



WHITTHORNE MIDDLE SCHOOL
(931) 388-2558

2022 – 2023 STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK

At Whitthorne Middle School - **W**e are **M**otivated for **S**uccess. An academically motivated and successful WMS student shows they are **READY** by self-advocating, being goal oriented, and moving forward; **RESPECTFUL** by showing social intelligence, promoting diversity, and valuing education of self and others, and **RESPONSIBLE** having a growth mindset, showing integrity, effort, and perseverance.

Student & Parent Handbook: The purpose of this handbook is to provide information about expectations, procedures, and information for the students and parents at Whitthorne Middle School. *Please note that the material in this handbook does not include all aspects of our school's procedures.*

ATHLETICS

Sixth through eighth graders may try out for WMS athletic teams: football, basketball, softball, volleyball, baseball, soccer, tennis, track, bowling, and cross-country. Prior to try-outs for any sport, students will attend an informational meeting.

All students who are trying out for any team must have a current physical. Information about physicals will be distributed through the main office or the athletic coach.

Students must meet high academic and behavior expectations to remain on the team.

ATTENDANCE

Arrival

- Students may enter the school at 7:00 am.
- Students that want breakfast will report directly to the cafeteria.
- Students that arrive between 7:00-7:35 will report to the following locations:
 - 5/6 grades – cafeteria
 - 7/8 grades – main gym
- At 7:35, students will be dismissed to their 1st period class.
- Once in class if a student needs to leave, they must have a signed WMS hall pass.

WMS School-Wide Expectations: Arrival & Dismissal

TIGERS are RESPECTFUL by

- Walking to designated destination quietly
- Keeping hands to yourself

TIGERS are RESPONSIBLE by

- Keeping ramps, sidewalks, and hall areas clean
- Being in the designated area

TIGERS are READY by

- Coming inside ready to follow all school expectations
- Following all school expectations during arrival and dismissal.
- Arriving on time. Getting out of vehicle quickly and safely

Tardy to school

A student who is not in 1st period when the 7:45 a.m. bell rings is tardy. Any student who is tardy must report to the office to receive a tardy slip. Tardies can be excused with a note or parent sign-in. **See MCBQE 6.200 / 6.300 regarding consequences for tardies.**

Afternoon pick up for car riders

Students must be picked up in front of the building no later than 3:15 p.m.

Dismissal during the school day

ID will be checked before a student is signed out in the main office. If a student returns to school the same day, they must sign in at the office. A student who leaves before 11:16 a.m. is counted absent. **Students may not be signed out after 2:25 p.m.**

NOTE: No student will be allowed to leave campus with anyone other than a person listed on the student's office information card unless a parent/guardian note is presented to office staff. A call will be made to the parent/guardian to verify the note.

Excused absences

Absences shall be classified as either excused or unexcused as determined by the principal /designee. Excused absences shall include:

1. Personal illness/injury
2. Illness of immediate family member
3. Death in the family

4. Extreme weather conditions
5. Religious observances
6. College visits
7. Pregnancy
8. School sponsored or school endorsed activities
9. Summons, subpoena, or court order
10. Circumstances which in the judgment of the principal create emergencies over which the student has no control.

Otherwise, the absence(s) will be considered unexcused. The note should include the student's name, homeroom teacher, date of the absence(s), reason for absence, and a parent/guardian signature. Only 5 parent notes will be accepted each semester.

Unexcused absences

Unexcused absences are reported to the Supervisor of Attendance and Discipline at the Maury County Board of Education. **See MCBOE 6.200 for an explanation of the progressive truancy plan.**

Make Up Work

Students with an absence shall be provided with the opportunity to receive assignments missed during the absence and to make-up the work upon their return for the full grade. Make-up work must be requested by the student or parents within 3 days of return and will be due at the due date determined by the teacher.

