



**Walter Johnson Middle School
Student/Parent Handbook
2026-2027**

**Principal - Mr. Antonio Lyerly
Assistant Principal - Ms. Ashley Brown
Assistant Principal - Mr. Lee Crawford**

Who are We?

We are a driven and inclusive learning community that values the power of collaboration. We are dedicated to opening our students' eyes to their potential, igniting intrinsic motivation, and equipping them for success both short and long term. We believe that all students can achieve and change our world.

701 Lenoir Road
Morganton, NC 28655
(828) 430-7340
(828) 430-4801 Fax
<https://wjms.burke.k12.nc.us/>
<https://www.facebook.com/WJMSJackets/>
<https://www.burke.k12.nc.us/>

Staff Email List

Grade Level	Name (content area)	Email
6th Grade	Mrs. Cotter (Math) Mr. Dula (Science) Mrs. Snead (Math) Mrs. Rhoney (ELA) Mr. Richardson (ELA) Ms. Suddreth (SS)	kcotter@burke.k12.nc.us tdula@burke.k12.nc.us jessicasnead@burke.k12.nc.us christinhoney@burke.k12.nc.us matthewrichardson@burke.k12.nc.us sarasuddreth@burke.k12.nc.us
7th Grade	Ms. Pearson (Social Studies) Mrs. Tramble (ELA) Ms. Houston (ELA) Ms. Pearl (Science) Mrs. McMichael (Math) Mrs. St.Louis (Math)	hannahpearson@burke.k12.nc.us madisontramble@burke.k12.nc.us gracehouston@burke.k12.nc.us susanpearl@burke.k12.nc.us tinamcmichael@burke.k12.nc.us ashleystlouis@burke.k12.nc.us
8th Grade	Mrs. Pam Barrier (ELA) Mr. Minetola (Science/SS) Mr. Nelson (Science/SS) Mrs. Yost (ELA) Ms. Gordon (Math) Mr. Buchanan (Math)	pambarrier@burke.k12.nc.us eminetol@burke.k12.nc.us anthonymnelson@burke.k12.nc.us hannahyost@burke.k12.nc.us katiegordon@burke.k12.nc.us nathanielbuchanan@burke.k12.nc.us
Special Education	Ms. Fisher Mrs. Tyson Rodriguez Ms. VanArtsdalen Mr. Rodriguez Mrs. Claudia Rodriguez (EC TA)	diannafisher@burke.k12.nc.us trodriguez@burke.k12.nc.us vickievanartsdalen@burke.k12.nc.us gabrielrodriguez@burke.k12.nc.us claudiarodriguez@burke.k12.nc.us
Instructional Support	Mrs. Baker (Reading Specialist)	kbaker@burke.k12.nc.us
ESL	Ms. Lucky (6th, 7th, & 8th) Ms. Cruz (6th, 7th, and 8th) Mr. Flores (Dual Language) 6th for Science & Social Studies	stacylucky@burke.k12.nc.us ayelencruzbautista@burke.k12.nc.us joelflores@burke.k12.nc.us
Exploratories	Mrs. Graybill (Chorus) Mrs. Fox (PLTW)	vgraybill@burke.k12.nc.us elizabethfox@burke.k12.nc.us

