



## School Attendance

(School Board Policy, Section JEA)

Regular attendance is critical to a student's success in school. Please make every effort to have your child in school. If possible, schedule doctor and dentist appointments outside school hours. It is important that children learn early in life the importance of attending school regularly and on time.

### Absences

The Williamsburg-James City County attendance policy, in compliance with the Virginia Compulsory Attendance Law, defines a legal absence as one "caused by illness, quarantine, religious holiday, death in one's family, floods, hurricane, and storms" **OR** educational family field trips not to exceed five (5) school days and for which at least five (5) days prior notice has been given in writing by the parent to the principal. Families are encouraged to limit their vacations to times that do not interfere with their children's schooling.

When a child is absent, the parent/guardian should contact the attendance office to provide a reason for the absence. Parents will receive an automated call daily when a child is absent. To make sure an absence is excused, the teacher must receive a note from the parent stating the date and the reason for the absence. **Without this written communication, the absence will not be excused.** A doctor's note is required for five consecutive school days of absences at the elementary level.

Excessive or chronic tardiness/early dismissals and absenteeism is monitored by administrators, teachers, attendance specialists, and the school social worker. If

any child has excessive absences defined as 5 or more days, a letter from the principal will be mailed home to notify parents of absences. Further absences from school will result in the need for an attendance plan between the school and parents, and will also require intervention from the school social worker. Further excessive absences may result in the necessity to implement court action. For additional information on school attendance, see School Board Policy, section JEA.

### Tardiness/Early Releases

Tardiness and Early Releases are disruptive to the routine of the school. Acceptable reasons for excused tardiness or excused early releases are illness of student, medical and dental appointments that cannot be arranged for out of school hours or bus problems. (Please make sure to bring in a doctor's note.) **All children arriving at school after 9:15 a.m. must be accompanied by their parents and report to the office before going to the classroom.** Names are then removed from the absentee list by the attendance secretary in the office.

Early releases are treated the same as tardiness. If any child has excessive tardiness or excessive early releases defined as 6 or more times, a letter from the principal will be mailed home to notify parents of these tardies/early releases. Further tardies/early releases from school will result in the need for an attendance plan between the school and parents, and will also require intervention from the school social worker.

### Emergency Closings

Due to weather conditions or other unforeseen emergencies, it is sometimes necessary to close school during the school day. In the event of severe weather conditions, listen to radio stations WDCK 96.5 FM and WMBG 740 AM for information regarding early dismissal of schools. The information hotline (259-4154) also provides emergency closing information as does Cable Channel 47 and the WJCC website at [www.wjccschools.org](http://www.wjccschools.org).

Be sure your child knows where to go in the event of an emergency closing, and make sure your child's teacher has on file any special instructions requested by you. **Please go over this information with your child.** If this information changes

at any time during the school year, remember to notify your child's teacher and the school office

### Scheduled Early Dismissals

A number of days are identified in the school calendar as early dismissal for students in grades K-5. Lunch will be provided for our students on those days. Students are dismissed at 1:31 on early days. **Please review the calendar that was sent home at the beginning of the year (it can also be found on the WJCC Schools website.)**

### Students Leaving School Prior to Dismissal

Parents are requested not to take children out of school before the school day has ended at 4:01. Learning continues until the end of the day and much is lost both for the individual student and the classroom through early dismissal. When a student must be picked up early, parents must send a note with the child notifying the teachers. This note will be forwarded to the office by the teacher with the attendance lists.

***If circumstances arise during the school day that necessitate a change in plans for either picking up your child early or requesting that he/she ride home on the bus, please call the school office to inform us of changes prior to 3:25 p.m.*** Due to the increased volume of calls at the end of the day, this will provide the staff with adequate time to ensure that all communications or new information regarding changes in student transportation or departure from school is accomplished without disruption of the dismissal time. **Calls made after 3:25 p.m. cannot be accommodated except in the case of an emergency.**

All authorized persons other than the parent must have a note from the parent/guardian in order to pick up your child. Identification of parents and other authorized persons will be verified by the staff prior to release of your child until the staff is familiar with the family members or designated individuals. We appreciate your support of this procedure to ensure the safety of your child at all times.

## Arrival at School

The earliest time students may be dropped off at school is 9:05 a.m. Parents may drop their children off at the loop at the main entrance. For the safety of our students, please drive to the front of the loop and wait for a staff member to open the car door for your child or signal that your child may get out of the car. Please refrain from parking in the loop. This area is for drop off only.

If it is necessary for you to bring your child into school, please park in a designated parking space and cross the parking lot at one of the crosswalks. If you arrive before the 9:05 bell, a parent/guardian must stay with student until the bell.

## Dismissal

We begin dismissing students at 4:00 p.m. Students should walk directly to their buses. Walkers, bicycle riders and students being picked up by parents are dismissed prior to the release of students to the buses. If a note has not been sent in indicating a change in dismissal procedures for a student, the student will ride the bus home.

### *Parent Pick - up*

Parents who pick up their child on a regular basis may request a car tag. This will allow you to remain in your car and drive through the parent pick up line at the front of the school. Your child will be released from the gym and brought to your car. Paperwork for obtaining a car tag is available in the office.

Parents who do not have a car tag must sign out their children out on the computer in the office, get a pick up slip and report to the gym. Please be prepared to show a picture ID when signing out your child.