BAND

Band is available during the school day for students in grades six through eight. Some after school rehearsal is required. If a student wishes to enter or drop band, parent/guardian permission is required. *Entering or dropping band must be done within the first two weeks of school, at the end of the first semester, or within the first week of the second semester.*

BUSES

Remember – Riding a school bus is a privilege. Proper conduct and safety regulations must be observed by all bus riders. All WMS behavioral expectations apply on the bus to and from school, as well as on field trips. (Refer to WMS School-Wide Expectations Matrix). Students should not have food or drink on the bus. Consequences for inappropriate behavior on a bus will be applied. Students and parents will be asked to read and sign the School Bus Transportation form when online registration is completed each spring. **See MCBOE 6.300 Exhibit B for details.**

CAFETERIA

Breakfast and lunch are served each day. Students may bring lunch from home and buy milk or other a la carte items. Students are not to bring soft drinks from home.

We welcome you to come eat lunch with your student; please note:

1. You will be given a special place to sit and have lunch with your child.
2. Please do not bring restaurant food to school for your child. This is a violation of cafeteria guidelines.

WMS School-Wide Expectations for the Cafeteria

TIGERS are RESPECTFUL in the cafeteria by

- Raising hand if they need something
- Using polite words to staff and students
- Being mindful of others with their own volume and behavior
- Doing these in the lines for food, trash, and dismissal

TIGERS are RESPONSIBLE in the cafeteria by

- Picking up after themselves and others; taking initiative to keep the cafeteria clean
- Eating first, then talking
- Staying seated during lunch

TIGERS are READY in the cafeteria by

- Picking up all items needed while in the lunch line
- Being ready to dismiss when teachers arrive

Cafeteria credit guidelines

Students may charge meals using the following guidelines:

1. Students may charge up to a maximum of 2 days.
2. After a student has exceeded their maximum of days to charge, the child will be provided with a meal on said day. Efforts will be made by school personnel to contact the student's parent/guardian on said day to inform them of monies owed to the school cafeteria.
3. No student will be allowed to charge school meals during the month of May and until the end of the school year to allow for collection of unpaid balances.
4. A check will not be accepted for payment of school meals if the school has previously received two separate checks which were returned by the bank for insufficient funds. A service fee will be assessed for each returned check by the cafeteria.

Breakfast & lunch are no longer free for all students, and ala carte items can be purchased.

<https://www.schoolcafe.com/>

CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students may possess personal communication devices and personal electronic devices so long as such **devices are turned off and stored** in backpacks, purses or personal carry-alls. Unauthorized use or improper storage of a device will result in confiscation until such time as it may be released to the student's parents or guardian. A student in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action. (**Refer to MCBOE 6.300**)

Cell phones should NOT be seen throughout the school day. This means NO cell phones should be out in the classrooms, cafeteria, hallways, restrooms, gyms, locker rooms, library, or any other location of the school.

WMS School-Wide Expectations for Technology

TIGERS are RESPECTFUL by

- Using technology and devices for intended educational purposes
- Taking care of personal and school equipment

TIGERS are RESPONSIBLE by

- Following the Whitthorne Way expectations
- Reporting any technological issues as they occur

TIGERS are READY by

- Knowing or having login information
- Having school issued chrome books charged and ready for class
- Knowing assignments and staying on appropriate sites
- Troubleshooting your own devices

*** Parents, if you need to contact your student during the school day, please call the WMS office @ 931 388-2558.**

CHANGES IN TRANSPORTATION

For safety reasons, changes in transportation cannot be made over the phone. No student will be allowed to leave campus with anyone other than a person listed on the student's office information card unless a parent/guardian note is presented to office staff and the note is verified.

If a student needs to ride a different bus, a note stating the names, addresses, phone numbers, and bus numbers of all students involved must be brought to the office during early homeroom. There are some buses that are full and notes to ride those buses will not be accepted by Pupil Transportation.

CLASS CHANGE TRANSITIONS

During class changes, students are under the supervision of all teachers and may be disciplined by any teacher due to misbehavior in the hallways.