	Mr. Rogers (Band) Mr. Brown (Art) Mrs. Cortez (Business) Mr. Carter (Health/PE) Mrs. Hackett (Health/PE/AD) Mr. McCarrick (Health/PE/AD) Mrs. Savarese (Media Coordinator)	jonathanrogers@burke.k12.nc.us duanebrown@burke.k12.nc.us janettecortez@burke.k12.nc.us olivercarter@burke.k12.nc.us lisahackett@burke.k12.nc.us jmccarrick@burke.k12.nc.us sarahsavarese@burke.k12.nc.us
Support Services	Cindy Rose (School Nurse) Mrs. Roscoe (Inst. Coach) Mr. Travis Childers (IT) Brian Cox (SRO) Mr. Angley (Counselor) Mrs. Harrison (Counselor)	crose@burke.k12.nc.us crosoce@burke.k12.nc.us travischilders@burke.k12.nc.us briancox@burke.k12.nc.us robertangley@burke.k12.nc.us courtneysudderth@burke.k12.nc.us
Office Staff	Mr. Klanert (Bookkeeper) Mr. Mull (Data Manager) Mr. Chandler Moore ISS/Receptionist Mrs. Lilly Zamora (Parent Educator)	jasonklanert@burke.k12.nc.us bradymull@burke.k12.nc.us chandlermoore@burke.k12.nc.us lilianajavierzamora@burke.k12.nc.us
Administration	Mr. Lyerly (Principal) Ms. Brown (Assistant Principal) Mr. Crawford (Assistant Principal)	antoniolyerly@burke.k12.nc.us abrown@burke.k12.nc.us leecrawford@burke.k12.nc.us

Daily Schedule

Bell Schedule:

7:30 -Building opens for students
7:50-8:00 - Homeroom
8:00-9:26- First Block
9:26-10:08 - SWARM
10:10-11:34 - Second Block
11:36-1:34 - Third Block and lunch
1:36-3:00 - Fourth Block

Lunch:

6th - 11:36-12:11
7th - 12:12-12:47
8th - 12:48-1:23
Class times are staggered
within grade level times.

Alternate Schedules

<u>2-Hr. Delay</u>	<u>3-Hr. Delay</u>	<u>Early Dismissal</u>
NO 2nd CHANCE BREAKFAST	***NO BREAKFAST***	***NO 2nd CHANCE BREAKFAST***
9:30 - Morning Bell	10:30 - Morning Bell	7:30 - Morning Bell
9:50 - Tardy Bell/Homeroom	10:50 - Tardy Bell/Homeroom	7:50 - Tardy Bell/Homeroom

10:00 - 10:35 - 1.1	11:00 - 11:25 - 1.1	8:00 - 8:25 - 1.1
10:35 - 11:10 - 1.2	11:25 - 11:50 - 1.2	8:25 - 8:50 - 1.2
11:15 - 12:45 - 2nd block, Lunch	11:55 - 1:10 - 2nd block, Lunch	8:55 - 9:20 - 2.1
12:50 - 1:20 - 3.1	1:15 - 1:40 - 3.1	9:20 - 9:45 - 2.2
1:20 - 1:50 - 3.2	1:40 - 2:05 - 3.2	9:50 - 10:15 - 3.1
1:55 - 2:25 - 4.1	2:10 - 2:35 - 4.1	10:15 - 10:40 - 3.2
2:25 - 3:00 - 4.2	2:35 - 3:00 - 4.2	10:45 - 11:05 - 4.1
3:00 - Bus / Car Dismissal	3:00 - Bus / Car Dismissal	11:05 - 11:30 - 4.2
Lunch Schedule	***Lunch Schedule***	11:30 - Bus / Car Dismissal
6th - 11:15 / 7th - 11:45 / 8th - 12:15	6th - 11:55 / 7th - 12:20 / 8th - 12:45	***Bag Lunch***
(Grade levels work out seating and transition times)	(Grade levels work out seating and transition times)	8th - 10:10 am / 7th - 10:35 / 6th - 11:00

Student Arrival and Dismissal

1. Students who are dropped off at school are to be let out as quickly and safely as possible at the main entrance to the building. Please pull forward. **Doors will be unlocked at 7:30 am.**
2. Student breakfast will be available for car riders each morning starting at 7:30. Bus riders will be offered breakfast upon arrival. Second chance breakfast will be offered later in the morning.
3. Students not in their classrooms when the 7:50 bell rings are late and need to report to the lobby for a tardy slip.
4. Bus riders are dismissed at 3:00. Car riders are dismissed from school after first load buses roll out. Car riders should only be picked up at the main entrance. Students should be picked up by 3:30 pm.
5. **Students should not be dropped off or picked up in the bus area or staff parking lot.**

General Student Information (listed alphabetically)

2026-2027 Meal Prices:

BCPS families should plan on the following for the 2026-2027 school year:

- Breakfast and lunch will be served at no cost to all students.
- Adult meals will be priced à la carte.

