a folder to help keep students organized with homework. The students will be given a sheet or they may use their agenda in order to write their homework on each week. Each teacher has a homework policy that will be explained to you and your child at the beginning of the school year. A participation grade will be assigned. A student that repeatedly does not do homework will be assigned lunch/recess detention. Some ways to help students with homework are to:

1. Ask to see the binder each night. (Many teachers require that parents sign.)
2. Set aside a quiet place and time to study each night. This will help your child stay focused.
3. Encourage children to ask for help from the teacher when they need it.

Honor Roll/Merit List

Honor Roll – Students must have an overall average of 90 or higher in each class (all A's) to be eligible for the Honor Roll.

Merit List – Students must have an overall average of 85 with no grade less than an 80 to be eligible for the Merit List.

Students will be recognized at the end of each Nine weeks grading period for making the Honor Roll or Merit List.

STEM and Art

STEM and Art instruction is provided for all WWES students in grades 4 and 5. Students are expected to follow directions, try their best and work hard in class. Studies show that STEM and art are directly related to brain development. Practice and appreciation of STEM and art can help students apply what they learn to other aspects of their lives.

Physical Education

Physical Education instruction is provided for all WWES students in grades 4 and 5. Students are expected to follow directions, to try their best and to work hard in P.E. class. All students are required to participate in Physical Education. A doctor's excuse is required in order for a student to be exempt from P.E.

All students 3rd – 12th grade are required to participate in the Fitness Gram. **Tennis shoes are required.** Dress shoes, sandals, hiking boots, or other inappropriate types of footwear are not permitted. Failure to wear tennis shoes will result in the following consequences:

1st Time: Warning; sit on the bench, complete written assignment.
2nd Time: Note home; sit on the bench, complete written assignment.
3rd Time: Participation grade lowered; sit on the bench, complete written assignment

Note: Students are responsible for knowing their P.E. class days. Calling home for a change of shoes is disruptive to instructional time, and will not be allowed except in the case of an emergency – forgetting is not an emergency!** ***In cases of hardship, please contact the P.E. teacher or the school principal for assistance.

Progress Reports

Progress Reports will be sent home on the midterm date of each nine-weeks grading period. Parents should look over the progress reports carefully and contact the school if the reports show signs of academic or behavioral problems.

Promotion Criteria

Parents/guardians will be informed of their child's academic status through report cards, progress reports, notes, phone calls, and parent conferences.

A student can only be **promoted** when **all** promotion criteria **have been met**. You will receive a detailed copy of the promotion criteria at the beginning of the school year. All students in 4th and 5th grade are required to take the Georgia Milestones Assessment unless opted out by their parent/guardian.

Fifth grade students must score a Level 2+ in ELA and a Level 2 in Math in order to be promoted.

Report Cards

Report cards will be sent home four times during the school year. They will show progress and grades for each of the grading-week periods. Parents should sign the report cards and return them to the school the following day.

Report Cards - Dates

October 6, 2026
January 5, 2027
March 16, 2027
May 21, 2027

Retention Notification

The parents/guardians of students who are not meeting requirements for promotion will receive written notification by mail. A parent conference will be scheduled in spring to discuss your child's academic progress and what steps need to be taken to help your child meet promotion criteria.

Social Media Policy

The Wilkes County School System maintains a Social Media Policy that outlines expectations for appropriate online behavior and communication by students. Families and students are encouraged to review this policy carefully to understand guidelines related to responsible digital citizenship, online safety, and potential consequences for misuse of social media. The complete Social Media Policy is included in this handbook on page 47 .

Standardized Testing

Students in all grades will be tested according to State and local guidelines during the school year. Students will take the Beacon Assessment Test in Reading and Math 3 times during the school year. Students in grades 4 and 5 will be given the State mandated test in April/May. Parents will be notified of test results as they become available.

Textbooks, Media Center Books, and All Other Books

Students are given a consumable Reading and Math textbook. These textbooks are a key part of instruction and should be brought to school each day. If lost a fee will be charged to replace the book. Media Center books should be handled with care, especially since they are used by all students. When books are taken home, keep them in a safe, dry and clean location (away from food and drink, weather, and younger children).

Students will be expected to pay for lost or damaged books. **The student to whom the book is issued or checked out is responsible for the safe return of the book to the school or for any payment due.**

WWES Positive Behavior Intervention Support

It is our belief that children learn best in a safe and orderly environment. We believe that children should know what is expected of them, and that those expectations should be realistic and appropriate for the age level of the child. We believe that procedures and rules should be in place that will guide the child toward appropriate behavior, and that we should model those behaviors and give the students ample opportunities to practice them.

When children behave appropriately, the potential for learning is greatly increased. Since our most important goal is that of student academic achievement and learning, this Behavior Code has been developed by the administration and faculty members of WWES.

A Positive Behavior Intervention Support System will be used at WWES to teach and promote positive behavior in all students. There are 3 expectations for all students.

1. I am Respectful
2. I am Responsible
3. I am Engaged

Each teacher will explain expectations and teach the students how to follow the expectations in the classroom, hallway, restroom, cafeteria, playground, and assemblies. Students and classes can earn links for mastering goals throughout the school. Students are expected to follow the classroom rules and procedures at all times.

Students are also able to earn individual rewards. Students are recognized each month as Student of the Month based on following the three expectations. Students are also awarded with a Good Behavior Celebration each month.

As students move throughout the school building, the following school rules and procedures should be followed:

1. **Listen carefully.**
2. **Speak at appropriate times using an "inside voice".**
3. **Respect yourself and others.**
4. **Keep your hands, feet, and other objects to yourself.**
5. **Take care of school property.**

As mentioned above, students are expected to follow their individual teachers' classroom rules. These rules will be posted in the classroom, modeled by the teacher, and then practiced and reinforced daily. It makes sense that students learn best when they are in their classrooms; however, students who choose to misbehave to the extent that the learning process is disrupted will be removed from the classroom. Removal from the classroom may range from an initial 1 hour visit to the BCR to consecutive days of In-School Suspension as assigned by the principal to suspension or expulsion from school.