WMS School-Wide Expectations for Hallways

TIGERS are RESPECTFUL by

- Maintaining appropriate speed & volume
- Keeping hands, feet, & objects to self
- Walking on the right side of hallway

TIGERS are RESPONSIBLE by

- Going directly to assigned destination
- Using this time to restroom
- Keeping hallways clean

TIGERS are READY by

- Walking on the right side of hallway
- Carrying all materials & reporting on time

Tardy to class

Students have four minutes to move from one class to the next. Any student who is not in class at the beginning of the class time is considered tardy. **"Tardy to class" will be considered "disruption and interference with school," and the consequences for this infraction can be found in MCBOE 6.300.** Once a student is in class, they must remain in class. If a staff member detains a student, a note from the teacher is needed to enter the next class.

CLUBS

To develop the whole middle-school child, there will be a variety of extra-curricular activities and clubs. Extra-curricular activities and clubs may include:

Art Club

The Art Club meets after school. The times and number of meetings will be announced by the art teacher. Students will be expected to have parent permission to participate and to have transportation available for after school pick up.

Best Buddies

Best Buddies is a free organization, dedicated to ending the social, physical, and economic isolation of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Best Buddies creates opportunities in and out of the school environment for one-to-one friendships. All can be a part of the fun, 5th-8th grade.

Jazz Band and Honors Band

Students who participate in these groups do so through a selection process determined by the band directors. These groups meet after school.

Jr. Beta Club

Jr. Beta Club's mission is to promote the ideals of academic achievement, character, service, and leadership among students in 6th – 8th grade.

CODE OF CONDUCT and DISCIPLINE

Whitthorne Middle School commits to creating a safe and effective environment for student learning. The Whitthorne Way and School-Wide Expectation Matrix provides all students and staff with the appropriate framework; all students must come to school prepared to learn and behave in a manner that is appropriate and free from disruption.

***No one has the right to interfere with the learning of others.**

Do your part to make Whitthorne an effective learning environment. To be a successful TIGER, students will learn and follow the Whitthorne Way:

Be Ready, Be Respectful, Be Responsible

Proper student conduct in school and at school-related activities is the joint responsibility of students, parents, and staff. Students are under the supervision of all school staff. It is the policy of WMS that priority will always be given to the safety of our students and to a quality education that is free from disruption. *(Refer to WMS School-Wide Expectations Matrix)*

WMS School-Wide Expectations						
LOCATIONS						
	Classroom	Hallway	Restrooms	Cafeteria	Technology	Bus Arrival / Dismissal
BE Respectful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooperate & Be Polite to Others Listen when others are speaking without interruptions Do not be a victim of your / fellow classroom procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain appropriate speed and volume Hands, Feet, Objects to Self Walk on Right Side 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect privacy Keep restrooms clean & graffiti free 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lines for food, trash, & dismissal Raise hands if needing something or help Use Polite Words to Staff and Students Misuse of Others with Volume & Behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use technology and devices for selected educational purposes Take care of equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ARRIVE / DISMISSAL Walk to your designated destination quietly Have your books to yourself
BE Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have all needed materials Do your best work on all work Follow directions the first time given 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use directly to your destination Use this time to use restroom and get materials from lockers Keep hallway clean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use Restrooms, Wash Hands, Scrub Restroom is a Technology Red Zone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Picking up after yourself (if eating anything) Get them talk Stay Seated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow Whitthorne Way expectations Report any technological or equipment issues as they occur 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ARRIVE / DISMISSAL About items, halls, outdoors areas clean Be in your designated area
BE Ready	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be prepared to learn, participate, and do your best Be in seat working when bell rings Complete ALL work on time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk on Right Side Carry all materials to class and be on time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use restrooms in between classes if at appropriate time Use restrooms for appropriate purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Picking up (sneak), napkins, plastic ware, etc. when in the lunch line the 1st time (sneak items included) Be ready when the teacher arrives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know or have your login information Have school issued computer charged and ready for class Have your assignments and be on appropriate site Troubleshoot your own device 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ARRIVE / DISMISSAL Come inside ready to follow all expectations During arrival and dismissal all school wide expectations apply Arrive on time. Get out of vehicle quickly and safety

