Welcome to Matthew Whaley!

We are so glad your family has joined our Patriot family.

In this guide, you will find key information and links to resources.

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Matthew Whaley Contact Information:
- Phone: 757-22-1931
- Website: https://wjccschools.org/mw/

School Hours: 9:10am-4:01pm

Early Release Dates: School Dismisses at 1:31pm
- October 4
- November 13
- November 14
- November 15
- March 6
- April 3
- June 5
- June 12
ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

It is very important that all of our students are engaged in a full day of learning every day. All students should arrive on time to begin their day of learning promptly at 9:10 and remain in school until dismissal at 4:01.

- We encourage our students to ride the bus to reduce traffic on school grounds.
- Please park in the rear parking lot if you need to walk your student(s) into the building at arrival or to pick up your child(ren) at dismissal. All children should be accompanied by an adult for safety.
- The Rec Connect Child Care program is provided by Williamsburg-James City County Parks & Recreation. To reach the Child Care program director, call (757)259-5351. For students enrolled in the Parks and Recreation Rec Connect program, families should follow the Rec Connect arrival and dismissal policies.

Arrival (9:10-9:20)
- Students may arrive at school starting at 9:10. Before 9:10, office and teaching staff are engaged with planning and collaboration for the school day. Families who arrive before the doors are opened are asked to wait on the front porch with their children. A staff member will open the front door at 9:10 to welcome all of our students.
- At 9:05, a staff member will be present in the drop off loop at the back of the building at the cafeteria entrance to help unload students who must be driven to school. Only the drop off loop at the back of the building should be used for unloading students. Please let the staff assist your child in exiting your vehicle to keep traffic flowing safely and efficiently.
- If you need to walk your child into the building, park in the rear parking lot and walk your child to the drop off area or front door. Adult supervision to the building is very important in light of the heavy car traffic.
- Handicapped parking spaces are reserved for guests who need those spaces for accessibility.
- Students arriving after 9:20 must be escorted by an adult into the building through the front door and signed in by an adult in the office.
- Students who arrive after 9:20 are tardy.

Dismissal (3:55-4:01)
- Please send a note to your child’s teacher if there is a change to your child’s dismissal routine (bus change, pick up by someone other than a parent/guardian, etc.). If a student does not have a note, he/she will be put on his/her bus.
- Help us provide for the safe dismissal of our children by notifying the office no later than 3:15 of a change to your child’s dismissal.
- Communicate transportation changes by sending a note with your child or calling the office (757-229-1931). Please do not send emails or text messages or leave voice messages to
your child’s teacher about same day dismissal changes as our teachers are engaged in instruction and often not able to access email or phone messages until after school.

- Adults picking up students at dismissal should wait until the cafeteria door (door#7) is opened at 3:50 by a staff member to enter the school and sign out their children in the cafeteria. All students signed out at the end of the day will be dismissed from the cafeteria. Staff in the cafeteria will call for students whose families did not provide prior notification of a transportation change.

- To ensure the safe dismissal of our students, staff members will escort family pick up students to the cafeteria at 3:55 and release students only to authorized adults who were given a dismissal ticket.

- All students should be picked up by 4:01 as staff need to return to their responsibilities to prepare for the next day’s instruction.
ATTENDANCE

Consistent school attendance is critical to student growth and success in school and developing a positive, lifelong habit. The Virginia Department of Education defines chronic absenteeism as a student being absent for 10% (18 days) or more of the school year for any reason. All missed school days, excused or unexcused, are identified as absences. The Matthew Whaley staff will communicate with families regularly to ensure we are supporting strong school attendance for all students.

Illness: There are times when a child is too sick to attend school or must be dismissed early from school. Though it is not always easy to know if a child is too sick to attend school, the following guidelines are helpful:

Your child should not be in school if he/she:
• has a fever of 100 or more (should remain at home for 24 hours after fever is gone)
• has vomited or has diarrhea (should remain at home for 24 hours after vomiting and/or diarrhea has stopped)
• has a persistent cough
• has any rash
• has open or draining skin sores
• has inflamed or draining eyes or ears

Our school nurse, Ms. Wells, is available to support families with health related questions for students and monitoring students with concerns such as allergies, colds, and other health concerns to minimize absences.

Communication: When a student has been absent, the parent or guardian is responsible for calling the school on the day of the absence and sending a note explaining the student’s absence on the day the student returns to school. Remember to include the student’s first and last name, the teacher’s name, date and reason of absence, and adult signature.

Appointments should be scheduled on dates and at times that minimize interruption to learning. When it is necessary to schedule an appointment during the school day, students should attend as much of the school day as possible, either by arriving tardy after an appointment or being released early prior to the appointment.