Members of the Washington Wilkes Elementary School Faculty and Staff have divided inappropriate student behaviors into the following categories: Minor Infractions or Major Infractions. Each category brings with it a set of disciplinary actions that will be enforced

consistently and pervasively when the unacceptable behaviors in that category occur. The categories and subsequent consequences are as follows:

The following procedures will be followed in regard to a Minor Infraction:

Minor Infractions:

Disrespectful to Student
Defiance
Disruption
Inappropriate Physical Contact
Inappropriate Language
Property Misuse
Dress Code Violation
Social Media Conflict Issues Disrupting Learning

The teacher will redirect the student toward appropriate behavior. The teacher will give a verbal warning. If the student does not correct the behavior the student will be sent to the BC (Behavior Control) Room.

1st Visit - 1 hour in BC room – Parent notified by a note and/or phone
2nd Visit - 2 hours in BC room and meet with school counselor - Parent notified by phone
3rd Visit – ½ day ISS – Parent notified by phone – Parent Meeting Schedules
4th Visit – 1-day ISS – Parent notified by phone – Referral to MTSS – Behavior Plan Implemented

Parents/Guardians will receive a phone call and/or note to notify them of their child's misbehavior. Discipline forms should be signed and returned to school the next school day. Teachers may choose to deny student privileges if discipline forms are not returned. Students who continuously do not return signed discipline forms will be referred to the school principal, who will in turn call their parents to set up a conference.

The following procedures will be followed in regard to Major Infractions

Major Infractions:

Defiance/Insubordination/Non-Compliance
Physical Aggression
Disruptive
Disrespectful to Teacher
Abusive Language/Verbal Harassment/Threat
Sexual Harassment/Inappropriate Touching
Bullying
Fighting
Forgery/Theft/Plagiarism
Technology Violation
Property Damage/Vandalism
Lying/Cheating
Stealing
Use/Possession of Tobacco/Drugs/Alcohol/Vapes

Use/Possession of Weapons
Bomb Threat/False Alarm
Technology Violation **A discipline referral will be issued, but student may not go to the BC room. The student will lose all computer privileges for a designated amount of time.
Gang Related Activities (including but not limited to wearing, displaying, or possessing gang-related apparel, accessories, tattoos or other markings; conveying membership or affiliation with a gang; gang-related solicitation; violence; threats; defacement of school or personal property by painting, tagging, marking, writing, or creating any form of graffiti, etc.)

Major Infractions

1. **No warning is necessary.**
2. **The student will be sent directly to the Behavior Control Room or to the office.**

1st Visit – ½ Day in BC Room– Parent notified by a note and/or phone
2nd Visit – 1 Day (ISS) in BC room and meet with school counselor; Parent notified by phone
3rd Visit – 2 Days (ISS) in BC Room – Parent notified and a meeting will be scheduled.

Parents/Guardians will receive a phone call and/or note to notify them of their child's misbehavior. Discipline forms should be signed and returned to school the next school day. Teachers may choose to deny student privileges if discipline forms are not returned. Students who continuously do not return signed discipline forms will be referred to the school principal, who will in turn call their parents to set up a conference.

* A child who has 3 referrals in a 30-school day period is considered as having a chronic behavior problem. At this time a meeting will be held to discuss needed strategies, a behavior intervention plan and if necessary a change in the RTI Tier of the student. When appropriate, the principal reserves the right to contact The Department of Juvenile Justice, The Department of Family and Children Services (DFACS), and/or local law enforcement in regard to a student's inappropriate behavior.

* At the end of each nine-week period any student that has been to Behavior Control Room or Suspended will have the opportunity to have a "fresh start"

* The students that have exhibited positive behaviors throughout each nine-week period will be rewarded.

* The WWES Positive Behavior Intervention Support plan will give special attention, when warranted, to students with special needs as specified in their current Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP). Extenuating circumstances will also be considered. (Example: The student is unusually disruptive in class and later on the teacher discovers that a family member has passed away, someone close to the child is seriously ill, etc.)

* **The school principal has the right to assign students to the BCR for longer periods of time than outlined above depending on the nature of the offense. For example, a student whose first discipline referral is a Major Infraction may be assigned to the BCR for longer than ½ day. Likewise, a student whose first discipline referral is a**

Level 3 offense may be assigned consecutive days in the BCR or suspended as outlined in the following section.

* **Parental involvement is required for students with discipline problems per Georgia Law L.C.G.A. 20-2-765, 20-2-766, and 15-11-62.**
* **See legal references**

Some major infractions are extremely serious and sometimes criminal in nature. The following procedures will be followed in regard to the following Major Infractions.

1. **No warning is necessary.**
2. **The student will be sent directly to the Principal's Office.**
3. **The Parents/Guardians, and when required, law enforcement agencies, will be contacted immediately.**

Major Infractions will be dealt with as severe and serious offenses. Punishment for these offenses will range from In-School Suspension (consecutive days in the BCR) to Out of School Suspension, to Tribunal, to a recommendation to the Superintendent for Expulsion. As stated above, the appropriate law enforcement agencies will be contacted for most offenses in this category.

***Fighting**

(Serious intent to hurt with numerous hits/licks/kicks or wrestling moves. Usually involves two or more students engaged with one another, but may involve one or more students who are fighting against a student(s) who are not fighting back/not participating)

1st Offense: A minimum of three days out-of-school suspension
2nd Offense: A minimum five days out-of-school suspension
3rd Offense: A minimum ten days out-of-school suspension

***Bullying**

The term "bullying" refers to
(1) "any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so, or
(2) any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm", or
(3) any intentional written, verbal or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:
(a) causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of O.C.G.A. 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as defined in O.C.G.A. 16-5-23.1;
(b) has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
(c) is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening education environment; or
(d) has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.
1st Offense: A minimum of three days out-of-school suspension
2nd Offense: A minimum five days out-of-school suspension
3rd Offense: A minimum ten days out-of-school suspension

***Only the school principal may determine if the action(s) should be considered bullying.**

***Possession/Use/Distribution of Firearms and/or Weapons**

Note: The presence of weapons on school property is detrimental to the welfare and safety of students and school personnel and is a violation of state law. No *person* shall carry, possess, or have under such person's control any weapon or explosive device or compound in any school building, on school premises, at any school sponsored function or activity; in any school vehicle or bus; or in a private vehicle parked on school property while attending school or a school sponsored or school related function.