Maury County School Board policies govern student behavior:

1. While on school premises
2. When coming to or going from school
3. While on school-owned and operated school buses or chartered buses
4. While engaged in approved and supervised school activities on or off school premises
5. When the good order, safety or welfare of the school or its students is affected as a result of out of school actions.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR / DISCIPLINE REFERRALS

As part of the WMS School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention Support System, basic school wide rules and expectations are established, posted, taught, modeled and practiced. It includes the use of a positive behavior incentive program for

establishing and encouraging “rule following”. The program also includes options and procedures for addressing violations to the school-wide behavior expectations, to the Whitthorne Way of **Be Ready, Be Respectful, Be Responsible**. The procedures range from teacher managed, such as redirection and re-teaching to office managed, such as referrals and administrative actions.

The office referral might be for, but not limited to:

1. Theft
2. Property Damage
3. Fighting
4. Assault
5. Bullying
6. Skipping Class / Truancy
7. Abusive Language
8. Harassment
9. Defiance / Insubordination / Non-compliance
10. Other

When a student is referred to an administrator for a violation of school conduct, the administrator will use MCOE policy 6.300 for middle school students to determine which of the following corrective action(s) will be taken.

In-School Alternative Setting (ISAS)

Our in-school program is intended to impress upon students that they are accountable for their actions. Students will serve in-school in a designated classroom. When a student is assigned to in-school alternative setting, he/she will be provided with assigned work for the day from each teacher. If a student fails to behave appropriately or complete assigned work, the student could have additional consequences assigned, including OSS. ISAS is viewed as an opportunity to continue learning but be held accountable for choices.

Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)

An out-of-school suspension is intended to communicate to the student and the parents the seriousness of an offense. The student may not be on any Maury County school grounds or attend any extra-curricular activities during the suspension period. If a student is assigned OSS, they may not ride the school bus home and alternate transportation must be arranged. A student can make up any work that is missed. An out-of-school suspension becomes a part of a student’s permanent record per the No Child Left Behind Act.

*Upon returning from OSS the student and parent must meet with administration and/or school counselor.

DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT

The Maury County Board of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, religion, national origin, age, gender, marital status, disability or any other unlawful area in the operation of its educational programs and in personnel administration.

All WMS students and staff are entitled to respect and personal safety. Physical and sexual harassment will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in accordance with policy established through the Maury County Board of Education. All reports of discrimination or harassment will be taken seriously.

Should you feel that you have been discriminated against/harassed, please contact Director of Pupil Services, 501 West 8th Street, Columbia, TN 38401, at 931-388-8403.

DRESS CODE

Please consult MCBOE Policy 6.310 for the dress code.

Students are expected to Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Ready, and Be a T.I.G.E.R. in their words, actions, and dress.

Inappropriate student dress can lead to disruption and will be subject to disciplinary actions as per board policy 6.300.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In case of snow, ice, or other dangerous conditions, students and their parents are urged to listen to the radio or watch television for information on school closings or changes in school hours. **Be sure your child knows where to go if school is closed early.**

ENCUMBRANCES

Students who owe money to the school may not receive final report cards until encumbrances are cleared. This could also prohibit a student from checking out a library book and/or having textbooks assigned to him/her.

FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER

A Family Resource Center is available at Whitthorne. Our Family Resource Center can be reached by calling the school – 388-2558.

- JoAnna Neece – ext. 1331

GRADING POLICY

Academic Areas

Students' grades will be based on mastery of state standards. In the academic areas of reading, language arts, math, science, and social studies, the following guidelines will be followed:

- 1) Grades will be taken to assess student learning and mastery of the standards.
- 2) Absent work will follow the MCPS BOE Policy.
- 3) Students & parents will be notified of potential failure and missing assignments.

Report Cards: issued on a quarterly (9 weeks) basis in accordance with MCPS Policy 4.601.

Progress Reports: will be sent home every 4 ½ weeks during the midpoint of each quarter.

