

August 2024



# BACK TO SCHOOL

Featuring

**COLUMBUS COUNTY and  
WHITEVILLE CITY SCHOOLS**

*A Special Publication of The News Reporter*



# Whiteville City Schools

EVERYONE COMMITTED TO THE SUCCESS OF ALL STUDENTS

Dear Parents, Students, and Community Members,

On behalf of the proud and dedicated board of education, administration, faculty, and staff, I welcome you to the 2024-2025 school year! As a result of hard work and perseverance of our staff last year, we celebrate significant increases in student achievement, the WCS graduation rate, and safety protocols. Once again, students and student-athletes earned champion status in and out of the classroom with success at the local, state, and national levels. In addition, our staff working conditions data continue to lead our region in key indicators as reported by the 2024 Teacher Working Conditions Survey.

We eagerly await the opening of our doors to the new school year on Aug. 26. Although we celebrate the success we have attained, there is much work to be done to continue to improve on past performances as well as our theme of sustaining growth. We will consult with all stakeholders to seek ways to improve teaching and learning conditions in all schools with safety for students and staff as our first priority. Administrators have worked diligently to recruit and retain high quality staff members in every area of the district, but we are still searching for key people to join our family. Finally, we are keenly aware that all of the aforementioned components culminate in what happens in our classrooms. Our strategic plan is being revised to reflect our focus for this and clearly define our district goals for this school year.

Our school system is rooted in a passionate community steeped in tradition. We flourish because "Everyone is Committed to the Success of All Students." Your input and continued support is always appreciated. You are always welcome to come by and share your concerns or ideas. I look forward to visiting with you in the office, school, or out in the community. Thank you for allowing us to serve your students and your family. Go Pack!



**Jonathan Williams**  
Superintendent

Jonathan Williams, Superintendent  
Whiteville City Schools  
107 W. Walter St.  
Whiteville, NC 28472  
whiteville.k12.nc.us  
910-642-4116

## Whiteville Primary

Dear Wolfcub Families,

We are excited to welcome students, staff, and families back to school for the 2024-2025 school year! As we embark on this new academic journey together, we are filled with anticipation for the exciting opportunities and experiences that lie ahead.



We believe that collaboration and communication are key to a successful educational experience. Therefore, we invite you to be a partner in our school by volunteering, joining the PTA, attending and/or supporting school events. We also encourage parents and guardians to stay involved in your child's education. Your support is invaluable to our school's success.

Our dedicated staff has been working diligently to create a stimulating and supportive learning environment where every student can reach their full potential. We are committed to fostering a strong sense of community, collaboration, and academic excellence.

My experiences this past year reinforced my belief in the incredible potential of our students. I am committed to creating a learning environment where every child feels valued, empowered, and inspired to reach their full potential.

I look forward to meeting each one of you in person at our open house Thursday, August 22, from 2-6 p.m. and working closely with our dedicated staff to provide the best possible educational experience for our students. Please follow our "Whiteville Primary School" Facebook page and check out our website at <https://wps.whiteville.k12.nc.us/>

We look forward to a fantastic school year filled with growth, collaboration, and achievement. Welcome back Wolfcubs!

Ashlee White,  
Principal



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# Edgewood Elementary

Dear Edgewood Elementary Families,

As we embark on another exciting year at Edgewood Elementary School, I am filled with enthusiasm and optimism for the journey ahead. Our school community is a special place where students, families, and staff come together to create a support and enriching environment.



First and foremost, I want to extend a warm welcome to our new families joining Edgewood. We are delighted to have you as part of our community and look forward to getting to know you. To our returning families, welcome back! Your continued support and involvement are invaluable to us, and we are excited to continue our partnership in your child's educational journey.

At Edgewood, we believe that a strong home-school connection is essential for student success. We encourage you to stay involved in your child's education by attending school events, joining the PTA, and maintaining open communication with teachers and staff. Your participation and support make a significant difference in our students' lives and help create a vibrant and thriving school community.

"Do the Right Thing" is and will continue to be an expectation that I apply to myself, the students and the adults that support those students in the classroom, on our campus and in students' homes. I believe all children should receive an exemplary education in an environment that is safe and conducive to learning. Students should receive all the support that can be provided by the adults in their life to ensure that they reach their maximum potential as a student and as a young person.

As we begin this new school year, let us embrace the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead with a positive and collaborative spirit. Together, we can create an environment where every student feels valued, supported, and inspired to reach their full potential.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child's education at Edgewood Elementary School. We are honored to be a part of their academic journey and look forward to a fantastic year.

Please be on the lookout in your mailbox for postcards coming soon with class assignments, and plan to join us during our open house Thursday, Aug. 22, from 2-6 p.m. It's a Great Day to Be a WOLFIE!

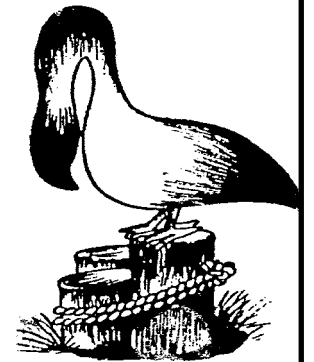
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## Central Middle

Dear Hornet Family,

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year! I am challenging each of you to set high expectations and focus on gaining new knowledge and skills. Together we must be committed to continuous improvement so we can lift Central to new levels of excellence.



Please join us for our open house Thursday, Aug. 22, between 4 and 7 p.m. During this time you can get your schedule, meet your teachers, and get to know the campus of Central Middle School!

Central Middle School information:

- Please follow our "Central Middle School" Facebook and Instagram pages.
- Check out our website at [cms.whiteville.k12.nc.us](https://cms.whiteville.k12.nc.us).
- 7:30 a.m. is the earliest drop-off in the morning.
- 8 a.m. is the tardy bell. Any student arriving after 8 a.m.

will have to be signed in by their parent.

- 3:05 p.m. is dismissal for car, walking and bus students.

Our dedicated teachers and staff have been hard at work preparing for a successful school year. Our administrative team is Katherine Hyatt, principal, Shanequa Collier, assistant principal, and Steven Clontz, assistant principal. Together the three of us will work to help students become productive and respectful citizens.