The term "weapon" means and includes any pistol, revolver, firearm (handgun, rifle, shotgun or other weapon which will or can be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or electrical charge), or any weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind, or any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, any other knife having a blade of *two or more inches*, straight-edged razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles (metal, thermoplastic, wood, or other similar material), blackjack, bat, club, or other bludgeon weapon or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a way to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chacka, nun chuck, nun chacku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc (of whatever configuration) having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled any which way may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any weapon of like kind, a nonlethal air gun or any stun gun or taser. *The following are defined as "hazardous objects" per [O.C.G.A. 20-2-751; See also 16-11-127.1: 15-11-37; P.L. 103-227]

In addition to the above, the term weapon includes "dangerous weapons" as defined by O.C.G.A. 16-11-121.

In addition to Georgia law, local Board of Education policy describes a knife of **any length** as a "weapon." It is unlawful for any person to carry, possess or have under control any weapon at a school building, school function, or on school property or on a bus or other transportation furnished by the school.

A weapon could also include *any object* that could or has been used as a weapon.
A toy weapon may also be considered a weapon, depending on the individual situation.

*Possession/Use/Distribution Dangerous Weapon or Firearms

There will be an immediate, minimum **ten-day** suspension with recommendation to the Superintendent a **one-calendar year expulsion from school** for any violation of this rule, provided however that a hearing officer, tribunal panel. Administrator, superintendent or board of education shall have authority to modify such expulsion requirement on a case by case basis.

*Possession/Use/Distribution of Weapons other than Firearms

1st Offense: A minimum three-day out-of-school suspension and possible referral to a Tribunal;
2nd Offense: A minimum ten-day out-of-school suspension and possible referral to a Tribunal;
3rd Offense: A minimum ten-day out-of-school suspension and recommendation to the Superintendent for expulsion for 60 days.

*Possession/Use/Distribution of Illegal Drugs

Students found with illicit, illegal drugs or narcotics (selling, giving, possessing, using, or being under the influence) on school property (including buses) will be subject to suspension or expulsion and reported to an appropriate law enforcement agency in accordance with local and state laws.
1st Offense: A minimum of ten days out-of-school suspension; probation for rest of the school year; ten days detention (BCR) with counseling;
2nd Offense: A minimum of ten days out-of-school suspension with a recommendation to the superintendent for expulsion for the remainder of the semester;
3rd Offense: A minimum of ten days out-of-school suspension with a recommendation to the superintendent for expulsion for the remainder of the school year.

***Possession/Use/Distribution of Alcohol**
Students found with alcohol (selling, giving, possessing, using or being under the influence) on school property, including buses will be subject to suspension or expulsion and will be reported to an appropriate law enforcement agency in accordance with local and state laws.
1st Offense: A minimum of five days out-of-school suspension; probation for rest of the school year; five days detention (BCR) with counseling;
2nd Offense: A minimum ten days out-of-school suspension, and possible referral to a Tribunal;
3rd Offense: A minimum ten days out-of-school suspension with a recommendation to the superintendent for expulsion for the remainder of the school year

***Possession/Use/Distribution of Tobacco and Tobacco Products**
1st Offense: A minimum of three days out-of-school suspension
2nd Offense: A minimum five days out-of-school suspension
3rd Offense: A minimum ten days out-of-school suspension

***Unsafe School Notice**
Under Georgia law and State Board Rule 160-4-8-.16, certain serious offenses, including weapons offenses, drug offenses, and violent acts, may result in suspension, expulsion, referral to law enforcement, and consideration in determining whether a school is designated as an Unsafe School.

***Falsifying Reports of Inappropriate Behavior by Personnel**
A student should never falsify, misrepresent, omit, or erroneously report information regarding instances of alleged inappropriate behavior by a teacher, administrator, or other school employees toward a student.

***Trespassing**
No student shall commit the offense of trespassing, which is defined as entering or remaining on a public school campus or School Board facility without authorization or invitation and with no lawful purpose for entry. This includes students under suspension or expulsion, and unauthorized persons who enter or remain on a campus after being directed to leave by the chief administrator or designee. This violation may be reported to the proper law enforcement agency.

***Vandalism**
No student shall commit the offense of vandalism, which is defined as the willful and/or malicious destruction, damage, or defacement of public or private property, real or personal, without the consent of the owner or the person having custody of control of it. Restitution may be required. This offense may be reported to the proper law enforcement agency.

***School Pranks**
No student shall commit the offense of school pranks. A student commits the offense of school pranks when he or she disrupts the school or defaces school property. If damages occur, the offense will be treated as an act of vandalism. Restitution may be required. This violation may be reported to the proper law enforcement agency.

An administrator, in accordance with State and Local Board of Education guidelines, may use corporal punishment (paddling). At WWES, corporal punishment will only be used as a last resort, and at that time only after a phone call to the parent from the principal. At no time will a parent or guardian be allowed to request corporal punishment as an alternative to another form of punishment. A parent may sign a form requesting that their child receive corporal punishment.

* **The school principal has the right to review all disciplinary referrals at the school. If the principal finds evidence to support that a student's misbehavior is of a more severe nature than was reported, a more severe punishment will be administered. Likewise, if**

the principal finds evidence to support that misbehavior of a less severe or even frivolous nature has been reported, a less severe punishment will be administered.

* **Consequences for any violation that is not covered in this Code of Conduct will be administered at the discretion of the school administration.**

***Parents/guardians who wish to question any disciplinary referrals involving their child may do so by contacting the school principal at 706-678-7124.**

*** A parent conference with the principal will be required for any student that is suspended.**

*******In the event that student behavior becomes aggressive in nature, physical restraint procedures will be implemented by certified staff members of the Crisis Management Team, in accordance with Wilkes County Board Policy JGF(2) which can be viewed at www.wilkes.k12.ga.us.

WILKES COUNTY SCHOOLS – 2026-2027
Bus Rules/Regulations for Students

Students must be responsible for being at the designated stop when the bus arrives. Students are required to **arrive at the stop five (5) minutes before the scheduled time** for the bus to arrive at the stop. Buses will not be able to wait for students who are not at the stop when the bus arrives, except in inclement weather.