Academic Progress Reports

We encourage all students and parents to take advantage of our Student/Parent Portal through PowerSchool. It allows for you to look at grades and attendance. If you need help setting that up, Mrs. Dickens, our data manager, can assist you. We will send academic progress reports

home every 4 ½ weeks. Report cards will go home at the end of each 9 weeks. [26-27 Reporting Periods](#)

Athletics

Athletics information can be found here:

Athletic Schedules

2026-2027 athletic schedules are available online at <https://www.burke.k12.nc.us/athletics/middle-school-sports> . Printed copies of athletic schedules are available upon request. These schedules are subject to change. Games/matches start at 4pm. Adult admission is \$5. Student admission is \$2.

[WJMS Athletic Schedule](#)

Attendance Policy

The student is responsible for all work that is missed during their absence. When a student is absent from school, the parent needs to provide a written note indicating the reason for the absence or a medical excuse signed by a doctor/dentist. **This note must be submitted to the office immediately upon returning to school.** Failure to bring a note following the absence will result in an unexcused absence. Parents may email the homeroom teacher. Absences are coded only as excused or unexcused. Illness, court, death in the immediate family, and student suspensions are all excused absences. If a student fails to bring a note from the parent or doctor/dentist, the absence is coded as unexcused.

In accordance with the Burke County Public Schools Attendance Policy, a medical note is required for all absences after the 8th absence. After a total of **eight unexcused absences**, the Attendance Counselor for Burke County Public Schools will be notified and parents and students may have to appear in court to justify absences. Letters will be sent out after the third, sixth, and tenth unexcused absences by the principal. On the day of an absence, students are not eligible to attend after school functions. This includes dances, concerts, and athletic events. Students must be present for at least 180 minutes of the school day in order to be counted present.

Students with excused absences may make up their work. **Upon returning to school, it is the student's responsibility to arrange make-up work within three days.**

Student Code of Conduct/Discipline Procedures for "Unexcused Tardies".

- 3 Unexcused Tardies = Warning notification given by school official.
- At Walter Johnson Middle School, we value each and every student's academic progress and excellence. Please make every effort to assure your child arrives at school on time. The less disruptions to class, the more time our teachers can spend on instruction.

Authority of all Adult Employees

In order to keep students safe and maintain order, all WJMS employees have the authority and responsibility to correct and redirect students when the need arises. **If any student is corrected by any adult employee, whether the employee is faculty, clerical, cafeteria, custodial, bus driver, or substitute teacher, the student is expected to respond appropriately to such correction.**

Behavior Expectations Matrix

The [HIVE behavior expectations matrix](#) outlines expected student behavior across all settings. This matrix will be explicitly taught throughout the school and all students will be held accountable in order to create a safe and successful learning environment at Walter Johnson Middle school.

Buses

The buses and the bus stops are an extension of the school. All school rules apply in both settings. Riding the bus is a wonderful privilege for students, but that privilege may be taken away if proper behavior is not exhibited at the bus stop and on the bus. Check with administration concerning times of drop off and pick up and the location of bus stops. **Written permission is required to get off at a different stop which must be approved by an administrator. This must be approved prior to 11:30. If a student is riding home with another student on the bus, both students must have a note from a parent/guardian giving permission. These notes must be signed by an administrator.** Riding a different bus is discouraged due to our buses being full, however if there is an extenuating circumstance and you must ride a different bus, please contact the school prior to 11:30.