Communication and collaboration are key to a successful school year. We would love for parents to be connected to ClassDoJo, Facebook and Instagram. Central is transitioning to a new data management program called Infinite Campus and will no longer have PowerSchool. You will have to set up a new parent portal to check your child's grades and school information. We will have Infinite Campus letters with account information for you at Open House. You are encouraged to attend social events, meetings, and athletic games. Middle school is such an exciting time because the addition of the band, cheerleaders, athletes, and clubs means that school spirit soars!

Please know that the health and safety of our students and staff are a priority. We will work to provide a secure and clean school environment and I am looking forward to a successful school year! My door is always open to you. By working together we can make this the best year yet!

Let's Go, Hornets!

**Katherine Hyatt,**  
*Principal*



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# Whiteville High

Welcome Back to School, Wolfpack Community,

My name is W.T. Edwards, and as the principal of Whiteville High School, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2024-2025 school year! My passion has always been within the education field. I am a resident of the Whiteville community with my wife, Brittany, and two girls, Gray (6) and Avery (3). We are excited to serve grades nine through 12 within our Whiteville community and look forward to a year filled with learning, growth, and success.



I would like to extend a warm invitation to our upcoming events. Freshman Orientation will take place Wednesday, Aug. 21, from 9 a.m.-noon. This is a wonderful opportunity for our new students to become acquainted with the school, meet their teachers, and start building connections. Additionally, our Open House is scheduled for Thursday, Aug. 22, from 4-7 p.m. We encourage all students and parents to attend, meet the faculty, and explore the school environment.

For more information about our school and to stay updated on all our events, please visit our website at Whiteville High School. You can also follow us on Facebook at "Whiteville High School Home of the Wolfpack" to keep up with the latest news and announcements.

As we prepare for the new school year, please note the following important information regarding our daily schedule. Students should not be dropped off earlier than 7:30 a.m. each school day. The tardy bell rings promptly at 7:50 a.m., and the school day concludes with dismissal at 2:50 p.m.

We are committed to providing a safe, supportive, and engaging atmosphere where every student can thrive. Our dedicated staff is here to support your children every step of the way, and we are looking forward to partnering with you to ensure a successful year, together!

Thank you for your continued support of Whiteville High School. Go Wolfpack!

**W.T. Edwards,**  
Principal



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## NORTH WHITEVILLE ACADEMY

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[www.nwa.whiteville.k12.nc.us](http://www.nwa.whiteville.k12.nc.us)  
 April Corbett, Principal




Dear Parents/Guardians, Students, and Community Members,  
 I am very pleased to welcome you to North Whiteville Academy. As this new school year begins and I serve as the new principal, I am excited about the learning and academic successes that will take place throughout our time together. I know that these successes will extend outside of the school building and have lasting impacts on students' personal lives and the community.

North Whiteville Academy serves grades seven through 12. We strive to create an environment that supports all of the social and emotional needs of each student, so that they can achieve academic success. The staff here places a priority on making sure that each student receives the attention and support they need to be successful in their endeavors.

Our goal is that when students obtain their high school diploma and transition into post-secondary education, seek employment, or enlist into a military branch, they will be prepared and have the tools necessary to be successful. Reaching this goal requires the commitment and collaboration of everyone involved in the lives of our students.

The staff and I look forward to working with you all to achieve this objective. Our Open House will be Thursday, Aug. 22, from 1-3 p.m. Feel free to join us during this time, or contact me if there are any questions or concerns.



**Jamal Soles**  
Principal



Back to school



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# 'It's what I love' — Jackson and Horne represented Whiteville as teacher and assistant of the year

Whiteville Primary School kindergarten teacher Alexa Jackson was WCS Teacher of the Year for the 2023–2024 school year. Karen Horne, of Edgewood Elementary School, was WCS Teacher Assistant of the Year.

## Jackson, teacher of the year

Jackson's passion for education began early in her life. As a young girl, "I would line my teddy bears and dolls up and have class" with them, she told The News Reporter in an interview. Jackson was named for the honor at the school district's annual back to school breakfast held Aug. 23, 2023, in the Whiteville High School cafeteria. .

"I knew as a little girl I was going to be a teacher," Jackson said. "I never changed my mind."

For the past 28 years, Jackson has taught at various grade levels, with 12 of those years at Whiteville Primary School, she said.

When asked what she enjoys most about working in education, Jackson said she appreciates all the love she receives from her students. "I get all these smiles and I-love-yous," she said, "which just makes every day special."

Jackson said she was "very blessed" to work in Whiteville City Schools.

## Horne, teacher assistant of the year

Unlike Jackson, Horne didn't intend to go into education from the outset of her career. Prior to embarking upon a profession in education, she worked as a nurse, she said.

However, "When my children started school," Horne said, "I wanted to be where they were." One day, a position opened up in a special education class. She applied, got the job, "and I have been working with special ed children ever since," Horne said. She's been employed with the city schools for 23 years.

Celebrating the accomplishments of her students is the highlight of her



STAFF PHOTO BY JOSEPH WILLIAMS

Alexa Jackson, left, a kindergarten teacher at Whiteville Primary School, was Whiteville City Schools 2023–2024 Teacher of the Year. Karen Horne was named the district's Teacher Assistant of the Year.

day's work. "I enjoy seeing their success, no matter how small it is," she said.

"It's an honor to have been working for Whiteville City Schools," Horne said. "It's in my heart. It's what I love."

Teachers and teacher assistants of the year from individual schools were also recognized at the ceremony.

Rachael Beverley was named Edgewood Elementary School Teacher of the Year; Shanequa Collier was named Central Middle School Teacher of the Year; Jami Hinson was named North Whiteville Academy Teacher of the Year and Curtis Moss was named Whiteville High School Teacher of the Year. April Stevens was named Whiteville Primary School Teacher Assistant of the Year.

Collier, previously a seventh grade math teacher, has since taken an assistant principal position at the middle school.

Columbus County Schools is expected to announce its next Teacher of the Year later this month.