1. Students who are in the **3rd Grade or younger** must have a parent / guardian meet the student when getting off the bus.
2. The driver is in charge of the bus and all students aboard. Students **must obey the driver and/or bus attendant promptly**.
3. Students are to stand **at least 12 feet** off the roadway when waiting on the bus.
4. Students must cross **in front of the bus** when boarding and exiting the bus.
5. Students must take their seats promptly after boarding and remain seated while the bus is in motion and while other students are loading or exiting the bus.
6. Students must keep their feet and other objects out of the aisle.
7. Students may not open windows without the permission of the driver and must not extend any part of their body and/or objects outside the bus window.
8. Students should not throw objects on the bus or out of the bus windows or bus doors.
9. Students are not allowed to eat, drink or chew gum on the bus. Any food or drink should be stored away upon entering the bus. Any food or drink consumed on the bus will be confiscated, and the student can be subject to disciplinary action.
10. Students must conduct themselves in an acceptable manner. Profanity, obscene gestures, screaming and excessively loud talking are not permitted.
11. Students shall not possess or handle any type of weapon or object that could be considered a weapon, tobacco, alcohol or drugs on the school bus.
12. Students may ride only the bus assigned by school official unless authorized by parent or school.
13. Students shall not cause any damage to the bus. Persons causing damage must pay the full cost of repairing the damage. The guilty party will also be subject to loss of transportation privileges.
14. Students are not permitted to exit the bus except at their scheduled stop without written permission from a parent, which also must be verified and signed by a school official.
15. Students should not touch the emergency door or bus equipment unless instructed to do so by the driver.
16. Students are prohibited from using mirrors, lasers, flash cameras or any other lights or reflective devices that might interfere with the bus driver's operation of the bus.

Students who misbehave will be referred to an administrator through a written conduct report. Consequences will be provided at the discretion of an administrator in accordance with the following Wilkes County procedures:

1st Offense: Warning - parent notified by note or phone
2nd Offense: Suspension from bus for one day - parent notified by note or phone
3rd Offense: Suspension from bus for three days - parent conference
4th Offense: Suspension from bus for five days - parent conference
5th Offense: Suspension from bus for seven days - parent conference
6th Offense: Suspension from bus for ten days - parent conference
7th and Subsequent Offences: Long term suspension from bus (more than ten days) and/or recommendation for expulsion from the bus for the remainder of the school year - parent conference.

**The administration will follow the consequences for bus referrals dependent upon the nature of the referral. There are certain offenses that do not warrant a student being suspended from the bus and therefore it will be at the discretion of the administrator to determine the consequences.

*If a student is involved in a fight on the bus, he/she will **automatically** be suspended from the bus for three days. Each subsequent incidence of fighting will result in two additional days of bus suspension for up to ten days. Repeated fighting will lead to a recommendation for expulsion from the bus for the remainder of the school year. If the fight involves a student(s) at another school, administrators at both schools will work together to assign appropriate consequences. In other severe cases of misbehavior on the bus, school administration may at their discussion skip any of the steps (1-7) outlined above.

In cases of persistent bus misconduct, students may be assigned to ride a different bus.

- Students shall be prohibited from acts of physical violence as defined by Code Section 20-2-751.6, bullying as defined by subsection (a) of Code Section 20-2-751.4, physical assault or battery of other persons on the school bus, verbal assault of other persons on the school bus, disrespectful conduct toward the school bus driver or other persons on the school bus, or other unruly behavior;
- Students shall be prohibited from using any electronic devices during the operation of a school bus, including but not limited to cell phones, pagers, audible radios, tape or compact disc players without headphones; or any other electronic device in a manner that might interfere with the school bus communications equipment or the school bus driver's operation of the school bus; and
- Students shall be prohibited from using mirrors, lasers, flash cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices in a manner that might interfere with the school bus driver's operation of the school bus.

If a student is found to have engaged in physical acts of violence as defined by Code Section 20-2-751.6, the student shall be subject to the penalties set forth in that Code section.

A meeting of the parent or guardian of the student and appropriate school district officials must be held to form a school bus behavior contract whenever:

- A student is found to have engaged in bullying; or

- A student is found to have engaged in physical assault or battery of another person on the school bus; or
- As otherwise deemed appropriate by the school administration.

The school bus behavior contract shall provide for age-appropriate discipline, penalties, and restrictions for student misconduct on the bus. Provisions may include, but are not limited to, assigned seating, ongoing parental involvement, and suspension from riding the bus.

These provisions regarding use of a bus behavior contract are not to be construed to limit the instances when other code of conduct violations may require use of a student bus behavior contract.

The consequences for physical violence against a teacher, school bus driver, or other school personnel may include expulsion for the remainder of the student's eligibility to attend public schools.

Each school shall involve parents in developing and updating student codes of conduct. Each code shall require disciplinary action for each infraction of the code. All student codes on conduct shall be submitted to the board for approval.

The student code of conduct shall be distributed to each student and the student's parents or guardians during the first week of school and upon enrollment of each new student. The parents shall be requested to sign an acknowledgment of the receipt of the code of conduct and return promptly the acknowledgment to the school. The student code of conduct shall be available in the school office and each classroom.

Other Student Misconduct

*In reference to section 20-2-735(e) O.C.G.A.: "The Wilkes County School System encourages parents and guardians to inform their children on the consequences, including potential criminal penalties, of underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult.

Off-Campus Conduct

The Board has a responsibility to provide protection for students and employees and to provide and maintain a safe and orderly environment for education to take place. Therefore, it is the duty of the Board of Education to make necessary rules and policies to regulate student conduct for the purposes of maintaining good order and discipline in the schools.

Administrators are authorized to take disciplinary action for conduct, which occurs: (a) on the school grounds at any time; (b) off the school grounds at a school activity, function or event, or (c) enroute to and from school or a school activity.

Authority to take disciplinary action also extends to any off-campus non-school related actions by students, at any time of the year, which could be reasonably calculated to have direct and immediate impact on school discipline, the educational function of the school, or the welfare of the student and staff.

A student who has committed a criminal act while off-campus is subject to disciplinary action and may be excluded from school. Such acts would include, but would not be limited to, a felony, or an offense which would be considered to be a felony if the student were an adult, or an assault upon another, a violation of the drug laws or sexual misconduct of a serious nature. Such student whose presence on school property may endanger the welfare and/or safety of other students or staff, or whose presence may cause substantial disruption at school, would also be subject to other appropriate disciplinary action, including but not limited to, in-school suspension or assignment to an alternative educational program or site.

School officials shall contact proper authorities to verify any or all allegations that a student has been arrested or charged. The Superintendent and staff shall cooperate with the probation office or courts in order to allow that office to conduct a proper investigation. If the matter involves a juvenile, the Superintendent and staff shall cooperate with the Juvenile Court concerning the student's conduct and record in school.