Cell Phones

At Walter Johnson Middle School students are required to keep cell phones in their locker. WJMS staff are not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged cell phones. Staff will follow BCPS board protocols for confiscation of cell phones. Student cell phones will not be allowed in classrooms during instruction time, unless they are being used for instructional purposes. **BCPS policy gives teachers authority to confiscate cell phones and turn them over to parents at the end of the school day.**

[BCPS Board Policy 4318](#)

[Code 4300 R](#) (violation of policy)

Debts

Please make every effort to send in library books and pay technology fees in order to be in good standing at Walter Johnson Middle School. All debts must be paid in order to participate in extracurricular school activities (athletic events and dances) along with field trips. We will send letters home with students regarding any debt incurred. While lunch is free for all students this year, they will be charged for “extras” in the cafeteria. If you would like your student to be limited when buying “extras” in the cafeteria, please call Terri Woods, cafeteria manager at 828-430-7340 ext 702, or email her at terriwoods@burke.k12.nc.us.

Devices

The device that your child is being issued is an educational tool and should be used in that capacity. Failure to comply with the Responsible Use Policy and the following guidelines will result in loss of take-home privileges. Before a student is granted permission to take their assigned technology device home, they and their parent/guardian must sign a permission form and pay the annual fee. **This annual, non-refundable rental fee is not insurance on the device.** If the technology assigned to your child is lost, stolen, or damaged through negligence, vandalism, or failure to follow the proper care guidelines, then you are responsible for the cost of repair. If the device can not be repaired, you will be responsible for a full replacement cost (fees listed below). **Chromebook Devices will be left at school**

Charger Replacement: \$35.00

Keyboard Repair: \$75.00

Screen Repair: \$100.00

Device Replacement: Cost Varies depending on the Model of the Device

All technology is the property of Burke County Public Schools. BCPS reserves the right to demand the immediate return of the equipment at any time.

Dress Code

Please refer to [Policy 4316](#) for a description of inappropriate clothing. Students should not wear anything disruptive, provocative, vulgar, obscene, or which advertises illegal drugs or displays obnoxious or indecent signs, symbols or drawings, or which endangers the health or safety of the students or others is prohibited. Shorts, skirts, and dresses should not be shorter than mid-thigh. No inappropriate tops, midriff, see-through clothing, or clothing that allows exposed undergarments are allowed. If students do not meet the Burke County Board of Education Policy 4316, they will be asked to change clothing or call home for a change of clothes. Multiple offenses could warrant ISS.

Early Student Dismissal

Parents are to sign their child out in the office if they are leaving early. **Students may only be picked up by those listed on the student's contact list. If there is someone else that you need to pick up your child from school, stop by the office to add them to your child's approved pick up list. This is a very important safety measure for our school and your child. Be prepared to show identification in order to pick up a student.**

Emergency School Closing

It may be necessary to close or delay school because of bad weather or unsafe driving conditions. Local TV, radio stations, the BCPS website, and the BCPS Facebook page will

announce school closing information when necessary. If you have an updated phone number in our school database, you will receive a phone call concerning delays and closings from BCPS.

Field Trips

Extracurricular field trips are a privilege. Students who have had OSS or 3 or more days of ISS may not be allowed to attend field trips. Students may appeal up to 2 weeks prior to the trip to the Principal. A decision will be relayed back to the students one week prior to the trip.

Homework

Homework may be assigned to students on a regular basis as a way to supplement and strengthen the student's learning in the classroom. The student will be held responsible for turning in completed assignments. Students who have been ill and absent from school are to complete assignments within three days.

In-School Suspension (ISS)

When a student is assigned to ISS by an administrator, they will spend the assigned time in a designated area to reflect and complete work. **Rules broken in ISS may result in out-of-school suspension (OSS).**

Lockers

All lockers on the school premises are the property of Walter Johnson Middle School. Locks are sold in the office for ten dollars. They can also be purchased online via MySchoolBucks.com or at open house. Locks purchased will be turned in at the end of the school year for safekeeping and given back to the student each subsequent year until they complete eighth grade. Only school-issued locks are permitted on hallway lockers. Students may store school supplies and personal items necessary for use at school. Student lockers will serve as the designated location for cell phones during the instructional day. Students will have access to their locker before the tardy bell and at the end of the school day unless otherwise authorized by administration. **The school retains the right to inspect any locker at any time.**

Lost and Found

Students who find lost articles are asked to take them to the school office during the school day. These items will be added to the lost and found bin.