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John Philip Stoll, R.Ph.  
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*Wishing You a Safe and Successful School Year!*



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# CITY STUDENTS DRESS CODE

*Policy Code: 4316*

The Whiteville City Board of Education believes a safe and disciplined learning environment is the first requirement of a high performing school. The implementation of school uniforms will help minimize disruptive behavior, promote respect for oneself and others, build school/community spirit, and, more significantly, help to maintain high academic standards by enhancing the instructional program. The wearing of uniforms will promote the quick identification of intruders on campus. Uniforms will also allow students to focus more acutely on learning by eliminating the distractions of fashion and style. School administration will enforce the policy to ensure the safety of the students and compliance with the dress code policy set forth by the Whiteville City Schools Board of Education.

## A. IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

Students are required to wear uniforms, which began with the 2009-10 school year.

## B. INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

School officials will communicate information concerning the uniform policy to students, parents, teachers, and the community. This information will include general guidelines for implementation and will be achieved by using one or more of the following: newsletters, parent forums, PTA meetings, School Improvement Team meetings, TV and radio announcements, newspaper, Whiteville City Schools social media, phone, flyers, and posters.

## C. GENERAL STUDENT APPEARANCE

In addition to being required to wear school uniforms, all students are to be groomed and dressed appropriately for school and school activities. A student's dress and/or appearance shall:

1. Support, not disrupt, the learning environment;
2. Constitute no threat to health or safety;
3. Be tasteful and unable to

be construed as provocative or obscene;

4. Reflect practices of good hygiene and cleanliness.

## D. RELIGIOUS BELIEFS - MEDICAL REASONS

Reasonable consideration shall be made for those students who, because of a sincerely held religious belief or medical reason, request a waiver of a particular guideline for dress or appearance. The waiver request shall be made in writing from the parent or guardian and approved by the principal. In considering a waiver request, the principal may request additional documentation from medical officials and/or religious leaders.

## E. SPECIAL ACTIVITY ACCOMMODATIONS

Reasonable accommodation shall be made by the principal for students involved in special duties, activities, or projects approved by the school. This may include, but is not limited to athletics, career and technical education, physical education classes, special events, or any other activities that require non-conforming dress on a school campus during a school-sponsored event. In the case of athletics, this includes "spirit-wear" (e.g., Wolfpack t-shirts or athletic team shirts) which shall be worn over regulation uniform shirts/blouses.

## F. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Parents and/or guardians who have concerns about the affordability of a school uniform should contact the principal. The principal and/or school social worker will assist the family with identifying community resources that may be able to help procure the required school uniforms. The

school system will not be responsible for funding uniforms for any students.

## G. SCHOOL UNIFORM

The principal will implement the school uniform and appearance policy in a manner that is age and developmentally appropriate. Good judgment in considering issues such as age, developmental stages, and body type are expected of all students, parents, and guardians in the selection of school attire and appearance. The manner of a student's wear of the school uniform shall be neat, clean, properly fitted, age-appropriate and suitable for the learning environment.

## 1. SHIRTS/BLOUSES

- a. Interim Superintendent



on two days during a week rather than one. Principals will collaborate with student groups and faculty members to designate those special occasions."

b. Students must wear plain long or short-sleeved golf/polo or woven shirts with a collar. Long-sleeved, button-up shirts will not be worn over the approved uniform shirts.

c. With the exception of school-approved logos, shirts may have no insignias, logos, labels, words or pictures.

d. Shirts must be appropriately sized.

e. Shirts shall be long enough to cover the midriff when sitting or standing. Shirts must cover the chest and back so the chest and the back of the body are not exposed.

f. Undergarments may not be visible at any time. However, students may wear plain white or school color T-shirts under shirts which may be visible at the neckline of the collar.

g. See-through or mesh tops that will reveal the body or will reveal undergarments are prohibited.

h. Clothing shall be worn appropriately

(not inside-out or backwards; no rolled up pant legs, etc.) at all times.

## 2. LIGHTWEIGHT JACKETS/COATS/OVERCOATS

Students may wear sweaters, vests, light jackets, or sweatshirts over school uniforms when appropriate as determined by the school administration. Hooded jackets are permitted, but hoods may not be worn in the building as this

is considered headgear.

## 3. DRESS PANTS, SHORTS, SKORTS, JUMPERS, CAPRI LENGTH PANTS, DRESSES

a. Solid khaki, dark navy, or black are the only permissible colors for these uniform items.

b. No denim material or rivets allowed on pants.

c. Must be free of graphics and embroidery. With the exception of small labels, they may not have insignias, logos, words, or pictures.

d. Shorts, skirts, skorts and jumpers shall be modest and of sufficient length of no more than four (4) inches above the knee.

e. No pants or shorts with enlarged pockets. Pockets must not be of the "cargo" type and must not include zippers, buttons, Velcro closures, straps, or snaps. Pants are limited to no more than two front and two rear pockets. Watch pockets are not considered a pocket.

f. Clothing must be appropriately sized. No baggy or sagging pants or shorts are allowed. No "low rise" clothing is allowed. Pants must not be worn with the waistband below the hipbone. Joggers are not permitted as uniform attire.

g. Garments cannot have frays and must be hemmed and not dragging the floor.

h. Garments that do not fit properly will not be tolerated, including oversized, undersized, and skintight garments. Form-fitting spandex material, nylon, denim, corduroy, and sweat pants are prohibited (including leggings and "jeggings").

i. Pants must have zippers, buttons or snaps with the exception of Pre-K through Grade 2 students.

J. Skirts are limited to no more than four pockets.

k. Garments may not have more than two slits and the slits cannot exceed four inches above the knee.

l. Capri pants are allowed but cannot be hip huggers, cannot

Continued on page 10

dent Danny McPherson wrote to *The News Reporter* Aug. 9: "Effective this school year, students have the flexibility to wear Polo shirts of any solid color. Schools will also have the opportunity on specific, designated occasions-as approved by the principal-to wear 'school spirit shirts'

# Dress code

Continued from page 9

be skin tight, and the manufactured slit at the bottom of the Capri pant cannot be above the knee.

m. Pants may not have a slit that exceeds four inches from the bottom of the pant leg.

n. Pants may not be rolled up in a cuff to simulate Capri pants or shorts.

o. One-piece jump suits are not allowed.

## 4. BELTS

a. Students in grades 3 through 12 must wear belts if the garment was manufactured with belt loops. Belts must be with a plain belt buckle that is not over two inches. All belts must be appropriately buckled.

b. Pre-K through Grade 5 students are not required to wear a belt.

c. Graphics, metal decorations (spikes and studs), or labels are unacceptable on all belts and belt buckles.

d. Belts must be an appropriate length and not hang below the straddle.