Any suspension, expulsion, or exclusion from enrollment under this policy shall be handled in accordance with due process as set out in Board policy relating to suspension or expulsion.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The following pesticides are applied to this location on a regular basis each month.

- Maxforce FC Select — Cracks and crevices throughout interior
- Niban Granular Bait — Exterior of schools on specific ant mounds
- Phantom Pressurized Insecticide — Cracks and crevices throughout interior
- Talstar P — Exterior and in cracks and crevices throughout interior
- Uncle Albert's Super Smart Ant Bait — Cracks and crevices throughout interior
- Top Choice Granular Insecticide — Exterior

Pesticides are applied on the following days and times:

1. Interior of schools will be treated on the 1st Friday of each month after 3:00 p.m. in the cafeteria and classroom.
2. Emergency called treatments will be done on the 3rd Friday of each month.
3. Treatment of the exterior of schools is scheduled for the 1st Saturday of each month.
4. During the months of June and July, treatment at the schools is scheduled for Thursdays.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency warns that pregnant women should reduce or eliminate their exposure to all pesticides.

Any person requiring information concerning pesticides used during these applications may review the MATERIAL SAFETY DATA SHEET by contacting:

Josh Fincher
Director of Plant Operations Wilkes County
Board of Education
906 East Robert Toombs Avenue
Washington, GA 30673
Phone 706 678-3093

This information is provided according to HR 1317 effective 7/1/96.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY:

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the Education Amendments, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Wilkes County Board of Education prohibits discrimination against students or employees on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age or disability in any of its educational programs or activities. Prohibited sex discrimination includes, but is not limited to, sexual harassment and sexual violence, and discrimination against pregnant and parenting students. This requirement not to discriminate in educational programs and activities extends to employment therein. Inquiries concerning the application of this policy by the Board of Education may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator: Deleki Lee, 313-A North Alexander Avenue, Washington, GA 30673, Phone: 706-678-2718, email: leed@wilkes.k12.ga.us

Complaints made to the School District regarding alleged discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color or national origin in violation of Title VI, on the basis of sex in violation of Title IX or on the basis of disability in violation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Americans With Disabilities Act will be processed in accordance with the following procedure: (Wilkes County BOE Policy JAA)

1. Any student, employee, parent or other person with a complaint or report alleging a violation as described above shall promptly notify, in writing or orally, either the principal for his/her school or the appropriate coordinator designated from time to time by the Board of Education [or by the principal]. If the complaint is oral, either the coordinator or school principal to whom the complaint is made shall promptly prepare a memorandum or written statement of the complaint as made to him or her by the complainant and shall have the complainant read and sign the memorandum or statement if it accurately reflects the complaint made. If the complaint is made to a school principal, he or she shall be responsible for notifying the appropriate coordinator of the complaint.

2. If the alleged offending individual is the coordinator or the principal, the complaint shall either be made by the complainant to the Superintendent or, if the complaint is initially made to the school principal, reported by the principal to the Superintendent. If the alleged offending individual is the Superintendent, the complaint shall be made to the designated coordinator, who shall, without further investigation, report the complaint to the Board chairperson.

3. The coordinator or his or her designee shall have fifteen work days to gather all information relevant to the complaint made, review the information, determine the facts relating to the complaint, review the action requested by the complainant, and attempt to resolve the complaint with the complainant and any other persons involved. The coordinator or designee shall prepare a written response to the complaint detailing any action to be taken in response to the complaint and the time frame in which such action will be taken and copies of this response shall be furnished to the complainant, the appropriate coordinator and the principal or his or her designee.

4. If the complaint is not resolved at the conclusion of this fifteen-day period or if the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution of the complaint, the complainant shall have the right, within five work days of receiving a copy of the written response, to have the complaint referred to the Superintendent of Schools. If the alleged offending individual is the Superintendent, the complainant may have the complaint referred to the Board of Education, rather than the Superintendent.

5. The Superintendent shall have fifteen work days to review the complaint and the response of the coordinator or designee and attempt to resolve the complaint. The Superintendent shall furnish to the complainant a written response setting forth either his or her approval of the action

recommended by the coordinator or designee or the action to be taken by the School District in response to the complaint in lieu of that recommended by the coordinator or designee and the time frame in which such action shall be taken.

6. This policy is not intended to deprive any student or parent of any right they may have to file a complaint under any other applicable policy of the local board or to contact the Office of Civil Rights or other appropriate state or federal agency with regard to any allegations that the School District has violated the statutes described above.

7. The School District shall be responsible for distributing and disseminating information relevant to this policy and procedure to students, parents and employees through appropriate procedures.

8. No reprisal shall occur as a result of reporting unlawful discrimination or harassment under this policy, and any attempt to retaliate against a complainant shall be disciplined as is appropriate.

9. The confidentiality of any individual making a complaint or report in accordance with this policy, to the extent it is reasonably possible and complies with the law, shall be protected, although the discovery of the truth and the elimination of unlawful harassment shall be the overriding consideration.

Right to Know Professional Qualifications of Teachers and Paraprofessionals

Washington-Wilkes Elementary

Date: July 31, 2026

Dear Parents,

In compliance with the requirements of the Every Students Succeeds Act, Washington-Wilkes Elementary would like to inform you that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student's teacher(s) and/ or paraprofessional(s). The following information may be requested:

- Whether the student's teacher—
    - has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
    - is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and
    - is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.

- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teacher's and/ or paraprofessional's qualifications, please contact the principal, Amy Harkins at (706) 678-7124.

Sincerely,

Amy Harkins

WWES Principal
July 31, 2026

School Parent and Family Engagement Policy

Washington-Wilkes Elementary School

2026 – 2027

Revision Date: May 04, 2026

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, **Washington-Wilkes Elementary** receives Title I, Part A funds and therefore must jointly develop with, agree on with, and distribute to parents and family members of participating children a written parent and family engagement policy that contains information required by section 1116(b) and (c) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The policy establishes the school's expectations for parent and family engagement and describes how the school will implement a number of specific parent and family engagement activities, and is incorporated into the school's plan submitted to the local educational agency (LEA).