My School Bucks

Device, lock, and cafeteria fees can be paid through MySchoolBucks.com .

To find the My School Bucks website, go to the Burke County Public Schools webpage

- Hover over the "Links" tab.
- Go down to select the "My School Bucks" option.
- You can open an account and then add your student with their student ID#.

School Dances

Dances are scheduled at different times during the school year. Students are required to exhibit appropriate behavior and are expected to follow all school rules while at a school dance. Students must be in attendance at school the day of the dance in order to attend.

Students are to be picked up directly after the end of the event or risk losing the privilege to attend other after school events. The price for admission is five dollars and dances will be held from 3:00 - 5:00 pm. The dates of 2026-2027 School Dances will be held on 10/23/2027, and 3/5/2027. 8th grade formal will be held on 5/7/2027 from 5:00-7:30. Dances are \$5 for admission. The price of admission for the 8th grade formal is \$10.

Visitors

All visitors must sign in and obtain a visitor's pass which must be returned to the office when they leave.

BCPS POLICY MANUAL

BCPS STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT Policy Code: 4300-R

The above list of rules (Code 4300-R) for the Burke County Schools is provided as guidance for students, parents, teachers and administrators. This cannot be an all-inclusive list; however, administrators shall use their discretion in dealing with all specific behavior that violates the principles set forth in this policy. Consideration is to be given to the student's cognitive and developmental ability to appreciate the significance of his/her behavior and to assume responsibility for behavior.

This policy pertains to all students in the Burke County Public Schools while they are on the campus of any school in the Burke County School system, while they are participating in any activity sponsored by the Burke County Public Schools, while they are being transported in a vehicle owned or operated by the Burke County Public Schools, while they are awaiting pick-up/drop-off at a bus stop, while going to or from a bus stop, in route to and from school, while they are representing the Burke County Public Schools in any way or while students are off campus if the incident was initiated at school or if the incident could substantially disrupt the school environment. In circumstances where student behavior indicates that the student's continued presence in the school constitutes a clear threat to the safety of employees or other students, a student may be suspended or expelled regardless of where the acts and conduct occur. Students may be suspended for off-campus conduct only if the conduct otherwise violates the Student Code of Conduct AND the conduct has or is reasonably expected to have a direct and immediate impact on the orderly operation of the school or on the safety of individuals in the school environment. It is expected that any subsequent infraction will build upon disciplinary actions of previous infractions.

Students may be subject to random searches for weapons or contraband upon entering a school building or event.

In any case where out of school suspension is utilized, a parental conference with the principal and/or teacher(s) is required before re-entry into school. If the parent/guardian cannot or will not come to school for a conference, the student may come back to school at the discretion of the principal. Parents should be informed of all out-of-school suspensions by phone if at all possible, as well as the written notice required by law. All rule infractions will be retained in the Burke County Uniform Disciplinary Database.

The Superintendent and principals are allowed to consider the student's intent, disciplinary and academic record, the potential benefits of alternatives to suspension, and other mitigating and aggravating factors when deciding whether to recommend or impose long term suspension. ("Special circumstances")

BCPS POLICIES PERTAINING TO GRIEVANCES

DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW

[Policy 1710/4020/7230](#)

TITLE IX NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX

[Policy 1720/4030/7235](#)

TITLE IX SEXUAL HARASSMENT - PROHIBITED CONDUCT AND REPORTING PROCESS

[Policy 1725/4035/7236](#)

TITLE IX SEXUAL HARASSMENT - DEFINITIONS

[Policy 1725/4035/7236-R](#)

TITLE IX SEXUAL HARASSMENT GRIEVANCE PROCESS

[Policy 1726/4036/7237](#)

NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF DISABILITIES

[Policy 1730/4022/7231](#)

STUDENT AND PARENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

[Policy 1740/4010](#)

RESPONDING TO COMPLAINTS

[Policy 1742/5060](#)