## 5. SHOES

a. Shoes shall be worn at all times. As needed, shoes shall conform to special class requirements such as P.E. classes, JROTC, science labs, and any other classes as deemed necessary by the teacher and the principal.

b. Shoes and boots that have laces shall be laced and tied.

c. No bedroom shoes shall be allowed.

d. "Flip-flop" style shoes or "athletic slides" are not allowed. Sandals with a back are permitted in Grades K-2. Sandals in Grades 3-12 are at administrative discretion.

e. Shoes may not be altered in any way from the manufactured design, style, or functionality.

f. Shoelaces must match, and any straps must be secured.

g. Knee-high boots that lace up over the pant leg are prohibited.

h. Shoes with spiked heels are prohibited.

## 6. SOCKS

a. Both socks must match.

b. Socks must be worn in a manner that does not undermine the integrity of the uni-

form.

c. Socks must be one solid color.

d. Socks may not be worn over pant legs.

e. Students may wear solid colored panty hose, tights, or knee-high stockings.

## 7. JEWELRY

a. Students may not wear large pendants or medallions. Jewelry designed to be worn around the neck must be worn beneath the shirt/blouse of the uniform at all times.

b. No adornment is allowed that reasonably could be perceived as, or used as, a weapon. This includes, but is not limited to chains, spikes, and certain belt buckles.

c. Only school activity buttons, approved by the principal are permitted to be worn on a student's school uniform, purse, book bag, or any other article of clothing or personal article.

d. Heavy chains, spiked accessories, excessively large earrings or other heavy jewelry are not allowed.

## 8. HATS/SUN-GLASSES/HEAD-GEAR

a. Neither headwear nor sunglasses shall be worn inside school buildings. Head sweatbands are considered headwear for purposes of this school uniform policy.

b. No bandanas shall be allowed as an article of clothing and shall not be in the possession of any student. Bandanas will be confiscated and may be submitted to law enforcement officials as possible evidence of gang-related activity. School officials will not return bandanas or other items that may be determined to have gang-related purposes upon confiscation.

c. Hats, do-rags, skull caps, scarves, sweat bands, head bands or other items that may be seen as a disruption to the school setting are prohibited

in school during the regular school day.

## 9. OTHER CLOTHING ITEMS OR ACCESSORIES

a. No gang-related clothing, accessories, symbols or intimidating manner of dress, as identified by local law enforcement agencies, are allowed.

b. Clothing shall not promote alcohol, tobacco, or drug use.

## 10. OTHER UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS



a. Students are expected to be dressed in compliance with the standards for uniforms as established by this policy at all times while school is in session.

b. Students who are taking classes that require a special dress code (such as JROTC or career and technical education

internships) may wear that uniform to other classes.

c. Students who are issued uniforms by the school which are used to represent the school in athletic contests approved by the Principal or other school sponsored activities may be allowed to wear team uniforms as directed by coaches.

d. Students who take a class at another school must wear the uniform shirt/blouse/top of their home school.

e. Clothing designed for school athletic events (i.e. cheerleader outfits, etc.) that does not meet the above guidelines shall not be worn during the instructional day unless appropriate additional garments are worn with the outfit.

f. Attire for special school-related events must be prior-approved by school-based administration as presented by the event coordinator/coach/advisor.

## 11. PERSONAL APPEARANCE

a. Combs and other hair grooming items cannot be visible in the hair.

b. Piercings cannot present a health hazard or cause a disruption to the school environment.

c. No visible tattoos.

## 12. MISCELLANEOUS

a. Any item that is worn to school must not undermine the integrity of the Uniform Policy, serve as a disruption to the educational process, or present a health hazard to an individual or his/her peers.

## H. ENFORCEMENT

The Principal shall ensure that the policy is enforced in a consistent manner and require the student and the student's parent or guardian to take appropriate action to remedy situations de-

termined to be in conflict with this policy. Disciplinary action shall be taken for violation of the School Uniform Policy in accordance with the Violations & Consequence section of the Whiteville City Schools Parent/Student Information Guide. Appropriate disciplinary actions for violations shall

include the following:

## First Offense:

A first offense shall be considered a Level I violation of the Parent/Student Information Guide. Students shall be informed that they have violated the policy. They shall be given the opportunity to change into acceptable clothing by using available clothes at school or by calling a parent/guardian to bring clothes. Parents must be informed in writing of the violation.

## Second Offense:

A second infraction of the policy shall be considered a Level II violation of the Parent/Student Information Guide and consequences shall be within the scope of that document. These may include up to assignment to the Re-Direct Center. Parents must be informed in writing of the violation.

## Third (and additional) Offenses:

A third infraction of the uniform policy shall be considered a Level III violation of the Parent/Student Information Guide and consequences shall be within the scope of that document. These may include up to referral to the Alternative Learning Program. Parents must be informed in writing of the violation.

Disciplinary action may vary when a student has a record of other student conduct violations during the current school year. Students who do not comply with the School Uniform Policy also may be excluded from participating in certain school programs, including graduation ceremonies. Copies of the School Uniform Policy shall be made available to students and parents.

Students new to Whiteville City Schools shall be given a two-week grace period from the date of enrollment to obtain and wear the proper school uniforms.

## I. ANNUAL REVIEW

This policy may be reviewed annually and revised as necessary by the Board of Education.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-47, -390, -391

Cross References: School Plan for Management of Student Behavior (policy 4302), Disruptive Behavior (policy 4315)



**Jesse E. Beck II**  
**Superintendent**

Welcome back to a new school year!

As we embark on this journey together, I am filled with excitement and optimism for what lies ahead. This year marks a time of new beginnings, fresh opportunities, and a renewed commitment to the success of every student in our district.



Our dedicated teachers and staff have been working tirelessly over the summer to prepare for the arrival of our students. Extensive planning sessions have taken place as we implement a new curriculum and innovative teaching methods. We've held meetings to reflect on lessons learned from the previous school year and have readied our schools for August 26th. As we open our doors once again, we do so with a focus on fostering a positive and inclusive environment where every student feels valued and supported, and where each student receives an education tailored to their individual needs.