Washington-Wilkes Elementary agrees to implement the following requirements as outlined by Section 1116:

- Involve parents, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review, and improvement of programs under Title I, Part A, including the planning, review, and improvement of the school parent and family engagement policy and joint development of the schoolwide program plan under Section 1114(b) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).
- Update the school parent and family engagement policy periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the school, distribute it to the parents of participating children, and make the parent and family engagement policy available to the local community.
- Provide full opportunities, to the extent practicable, for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under Section 1111 of the ESSA in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- If the schoolwide program plan under Section 1114(b) of the ESSA is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, submit any parent comments on the plan when the school makes the plan available to the local educational agency.
- Be governed by the following statutory definition of parent and family engagement and will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with this definition:

Parent and Family Engagement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring:

A. Parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning
B. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school

C. Parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child
D. The carrying out of other activities, such as those described in Section 1116 of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). We will reserve 1% of the total amount of Title I funds received in FY23 to carry out the family involvement requirements listed in the policy. Throughout the year, we will collect input via surveys and feedback as to how funds can be best spent at WWES from the allocated 1%.

JOINTLY DEVELOPED

Washington-Wilkes Elementary will take the following actions to involve parents in an organized, ongoing, and timely manner in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs, including opportunities for regular meetings, if requested by parents, to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their child and respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible.

- The Parental Involvement Policy and Compact will be distributed at the beginning of the school year in student handbooks.
- A schoolwide meeting will be held in October to distribute the policy and allow for parent suggestions.

ANNUAL TITLE I MEETING

Washington-Wilkes Elementary will take the following actions to conduct an annual meeting, at a convenient time, and encourage and invite all parents of participating children to attend to inform them about the school's Title I program, the nature of the Title I program, the parents' requirements, the school parent and family engagement policy, the schoolwide plan, and the school-parent compact.

- Schedule title I Parent Meeting in October and April/May
- Meeting with be scheduled in the morning, evening, and/or virtual in order to provide time for parent to attend meetings.
- Notify parents of meeting using the following methods: School calendar, website, marque, Infinite Campus, Notices Sent home with students.

COMMUNICATIONS

Washington-Wilkes Elementary will take the following actions to provide parents of participating children the following:

- Timely information about the Title I programs
- Flexible number of meetings, such as meetings in the morning or evening, and may provide with Title I funds, transportation, child care or home visits, as such services relate to parent and family engagement.
- Information related to the school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities, is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand:

- Title I Parent meeting scheduled in October and April. Providing two times (Morning, Evening, and/or virtual) for parents to attend.
- Notices sent on school calendar, parent connections, school website, school marquee, and flyers.
- School council meetings – 4 times per year.

SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT

Washington-Wilkes Elementary will take the following actions to develop with parents of participating children a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the state's high standards.

- Provide parents the opportunity to provide feedback and suggestions at Annual Title I Parent Engagement Meeting
- Parent survey results will be utilized to revise the compact.
- Staff will have input on revisions.
- Student survey results will be utilized to make revisions.

COORDINATION OF SERVICES

Washington-Wilkes Elementary will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement programs and activities with other Federal, State, and local programs, including public preschool programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children by:

- Washington-Wilkes Elementary School will work with community services, school-based programs, and other programs in schools, when feasible, to improve student achievement, promote parental involvement, promote family literacy, and provide opportunities for smooth transition to school and to support the instructional program.
- Washington-Wilkes Elementary will continue to develop partnerships with agencies who provide services to children and families through Title I. We will strive to coordinate with community services such as Headstart, the Wilkes County Health Department, the Department of Family and Children Services, the Family Connection Communities in Schools, Wilkes County Emergency Management Agencies, Washington-Wilkes Parks and Recreation, and Wilkes County Sheriff's Department.

BUILDING CAPACITY OF PARENTS

Washington-Wilkes Elementary will build the parents' capacity for strong parent and family engagement to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school and the community to improve student academic achievement through the following:

- Providing parents with a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessments used to measure student progress, and the achievement levels of the challenging State academic standards; and
- Materials and training to help parents to work with their child to improve their child's achievement, such as literacy training and using technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy), as appropriate, to foster parent and family engagement
- Providing assistance to parents of participating children, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following:
  - The challenging State's academic standards
  - The State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments
  - The requirements of Title I, Part A
  - How to monitor their child's progress
  - How to work with educators to improve the achievement of their child

- Washington-Wilkes Elementary School involves parents in school activities in a variety of ways. (PTG programs, Academic Nights, Family Fun Events, Annual Christmas Program, Honors Day, Field Day, Fun in the Sun Day, Color Run, parent conferences)
- Parent workshops are scheduled to provide materials to help with academic areas, distribution of newsletters, and websites that include tips for working with children at home.
- Meetings and/or workshops are held to provide assistance to participating parents in understanding such areas as Georgia's content standards and student performance standards, the school improvement and corrective action process, components of a school wide Title I program, state and local assessments, or the requirements of Title I, Part A.
- Information is provided to parents through meetings, workshops, or printed documents so that parents understand the ways they can monitor their children's progress and work with educators to improve the performance of their children.
- Parents are informed of ways that they can participate in decisions relating to the education of their children.
- Washington-Wilkes Elementary School plans various school activities to include parents in school activities. These activities are documented through Parent Contact Records. Meetings involving parents are scheduled in the morning and evenings to maximize opportunities for parents to participate in school related activities.

BUILDING CAPACITY OF SCHOOL STAFF

Washington-Wilkes Elementary will provide training to educate teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other school leaders, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents and the school by:

- Provide professional development to staff on communicating with parents.
- Provide educational articles to staff about parent communication
- Schedule designated times for parent conferences.

Washington-Wilkes Elementary will provide other reasonable support for parent and family engagement activities under Section 1116 as parents may request by:

- Using information gained from surveys to plan family engagement activities
- Title I Parent Input meeting
- PTG Meetings
- School Council Meetings
- Informing office personnel of requests and suggestions

School-Parent Compact
Washington-Wilkes Elementary School
2026 - 2027
Revision Date: 05/04/2026

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Washington-Wilkes Elementary School, students participating in the Title I, Part A program, and their families agree that this compact outlines how parents, school staff, and students will share responsibility for improved student academic achievement. This compact also describes how the school and families will build and strengthen a partnership to help children achieve the state's high academic standards.

JOINTLY DEVELOPED

Parents, students, and staff at Washington-Wilkes Elementary School worked together to develop this School–Parent Compact for achievement. Teachers shared strategies to support learning at home, parents provided feedback regarding the support they need, and students shared ideas about what helps them learn best.