Principal's List: A student who earns an academic average of 93 or higher for an academic quarter will be eligible for the principal's list. The student must have all "A's".

A-B Honor Roll: A student who earns 85-100 average will be eligible for the honor roll each quarter. The student must have no grades lower than an 85 to be eligible.

MAURY COUNTY'S GRADING SYSTEM

A – 90-100: "A" indicates that a student's performance is superior. The work is of high quality and shows ability to think creatively.

B – 80-89: "B" indicates that a student's performance is above average. The work indicates good achievement and is of a better quality than that of the average student.

C – 70-79: "C" indicates that a student's performance is average. The work is reasonably well done.

D – Passing – 60-69: "D" indicates that a student's performance is below average. Assignments are done irregularly and not as well as the expected average.

F – Failure – 50-59: "F" indicates that a student's performance is far below expectation. Work either has not been completed satisfactorily or is below the minimum requirements.

COUNSELING SERVICES

Counseling services are available for every student in the school. The counselors assist students by helping them to understand themselves, to make the best use of their abilities, to know the educational and career plans available to them, and to make realistic plans and decisions for the future.

Counselors may meet with students individually, in small groups, or in large groups. Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact a counselor to discuss school progress or any concerns they may have in regard to their child. Parents wishing conferences may call the school (388-2558) for an appointment.

- Katie Albright (Counselor) – ext.1289
- Jennifer Ervin (Counselor) – ext. 1332
- Erin Lawrence (Counseling Office/Records Clerk) – ext. 1439

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

The Library/Media Center is a place in which you may read, study, and research information. It is a service, information and reading center for students and teachers. The library staff is most happy to help in any way. Our Library/Media Center can be reached by calling the school – 388-2558, ext. 1290 or 1291.

- Amber Skelton (Librarian)
- Sherrie Kennedy (Library Assistant)

WMS School-Wide Expectations for the Library

TIGERS are RESPECTFUL by

- Cooperating and being polite to others
- Doing what is asked and following library procedures

TIGERS are RESPONSIBLE by

- Taking care of all books and materials
- Doing your best work
- Following directions, the first-time given

TIGERS are READY by

- Being prepared to learn, participate, and do your best

LOST AND FOUND

Found items should be turned into the office or the Family Resource Center. Unclaimed items will be donated to charitable organizations.

MEDIA

Throughout the school year, Maury County Public Schools and WMS staff will take photographs and videos of students for promotion and publication. **The use of photographs is for public relations purposes to promote our students, their accomplishments, their participation in school events and news in general.** Students may be identified by their first and last names. Examples of use include, but are not limited to, posting on the school website, posting on the district website, posting on the district's and school's Facebook pages, and inclusion in digital slide shows at the school or Central Office. **You may opt out** of having your child appear in photographs and videos promoting events, celebrations, accomplishments, and news in general. **To opt out**, please write to your child's school with the request that he/she should not be photographed, filmed or identified for media purposes and submit the written documentation to the principal within 10 days of the child's first day of instruction.

MEDICATION

Students **ARE NOT** allowed to bring prescription or non-prescription medication (example, Tylenol, Midol, Excedrin, etc.) to school or carry them in backpacks, locker, purses, etc. Students are not to have these at school activities or on school grounds. If a student must take prescription medication while at school, the parent/guardian must obtain a

medication form from the office. A parent or guardian must bring the medication to the office in the **original container** from the pharmacy.

All medication must be kept in the school office and will be administered at the appropriate times by the school nurse or trained personnel. If it is **absolutely necessary** for a student to take over-the-counter medication, the medication must be brought to the office by a parent/guardian. It should be in the original, unopened container with the student's name on it. A medication form must be completed stating the student's name, time medication is to be taken, dosage to be given, discontinuation date, reason medication is needed, and parent/guardian phone number in case of emergency. Medications that are not picked up at the end of the school year will be destroyed.