Our district's commitment to academic excellence remains unwavering. We prioritize innovative teaching methods, personalized learning, and the use of technology to enhance the educational experience. We are also continuously developing and enhancing all curricular and extracurricular areas, recognizing the importance of a well-rounded education. Our goal is to cultivate individual talents and maximize the potential of every student every day. We encourage all students to engage responsibly in their learning, maximize their potential, and prepare for success.

As we navigate the school year, we recognize the importance of maintaining high morale and fostering a sense of community. Education is a collaborative effort, and we are fortunate to have a strong and supportive community that plays an integral role in our students' success. We are dedicated to creating a welcoming and supportive atmosphere where everyone—students, staff, and families—feels connected and engaged. Together, we will celebrate our achievements, overcome challenges, and build a brighter future for our students. I encourage you to stay involved, communicate openly, and support one another. We are here for you!

I am honored and excited to be your new superintendent. My promise is that, regardless of whether you are a student, parent, staff member, or concerned citizen, my door is always open. I look forward to partnering with every single stakeholder as we work to create the best possible schools for our students.

Jesse E. Beck II, Superintendent  
2586 James B. White Hwy North  
Building A  
Whiteville, NC 28472  
ebeck@columbus.k12.nc.us  
910-642-5168

# East Columbus Jr/Sr High

Dear East Columbus Jr-Sr High School Family,

I hope this letter finds you refreshed and rejuvenated after a well-deserved summer break. As we embark on the 2024-25 school year, I am filled with excitement and optimism about the opportunities and experiences that await us.



To our returning students and families, welcome back! To our new students and families joining us this year, we are thrilled to have you as part of our school community. I look forward to getting to know each of you and working together to create an environment where every student can thrive.

At East Columbus Jr-Sr High School, we are committed to providing a supportive and enriching educational experience. Our dedicated faculty and staff are ready to inspire, challenge, and guide our students toward academic excellence, personal growth, and lifelong success. We believe in fostering a collaborative and inclusive school culture that values each individual's unique contributions.

As we prepare for the new school year, I would like to share some important information to help ensure a smooth transition:

1. Website: Please use our school website throughout the year to obtain information about our school and remain up-to-date with what's happening. <https://www2.columbus.k12.nc.us/ecjshs/>

2. Social Media Channels: If you are on social media, please like, follow, and connect with us via Facebook and LinkedIn.

• Facebook: [www.facebook.com/eastcolumbushigh](https://www.facebook.com/eastcolumbushigh)

• LinkedIn: [www.linkedin.com/company/east-columbus-jr-sr-high-school](https://www.linkedin.com/company/east-columbus-jr-sr-high-school)

3. Remind App: To receive text message alerts and school updates via the Remind App, text @8b96ge to 81010.

4. Open House: Open House will take place Thursday, Aug. 22, from 4-7 p.m. At 5 p.m., there will be an information session for high school students and parents, and at 6 p.m. there will be an information session for middle school students and parents; these sessions will be held in the school auditorium.

5. School Day: Students may begin entering the school at 7:40 a.m. this year in order to report to class by 8 a.m. We will dismiss from school at 3 p.m.

Let's make this school year memorable, productive, and filled with accomplishments. Together, we can create a vibrant and nurturing environment where every student feels valued, supported, and empowered to grow and reach their full potential.

Thank you for your dedication, enthusiasm, and commitment to our school community. I look forward to a fantastic year ahead.

Warm regards,

**Kenneth Bowen**  
Principal



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## South Columbus High

Greetings, Stallions,

As the new principal of South Columbus High School, I am thrilled to welcome you back for the 2024-25 school year. This year promises to be filled with excitement, opportunities, and a renewed sense of school pride. Together, we will strive to excel in academics, athletics, and extracurricular activities, fostering a supportive and dynamic community.



Our mascot, the Stallion, is admired for its strength, stamina, and the fantastic potential for excelling in competitions. This year, let's embody these qualities in everything we do. Whether in the classroom, on the sports field, on stage, or in our community and beyond, let's demonstrate the pride and perseverance of a true Stallion.

The start of a new school year is always filled with endless possibilities. It's a chance for students to sharpen their academic skills, join clubs, be part of organizations, and shine on athletic teams. We have high expectations for our students, and we are committed to helping each of you reach your full potential. Remember the words of Nelson Mandela: "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." Let's harness the power of education to transform our futures.

This year, we're kicking off a new era at South Columbus High School. We're calling it "Back in Black" to signify a fresh start and a unified spirit. On the first day of school, Monday, Aug. 26, I encourage all students, faculty, and staff to wear black attire. This simple act will show our collective commitment to starting the year strong and setting a powerful tone for the months ahead. Our black attire will symbolize the strength and unity of our Stallion community as we embrace new challenges and celebrate our achievements.

Our administration, faculty, and staff are excited to welcome you back. We aim to be the premier high school in the district, and we are confident that great things will happen this year. We're committed to excellence in all areas, and we're here to support you every step of the way.

Parents of freshmen, please mark your calendars for our orientation Tuesday, Aug. 20, at 6 p.m. The meeting will begin promptly in the auditorium. Arrive early to receive student schedules and Chromebooks. This orientation will provide valuable information to ensure a smooth transition into high school.

We look forward to welcoming back all students on Monday, Aug. 26. Drop-off and student parking begin at 7:40 a.m., with the school day starting at 8 a.m. and dismissal at 2:45 p.m. I am excited to embark on this new journey and I can't wait to greet you at the door. As Dorothy said, "There's no place like home..." Let our school be a place where all who enter quickly recognize Stallion students live here!

Here's to an incredible year ahead!

Kelly Beck  
SCHS Principal



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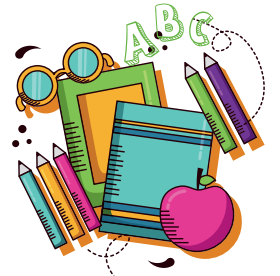
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## West Columbus High

Dear Students, Parents, and School Community,

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year at West Columbus High School! I hope you all enjoyed the summer break and are all excited for the opportunities that lie ahead. As we embark on this academic year, I am thrilled to share some of the exciting changes and programs we have available for all ninth to 12th-grade students.