Parents are encouraged to attend annual revision meetings held in October and April/May to review the compact and make suggestions based on student needs and school improvement goals. Families are also encouraged to participate in the annual Title I Parent Survey, which helps gather feedback regarding current Title I programs and policies.

To understand how working together benefits your child, it is important to understand both the district and school goals for student achievement.

DISTRICT GOALS – WILKES COUNTY SCHOOLS

1. To achieve academic excellence by providing high-quality education, personalized support, and engaging learning experiences that prepare students for future success.
2. To enhance the efficiency of school operations while attracting, retaining, and developing skilled staff to support student success.
3. To foster a safe, inclusive, and supportive school climate through open communication, strong relationships, and a collaborative culture that empowers all stakeholders.

SCHOOL GOALS – WASHINGTON-WILKES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Washington-Wilkes Elementary School will:

- Increase student Reading scores on the universal screener. The screener is administered three times per year to students in 4th and 5th grades.

- Increase student Math scores on the universal screener. The screener is administered three times per year to students in 4th and 5th grades.
- Increase student reading/Lexile levels as measured by reading assessments administered three times per year to students in 4th and 5th grades.

WORKING TOGETHER FOR STUDENT SUCCESS (SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES)

To help your child meet district and school goals, the school, parents, and students will work together in the following ways:

School/Teacher Responsibilities

Washington-Wilkes Elementary School will:

- Provide parents with strategies to help improve students' reading and Lexile levels.
- Provide students with suggested reading lists that match their interests and reading/Lexile levels.
- Provide parents with strategies and resources to support math fact fluency, problem-solving, and mathematical thinking at home.
- Provide students with a minimum of 45 minutes per week of i-Ready instruction in ELA and Math.

Parent Responsibilities

As parents, we will:

- Read with our child and promote reading at home for at least 20 minutes each night.
- Encourage our child to practice math skills at home and discuss how math is used in everyday life.
- Attend school events whenever possible.
- Participate in parent conferences and meetings.
- Talk with our child about what they are learning at school.

Student Responsibilities

As students, we will:

- Bring home important school information, including newsletters, flyers, and graded work, to keep our families informed.
- Read for at least 20 minutes each night.
- Practice math skills regularly and ask for help when needed to improve our understanding.
- Complete homework and class assignments to the best of our ability.
- Talk with our families about what we are learning at school.
- Come to school prepared, ready to learn, and do our best each day.

COMMUNICATION ABOUT STUDENT LEARNING

Washington-Wilkes Elementary School is committed to maintaining frequent, two-way communication with families about student learning. Families can expect communication through:

- Rooms
- Parent Portal
- Google Classrooms
- Parent–Teacher conferences
- Weekly folders
- Emails regarding student progress
- Phone calls
- Other school communication methods as needed

ACTIVITIES TO BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

Washington-Wilkes Elementary School provides ongoing opportunities to strengthen partnerships with families, including:

- Parent–Teacher Conferences
- Parent Workshops
- PTG Meetings and Curriculum Nights
- Parent Resource Center
- Volunteering and Classroom Observations
- Open House
- Online Resources
- School Programs, Field Day, and Honors Day

WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

STUDENT SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Purpose

The Wilkes County School District recognizes that social media platforms can be valuable educational tools but also present risks and distractions if misused. This policy ensures that social media is used responsibly and safely in the school environment and on school issued devices. The district employs GoGuardian and additional monitoring software to restrict access to social media sites on all school-issued devices, with limited exceptions for approved purposes.

Applicability

This policy applies to all students using school issued devices at any time (on or off campus), as well as to social media use during school related activities, events, or programs.

Prohibited Use

1. Students are not permitted to access social media platforms on school issued devices for personal use.
2. Students must not attempt to circumvent or disable GoGuardian or any other web filtering/security measures through proxies, VPNs, or other methods.
3. Any form of bullying, harassment, hate speech, or posting of offensive content on social media platforms is strictly forbidden and subject to disciplinary action under the school's code of conduct and/or Anti-Bullying Policy.
4. Students may not create social media accounts that impersonate the school, staff members, or other students.

Approved Educational Use

1. Students may access age appropriate social media platforms only when a teacher or authorized staff member explicitly directs such use for a school related activity or project.
2. During approved usage, teachers must supervise students and ensure the online materials or activities are relevant, safe, and aligned with instructional goals.
3. Once the specific class activity is completed, students are expected to exit the social media site.

Parental Involvement

1. **Requesting Information:** Parents and guardians may request information regarding which social media platforms have been accessed by their child on a school issued device. To do so, they should contact the district's Technology Director or the building principal.

2. **Opt Out of Specific Platforms:** A parent or guardian who wishes to block their child's access to specific social media platforms (even for educational purposes) may submit a written request to the district's Technology Director or the building principal. The district will work with parents to accommodate these wishes whenever feasible.

3. **Home Monitoring:** Parents and guardians are encouraged to discuss social media safety and responsible online behavior with their children, even when students use personal devices outside of school.

Enforcement and Consequences

1. **Loss of Privileges:** Any student found violating this policy may lose the privilege of using school issued devices and/or face other disciplinary consequences under the school code of conduct.

2. **Severe Violations:** Serious or repeated infractions (e.g., consistent bypass attempts, cyberbullying, or posting harmful content) can result in suspension, referral to law enforcement, or other appropriate legal action.

3. **Documentation:** Violations will be documented by the appropriate staff member, and parents or guardians will be notified.

   Social media activity that occurs off campus or outside of school hours may still be subject to school disciplinary action if the content substantially disrupts the school environment, targets students or staff, involves bullying or harassment, threatens school safety, or otherwise violates district policies.

Policy Review and Updates

Wilkes County Schools will periodically review this policy in light of evolving technology and legal requirements. Parents, students, and staff, will be informed of any significant changes. Questions or concerns about the Social Media Policy may be directed to the district's Technology Director or building principal.

Acknowledgment and Consent

By signing below, we acknowledge that we have read and agree to abide by the Wilkes County Schools Student Social Media Policy.

Student Name (Print): _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (Print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

WILKES COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

STUDENT ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (AUP)

The Wilkes County Board of Education believes that providing students with access to technology and the Internet can enrich learning, foster creativity, and improve communication. To protect students and comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and the Protecting Georgia's Children on Social Media Act of 2024 (SB 351), the district uses safeguards on all school devices to block or filter content that is obscene, depicts child pornography, or is harmful to minors. This Student Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) explains the guidelines students must follow when using district owned devices, school networks, or district approved online services. By using these resources, students and their parents/guardians agree to follow these rules.