Nurse Beverly Norman – 388-2558, ext. 1443
Nurse Shelby Scott – 388-2558, ext. 1270

OFFICE HOURS

The WMS office is open from 7:30 - 3:30. Please contact the office to make an appointment to meet with teachers or administration as they are working with students and on academic achievement during the school day.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Valuable items may be lost, stolen, or damaged. The school is not responsible for lost or damaged items. Large amounts of money (over \$10.00) should not be brought to school. Backpacks, heavy coats and jackets are to be kept in lockers and not carried or worn during the day. No blankets should be brought to school.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Please consult MCBOE Policy 4.603

Before a student is retained, the parents shall be informed in writing and shall have the opportunity to participate in a conference at least nine (9) weeks before the end of the school year. The following factors shall be considered in deciding on promotion and retention:

- 1.) Mastery of essential competencies.** Students shall have mastered essential skills sufficiently to ensure a likelihood of success at the next grade level.
- 2.) Special procedures for special students.** Students who have been identified as having special problems, including high risk students and others with special needs, shall be given special consideration.
- 3.) Flexible placement.** Use of conditional promotion, remedial summer programs, assignment to transitional classes, and other approaches to meeting the needs of students shall be given consideration.

4.) Attendance. Attendance shall become a relevant factor only when excessive absenteeism becomes an educational problem.

5.) Conduct. Retention shall not be used as a disciplinary measure.

RESTROOMS

Students should use the restroom between classes. If a student must use the restroom during instructional time, students must have a signed hall pass from their teacher.

WMS School-Wide Expectations for Restrooms

TIGERS are RESPECTFUL by

- Respecting privacy
- Keeping restroom clean and graffiti free

TIGERS are RESPONSIBLE by

- Using the restroom, washing hands and leaving
- Adhering to the restroom as a NO technology location

TIGERS are READY by

- Using the restroom between classes and at appropriate times
- Using the restroom for appropriate purpose

SAFETY

Providing all students and staff with a safe and effective learning environment is extremely important. Actions which keep an individual from learning and working in a safe environment will be dealt with in accordance with policies established through the Maury County Board of Education.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

Our School Resource Officer is a member of the Maury County Sheriff's Department and works with students, staff, and community. Duties include counseling students and parents, conducting safety surveys, and providing assistance in the supervision of school events.

WMS SRO – Officer Davis 388-2558, ext. 1319

STUDENT RECOGNITIONS

As we provide a safe and positive place for rigorous learning where all students can succeed with support from school and home, we will celebrate our students' successes. Successes will be celebrated with quarterly awards program, honors field trips, etc. Information regarding requirements for Honor Roll, 9-Week Celebrations and Honors Trips will be distributed at the beginning of the school year.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Substitute teachers are considered teachers when they are fulfilling the role of a teacher who is absent. Students should be respectful and cooperate so that the lesson plan left by the teacher can be carried out,

the work will be pleasant for the substitute and the day will be profitable for the students. **Misbehavior for a substitute will be addressed by the classroom teacher or by other school personnel.**

TELEPHONE CALLS

Telephone calls to the schools from parents requesting that messages be delivered to students are restricted to **emergency situations only**. Calls home to parents/guardians to request that items be brought to school are not allowed. If a student is sick, the student should receive permission from a teacher to come to the office. Please do not call or text your student during the school day, as they are expected to follow the MCPS policies.

TEXTBOOKS, SCHOOL MATERIALS, SCHOOL PROPERTY

Textbooks, library books and other school materials used by students become their responsibility. All school materials and property should be treated with care and respect. If books or materials are damaged or lost while assigned to a student, he/she will be assessed the cost of repair or replacement.

VISITORS

All visitors must report to the main office upon entering the building. Visitors must present an ID and sign in and obtain passes. If a parent/guardian wishes to visit a classroom, contact must be made with an administrator to arrange a time for this to take place.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

If a student must withdraw from school during the school year, the student must return all textbooks to the appropriate teachers and go to the Counseling Department to complete all necessary forms. This is to ensure that all records or encumbrances have been cleared and that permanent records can be sent to the student's new school.