This year, we are launching new technology programs designed to enhance our students' learning experience and prepare them for success in this ever-expanding field. We have partnered with South-eastern Community College to create learning opportunities in a vast array of career and technical education fields, all of which will provide students with training, experience, and credentials to pursue careers and further training post-graduation. In addition to these new initiatives, West Columbus High School continues to offer opportunities in existing programs that maintain standards of excellence and student success, including our Agricultural Education, Automotive Technology, Health Science, Carpentry, and JROTC. Each of these programs is experiencing a resurgence of student-led opportunities and pathways to career success. Our core academic courses provide our students with a solid foundation to pursue success in their post-secondary pathway. Our classrooms are equipped with state-of-the-art tools that promote interactive learning and help bridge the gap between traditional and progressive practices. These tools will ensure our students are prepared for success in this digital age.

West Columbus High School is also placing a renewed emphasis on increasing student engagement. We believe that an engaged student is a successful student, so we will continue to offer extracurricular activities, clubs, and community partnerships that cater to a wide range of interests and passions. Additionally, our athletic programs continue to bolster the rich West Columbus Viking tradition of dedication, sportsmanship, and excellence. Our goal is to foster a vibrant school culture where every student finds their passion and thrives.

Our commitment to student success extends beyond high school. We are expanding our career counseling services and college preparation programs to ensure that each student is equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in their chosen path. Whether they plan to enter the workforce or pursue higher education, we are here to support them every step of the way.

I am confident that this year will be filled with growth, learning, and achievement. Together, we will make West Columbus High School a place where every student is empowered to reach their full potential. Please join us for our Open House Thursday, Aug. 22, from 6-8 p.m., a time to meet with our teachers and staff to establish and renew our partnership in the success of every student. Thank you for your continued support, and I look forward to a fantastic year ahead!

Warm regards,

John W. Browning,  
Principal



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# Acme Delco Elementary

Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome to the 2024-2025 School Year at Acme Delco Elementary School! We are very excited to see all our students from Pre-K through 6th grade return to campus. We are eager to see our students and share in their educational growth! We have missed our students and their smiles over the summer!

We have been busily preparing for our students and staff to return for a new and inspiring school year. We look forward to the opportunity to continue to grow our students academically and maintain our focus on how we, the staff of Acme Delco Elementary School, can make a positive difference in the lives of every child, every day!



As you prepare for the start of school please add to your calendar our Back to School event on Thursday, Aug. 22, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. We will begin our Back to School Event with an introduction to our new Opportunity Culture Educational Model, then students/parents will be able to view classroom rosters with teachers' names/room numbers which will be posted in the hallways to assist parents and students with locating their new classrooms. Parents and students will be able to meet teachers, visit classrooms and receive information regarding expectations, curriculum, and any additional supplies that you may need during this event. Food and Family Fun will be a part of this evening as well!

We encourage our students to have open minds, take risks, and foster their natural curiosity to learn continually! At Acme Delco Elementary School our students' academic, social, and emotional well-being is our main priority. We would like to challenge our students to "Roar" with excitement into the 2024-2025 school year and to "Race" into academic success while experiencing a positive/fun school year!

Our instructional day begins at 7:45 a.m. and ends at 3 p.m. at Acme Delco Elementary School. We encourage all students to attend the entire school day in order to support their academic growth.

Please feel free to contact the school at 910-655-2957 or follow Acme Delco Elementary School on Facebook for current information as well as send messages to address your questions.

We are looking forward to seeing our students on Aug. 26, for what I'm sure will be a fantastic year of growth and achievement at Acme Delco Elementary School! Go Bobcats!

**Kristie H. Leinthal,**  
*Principal*



## No School Supply Lists for Columbus County Schools

Columbus County Schools realizes rising costs have affected all of our families. As a result, schools will not be posting supply lists for the upcoming school year.

Parents are encouraged to purchase basic items that they feel will help their child's education such as pencils and paper. Other instructional supplies will be provided by schools. We hope that this decision will be helpful to all concerned.

We are excited about this coming year and look forward to seeing everyone at open houses and on the first day of school on Monday, Aug. 26.



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# Chadbourn Elementary

Welcome back Superstars! I am thrilled to begin another exciting school year filled with learning, growth, and fun adventures. Whether you are returning families or joining us for the first time, we are delighted to have you as part of our school community.



## Excitement for the Return of Pre-K

We are excited to have Pre-Kindergarten back at Chadbourn. We can't wait to welcome our pre-kindergarten students to our school. We look forward to nurturing your child's curiosity, creativity, and love for learning.

## Upcoming Open House Information

To kick off the new school year, we invite all families of students Pre-K - fifth grade to attend our Open House Thursday, Aug. 22, from 4-6 p.m. This will be a wonderful opportunity for you to meet your child's teacher, tour the classrooms, and learn more about our pre-kindergarten program.

## Drop-off and Dismissal Times

Please take note of the drop-off and dismissal times for our students:

- Drop-off Time: 7:40 a.m. - 7:55 a.m.
- Dismissal Time: 3:05 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.

We kindly ask that you adhere to these times to ensure a smooth and safe transition for all students.

## Get Connected

Stay informed and engaged throughout the school year by following our school's Facebook page and by signing up for ClassDojo and Here Comes the Bus. We will regularly update these platforms with important announcements, upcoming events, and highlights from our classrooms.

## Contact Us

Should you have any questions or need further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the school office at 910-654-3825. We are here to support you and your child every step of the way.

Once again, welcome back to CES! We look forward to a fantastic year ahead filled with laughter, learning, and new friendships.

Warm regards,

Herman D. Bland  
Principal



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## Hallsboro/Artesia Elementary

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year! I'm pleased to welcome both new and returning families as we embark on another exciting year at Hallsboro Artesia Elementary School.



As I enter my 17th year in education and second year as principal at HAES, I am more committed than ever to fostering a collaborative environment with educators, students, families, and the community. Our staff is dedicated to providing a great learning environment for all students. My priorities include ensuring high-quality teaching and maintaining student safety. We'll work together to set high academic goals and support every student in reaching them. We also aim to create a safe and inclusive environment that meets each student's social and emotional needs. I look forward to becoming even more integrated into the Hallsboro Artesia community, which has such a rich and cherished history. Remember, we are partners in your child's educational journey, dedicated to their social, emotional, and intellectual growth this year.