1. Prevention of Obscene or Harmful Content

In accordance with state and federal law, Wilkes County Schools uses GoGuardian and other technology protection measures to block or filter access to material that is obscene, depicts child pornography, or is harmful to minors as defined by CIPA and SB 351. These protections are in place on all school owned computers and Internet connected devices. The IT department promptly reviews requests to access material that is blocked but believed to be appropriate for educational purposes. To ensure these protections are effective and that students are using technology appropriately, the district monitors all activity on district devices, accounts, and networks. Students should have no expectation of privacy when using district technology. Any attempt to bypass or disable filtering or monitoring systems including the use of VPNs, proxies, or other methods, is prohibited. Violations may result in loss of Internet privileges, disciplinary action, and, if necessary, referral to law enforcement.

Wilkes County Schools provides opportunities for parents and guardians to collaborate with school staff regarding appropriate Internet access for students. Families may contact school administrators to discuss how online resources are managed and to request changes or restrictions to their child's Internet access that are consistent with district capabilities, applicable law, and the student's instructional needs. Upon written request, parents or guardians will receive a copy of this AUP, information on how the policy is enforced and related consequences, and the process for submitting a formal complaint if they believe the policy is being enforced inappropriately. Formal complaints must follow the district's established procedure and will receive a written response from an appropriate school or district official.

2. Respectful and Responsible Behavior

Students must act respectfully and responsibly in online spaces, just as they would in a classroom. Cyberbullying, harassment, threats, or posting harmful or offensive content are strictly prohibited. As part of the district's digital citizenship program, students receive age appropriate instruction on safe and appropriate behavior online, including how to recognize, avoid, and respond to cyberbullying. All digital communication should reflect courtesy and

respect. Students are also required to follow copyright laws by crediting creators and never downloading or sharing copyrighted material without permission.

Note: For guidelines concerning social media use on district devices, please refer to our **Social Media Policy**.

Note: For more information on how Wilkes County Schools addresses harassment or cyberbullying, please refer to our **Anti-Bullying Policy**.

3. Use of School Devices Only

All district owned devices are for educational purposes only. Students may not connect personal devices to the district network. They may not download or install unauthorized software or apps, and may not engage in any activities that disrupt learning or violate school rules when using district devices.

4. Damages to School Devices

Students are responsible for the careful and proper use of any district owned devices assigned to them. If a device is damaged due to intentional actions or careless behavior, the district will charge a flat repair fee of $75 to attempt repair. If the device is deemed irreparable by a district technician, the student (or the student's parent or guardian) will be responsible for the full replacement cost of the device. Repeated or serious incidents of device damage may also result in the loss of technology privileges and other disciplinary measures.

5. Privacy and Security

Wilkes County Schools reserves the right to review and inspect any files or messages sent or received on the school network or district-issued devices. Students must use only their assigned usernames and passwords and must not share login credentials or use someone else's account. They must avoid sharing personal information such as home address, phone number, or personal photos online, and immediately report suspicious emails, links, or attachments to a teacher or staff member. Students may not attempt to bypass security filters, including GoGuardian, or hide Internet activity through methods such as VPNs or proxies. They are also prohibited from attempting to gain unauthorized access to any account, network, or computer system. This includes hacking and any other type of unauthorized online activity.

6. Additional Google Services Parental Consent

Beginning March 2025, Google requires parental consent for users under 18 to access certain additional Google services (YouTube, Google Maps, and other non-core Google products). Without consent, students under 18 will be unable to use these services, even for school assignments.

Parents or guardians with questions should contact the district's Technology Director.

By signing this AUP, parents acknowledge that these Additional Google services will be used in the classroom and confirm their consent for their child to use these services.

7. Consequences of Misuse

Any violation of this policy may result in the loss of technology and Internet privileges and/or disciplinary action. Serious or repeated violations can lead to suspension, legal action, or referral to law enforcement. The severity of the consequence depends on the nature of the violation and the student's prior conduct. Parents or guardians will be informed of major or repeated infractions and may be asked to participate in resolving ongoing issues. These measures apply whether the violation occurs on or off school property if it involves district technology, accounts, or services.

8. Prohibited Uses

Students may not use district technology resources, devices, accounts, or networks to:

- Bypass or disable content filtering, monitoring, or security systems (including VPNs, proxies, or similar tools).
- Access websites, applications, or online services that are blocked, restricted, or inappropriate.
- Download, install, or run unauthorized software, apps, games, or browser extensions.
- Use another person's account, login credentials, or identity.
- Share personal information (such as full name, address, phone number, passwords, or images) without permission.
- Engage in hacking, unauthorized access, or activities that disrupt or damage systems, devices, or networks.
- Intentionally damage, alter, or remove hardware, software, settings, or cables from district devices.
- Introduce or spread viruses, malware, ransomware, or other harmful programs.
- Disable antivirus, firewall, or security settings on district devices.
- Post, send, or store content that is obscene, threatening, harassing, discriminatory, or otherwise harmful.
- Engage in cyberbullying or any form of online harassment.
- Use technology for non educational purposes that disrupt the learning environment.
- Access, create, or distribute inappropriate, explicit, or illegal material.

- Use technology to cheat, plagiarize, or gain unfair academic advantage.
- Attempt to change, delete, or tamper with district files, records, or accounts.
- Connect personal devices to the district network without authorization.
- Use technology for personal commercial gain, fundraising, or political campaigning.
- Attempt to impersonate staff, other students, or outside individuals online.
- Share or forward false, misleading, or harmful information.
- Access another student's work, assignments, or files without permission.
- Remove asset tags, barcodes, or identifying labels from district equipment.
- Use peer-to-peer file sharing, torrent sites, or other high-bandwidth services not required for classwork.

9. Acknowledgment and Updates

By signing this policy, students and their parents/guardians confirm they understand these rules and agree to follow them. Wilkes County Schools may update the Acceptable Use Policy as technology evolves or when legal requirements change. Questions about the policy should be directed to the school media specialist or the district's Technology Director.

Acknowledgment and Consent

By signing below, we acknowledge that we have read and agree to abide by the Wilkes County Schools Student Acceptable Use Policy and consent to the use of Additional Google Services.

Student Name (Print): _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (Print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____