Please save the dates for the following events:

Thursday, Aug. 22: Open House, 5-7 p.m.

Monday, Aug. 26: First Day of School

I am excited to see our students and their families and look forward to a wonderful year ahead at HAES.

**Kalee Hill**  
Principal



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# Nakina Middle

Dear Parents, Students, and Guardians,

Welcome to the start of a new school year! As we embark on this exciting journey together, I want to extend a warm welcome to all of our returning families and a special greeting to those who are joining us for the first time. The beginning of a school year is always filled with anticipation, enthusiasm, and a renewed commitment to excellence in education.



I am honored to serve you this year as the principal of Nakina Middle School. With over 23 years of experience in education I have served students in grades K through 12 in several capacities. I envision Nakina Middle School, which serves grades five through eight, as a beacon of academic excellence, innovation, pride, and hands-on learning that includes a variety of educational experiences such as the arts, athletics, career and technical education, citizenship, and student leadership.

To our amazing students, we are thrilled to see your bright faces back in the classrooms and hallways. This year promises to be full of new learning experiences, opportunities to grow, and moments to shine. Remember, each day is a chance to learn something new and make a positive impact. We encourage you to approach this year with curiosity, resilience, and a spirit of collaboration. We are here to support you every step of the way.

To our dedicated parents and guardians, your partnership is invaluable to us. We are committed to maintaining open lines of communication and working closely with you to ensure the success and well-being of your children. Your involvement and support play a crucial role in creating a nurturing and effective learning environment. We look forward to your active participation in school activities and events throughout the year.

This year, we are focusing on several key goals to enhance our educational programs and overall school experience:

1. **Academic Excellence:** We will continue to provide a rigorous and engaging curriculum that challenges our students and fosters critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
2. **Social and Emotional Well-being:** We are committed to the development of our students by promoting a safe, inclusive, and positive school culture.
3. **Community Engagement:** Strengthening the bond between school and community through various programs, events, and volunteer opportunities.

We look forward to meeting each one of you in person at our open house Thursday, Aug. 22, from 5-7 p.m. We are excited about the wonderful opportunities that lie ahead and are committed to making this school year a successful and memorable one for all. Thank you for your trust and partnership. Let's work together to create a vibrant and dynamic learning community where every student can thrive and maximize his/her potential every day.

Please take note of the following important information as we start the school year: First Day of School: Aug. 26; School hours: 8-3 p.m.; Volunteer forms are now available in the office; Contact information 910-642-8301.

Welcome back Mustangs!

**Shelly F. Cullipher,**  
*Principal*



# Old Dock Elementary

Dear Old Dock Families and Students,

Welcome back to another exciting school year at Old Dock Elementary! As we prepare for the start of the 2024-2025 school year, I want to extend a warm welcome to you. I hope that summer has provided you with the opportunity to reconnect with your families and to make memories that will last a lifetime. The staff and I are committed to providing you and your children with a school year that is just as successful and memorable.



This year, we are eager to inspire our students with innovative teaching strategies and engaging curricula designed to ignite their love for learning. Our dedicated staff is committed to providing a nurturing and stimulating environment where every child can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. We believe that when students feel safe, supported, and valued, they are empowered to reach their full potential.

As we embark on this journey together, we invite you to play an active role in your child's education. There are numerous opportunities for parents to get involved at Old Dock Elementary, including:

- Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO): Join us in fostering a strong school community.
- Volunteer Opportunities: Sign up to assist in classrooms, events, or special projects.
- Family Events: Participate in our school activities and workshops throughout the year.

Research shows that when families engage in their children's education, students perform better academically and socially. Together, we can create a positive learning atmosphere that supports each child's growth and development.

I am excited to invite you to our Open House Thursday, Aug. 22, from 4-6 p.m. This will be a wonderful opportunity to meet our dedicated staff, tour the school, and learn about the exciting initiatives we have planned for the year. We look forward to celebrating the start of a new school year with you!

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to Old Dock Elementary. Together, let's make this school year the best one yet!

Warm regards,

**Leslie Faulk**  
Principal



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# Tabor City School

Dear Colts Family,

We are thrilled to welcome the "COLTS" family back for the 2024-2025 school year! As we reflect on the achievements of the 2023-2024 school year, we are proud of the academic excellence demonstrated by our students. Their hard work and dedication have set a high standard, and we are confident they will continue to rise to meet the challenges of the new school year.



## Open House Details:

- Date: Thursday, Aug. 22, from 2-7 p.m.
- Activities: Kona-Ice will be available during the open house.
- Meet and greet with all staff.

## School Hours for 2024-2025:

• Drop-Off Begins: 7:30 a.m. • Start Time: 8 a.m. • End Time: 3:10 p.m.

We invite all students and parents to join us for the open house as we set new traditions and expectations for Tabor City School. This is a fantastic opportunity to meet your teachers, explore the school, and prepare for the exciting year ahead. Tabor City School is a Pre-K through 8th grade campus that proudly serves the Tabor City area.

As always, please feel free to contact us with any questions about the upcoming school year. We hope you're enjoying a safe and pleasant summer. We eagerly anticipate the start of the new school year and look forward to seeing all students on Monday, Aug. 26, for the first day of school.

GO COLTS!

Warm regards,

W. Dale Norris  
Principal



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# West Columbus School

Welcome back Warriors!

I am so excited to welcome you to the 2024-2025 school year at West Columbus School. I want to extend a heartfelt welcome to each of you. Whether you're returning to our school community or joining us for the first time, my staff and I are thrilled to have you with us. Our new staff members are excited to meet you, and our returning teachers are looking forward to a great year.



The summer break has given us a chance to prepare for a year full of new opportunities. This year, you will find new elective courses, great extracurricular activities, and fun ways to showcase your talents. We look forward to celebrating student accomplishments this year as we prioritize academic growth and personal success for each student and staff member. Our staff is committed to providing an environment that is safe and caring while challenging our students with rigor and the highest academic standards.

Parents, we appreciate your support and commitment to the school and our students. Your participation and involvement in your child's education are crucial to their success. We are committed to working with you to meet the needs of each student, and we value your input to make this school the very best. We look forward to seeing you at Open House Thursday, Aug. 22, from 4-7 p.m. Remember that we will provide school supplies for your child, so come out and meet the staff and get to know the Warrior Way!

We look forward to a fabulous year ahead and can't wait to see the amazing things we will accomplish together.

**Peggy Hester,**  
Principal



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## Plant the seeds and watch them grow.



We salute the parents, teachers, administrators and other school personnel who work together to plant the seeds that will grow into our leaders of tomorrow. They work tirelessly to ensure that the future will be bright for our greatest resource . . . our children.



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# Williams Township

Dear Students, Parents, and School Community Members,

As the new principal of Williams Township School, it is my great pleasure to welcome you to the new school year! I hope that you all had a restful and enjoyable summer break, filled with memorable moments with family and friends. As we embark on this exciting journey together, I would like to extend a warm welcome and invitation to both our returning families and those who are new to our school community to attend our drop-in Open House on Thursday, Aug. 22, from 5-7 p.m.



Our dedicated staff has been working tirelessly over the summer to prepare for the return of our students. Classrooms have been set up, curriculum plans have been fine-tuned, and new programs have been developed to enhance our students' educational experience. We are committed to fostering a love of learning, encouraging curiosity, and developing the skills and knowledge necessary for our students to thrive.

This year, we are excited to strengthen and renew initiatives designed to enhance the educational experience. Our focus will include:

1. Academic Excellence: With a strong emphasis on core subjects, we are introducing new rigorous curriculum programs in literacy, mathematics, and science to challenge and engage our students.
2. Social and Emotional Learning: We are expanding our social and emotional learning program to help students develop resilience, empathy, and positive interpersonal skills.
3. Arts, CTE and Athletics: We believe in the importance of a well-rounded education. Our arts, career technical and athletic programs will provide students with opportunities to explore their creative talents and develop physical skills.

Safety remains our top priority. We will continue to implement comprehensive health and safety protocols to ensure our school remains a safe place for learning. We appreciate your cooperation and support in adhering to these measures.

We value the partnership between school and home. We encourage parents to stay engaged, volunteer, communicate with teachers, and participate in school events. Your involvement is crucial to your child's success and helps create a strong sense of community.

Once again, welcome back! I am looking forward to an amazing year ahead and am excited to see all the incredible accomplishments our students will achieve. Should you have any questions or need assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Warmest regards,

**Michelle Simmons**  
*Principal*



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## Columbus Career and College Academy

Dear Students and Families of Columbus Career and College Academy,  
Welcome back! I hope this letter finds you well-rested and excited for the new academic year. As we embark on this journey together, I am thrilled to see both new and familiar faces walking through our doors. Our first day of school was Aug. 1, and we were eager to begin another year of learning, growth, and success.



At Columbus Career and College Academy, we pride ourselves on providing a unique educational experience through our partnership with South-eastern Community College. This collaboration offers our students the extraordinary opportunity to earn both a high school diploma and a college degree simultaneously. This dual-enrollment program is designed to give our students a head start on their careers and post-secondary education, preparing them for the challenges and opportunities of the future.

Our school day starts promptly at 8:20 a.m. and concludes at 2:25 p.m. Punctuality is key to a successful academic year, and we encourage all students to arrive on time and ready to engage in their studies. We have an exciting curriculum planned, filled with enriching courses and activities that will inspire and challenge each of you.

To our returning students, welcome back! Your continued dedication and hard work have been exemplary, and I am confident that this year will be no different. To our new students, welcome to the Columbus Career and College Academy family. You are joining a community that is supportive, driven, and committed to excellence.

Our dedicated faculty and staff have been working diligently to prepare for the upcoming school year, ensuring that each of you has the resources and support needed to thrive. We are here to guide you, challenge you, and celebrate your achievements along the way.

As we start this new chapter, I encourage you to set high goals for yourself, stay focused, and take advantage of the opportunities available to you. Your journey here will be what you make of it, and I have no doubt that each of you will rise to the occasion.

Thank you for being a part of Columbus Career and College Academy. Let's make this year the best one yet!

Warm regards,

**Christian Godwin**  
*Principal*



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# COUNTY STUDENTS DRESS CODE

*Policy Code: 4316*

The board believes that the dress and personal appearance of students greatly affect their academic performance and their interaction with other students. The board requests that parents outfit their children in clothing that will be conducive to learning. Generally, dress and grooming standards as determined by the student and his or her parents will be deemed acceptable. However, the board requires that appearance and clothing comply with the following board standards.

1. For sanitary and safety reasons and in accordance with State health regulations, all students are required to wear shoes/footwear to school. Specific footwear may be required for certain courses/classes. Slippers or bedroom shoes are prohibited.

2. Dress for special school sponsored activities that occur outside the regular school

day may be determined and regulated at the discretion of the principal.

3. Sunglasses, hats, hoods, and other headgear including kerchiefs, bandanas, and rags may not be worn inside

4. Jewelry and visible tattooing must not promote illegal drug, alcohol or tobacco use or be provocative, obscene or substantially disruptive.

Jewelry cannot include any



items that can be used as a weapon like spikes and chains attaching piercings.

5. Clothing which promotes illegal drug, alcohol or tobacco use or is provocative, obscene or substantially disruptive is prohibited (for information on gang-related attire, see policy 4328, Gang-Related Activity).

6. Clothing that is torn, cut, sliced or shredded from the

neck to four inches above the knee is prohibited.

7. Garments for the lower body section must fall to at least four inches above the kneecap when the student is standing erect. These garments include dresses, skirts, shorts and any other appropriate apparel. These garments must fit snugly around the waist to eliminate sagging.


8. Garments for the upper body section must cover the upper torso. These garments include shirts, blouses and any other appropriate apparel. The bottom of any top must cover the waistband of the lower body garment so no skin is showing. Tank tops and sleeveless shirts must reach the edge of the shoulder and top of the arm.

9. All undergarments must

be covered at all times.

Before receiving disciplinary consequences, a student who is not in compliance with this policy or a school dress code will be given a reasonable period of time to make adjustments so that he or she will be in compliance. Disciplinary consequences for a student who fails to comply after being offered this opportunity shall be consistent with Section D of policy 4300, Student Behavior Policies. The superintendent or designee shall list in the Code of Student Conduct the specific range of consequences that may be imposed on a student for violation of the dress code.

*Adopted: May 16, 2022*



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