Travel: When travel provides a student with a unique learning opportunity or special time with family, there are a limited number of allowable vacation days. The parent or guardian is responsible for submitting a written request for student to be absent for the vacation day(s) to the school administrator.

EVERY STUDENT, EVERY DAY!
**BREAKFAST IN THE CLASSROOM**

Breakfast in the Classroom goals are to:
- expand student participation in breakfast
- strengthen the positive culture of our school, and
- prepare children to be their best academically and socially/emotionally.

Research on breakfast in the classroom indicates that students benefit in multiple ways from starting their day with a healthy meal in their primary learning environment.

Breakfast will begin on Wednesday, September 4. Students eligible to receive free or reduced lunch will receive breakfast. The price for milk is $0.60 and a full breakfast price is $1.40. Please see WJCC’s website for detailed information about student meals and links to important family resources. [https://wjccschools.org/parents/student-meals/](https://wjccschools.org/parents/student-meals/)

Families may get more information about their child’s meal account by contacting our cafeteria manager at 757-229-1931.
BUS TRANSPORTATION & EXPECTATIONS

Families should contact the WJCC Transportation Department for information about bus routes or stops.

Website: https://wjccschools.org/parents/transportation/
Phone: 757-565-080 ext. 2

Families should arrive at the bus stop 10 minutes prior to the pick up and drop off times. Kindergarten and special education students will not be dropped off at a bus stop without a parent or guardian present.

If you miss your child’s bus arrival in the afternoon, call Transportation immediately to communicate with the bus driver through a dispatcher.

Riding the bus plays an important part in every school day for many of our students. As the new school year begins, we will meet with all students on the bus and in grade level meetings to remind students of their responsibilities to care for themselves and others by making safe, respectful, and responsible decisions for their behavior while they are on the school bus.

We are asking families to review the expectations for student behavior on the school bus. In addition to our Patriot Pride expectations, we have included the WJCC Code of Conduct information for student responsibilities on the school bus on the back of this letter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PATRIOT PRIDE EXPECTATIONS FOR THE BUS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SAFE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stay in your seat until it is time to unload.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board the bus one at a time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keep your hands and feet to yourself.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use a quiet voice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep food and drink in your backpack or lunchbox.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Bus and Bus Stop Expectations

Students are required to conduct themselves on the bus and at the bus stop in a manner consistent with the Code of Conduct. Riding the school bus is a privilege and should be respected and valued. The bus rules also apply when traveling for extra-curricular trips under school sponsorship. It is our goal to provide students a safe and non-threatening environment; therefore, bus drivers may institute and apply additional rules to maintain safety and order.

Safety Tips for walking to and from the Bus stop:
- Try to always walk with a friend and in a group.
- Use the sidewalk or stay close to the roadside curb to be easily seen.
- Avoid strangers.
- Stay in well-lit or populated areas.

Rules for the Bus Stop:
- Be on time, at least five minutes before scheduled pick up.
- Be safe and stand on the sidewalk or in the grass off of the road. Stay alert to traffic.
- Wait quietly and orderly.
- Make sure the bus has come to a complete stop before boarding and respect the danger zone- ten feet around the bus. Check traffic and look both ways before crossing the street to board the bus.
- Take your time and use the handrail when entering or exiting the bus.

While on the Bus:
- Be Respectful: Follow directions from the bus driver. Use soft voices and appropriate language. Use care with the bus, equipment, the seat and the interior.
- Be Responsible: Save food and drink for later. Keep your belongings secured and with you at all times. Remember to follow classroom rules and safety guidelines.
- Be Safe: Take your seat quickly, face forward, and remain seated for the duration of the ride. Keep your hands and head inside the bus and to yourself at all times. Sit quietly and respectfully when the dome lights are on.

Leaving the Bus:
- Remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- Make sure to remove all belongings that you brought on the bus. Clean up any trash in your seat.
- Leave in an orderly manner.
- Leave at your assigned stop. Students will only be permitted to leave at their designated stop unless proper authorization has been received from the parent and school administrator.
- Students should remain in their seats until dismissed by the driver.

Bus Changes:
- Bus changes should be kept to a minimum and authorized in emergency or extreme circumstances only.
- A signed written permission note from the parent/guardian is required and must be brought to the main office upon arrival at school to receive a bus note for the bus driver. The parent/guardian’s contact numbers must be included in the note for verification from the school. Bus drivers will not admit students onto the bus without the appropriate forms.

QUESTIONS?
Transportation: (757) 565-0808 (option 2)
http://www.info.finder.com/find?cid=WCS5PSADTKVX
Here are a few tips to help our carline run safely and efficiently for all families and students every morning.

1. Carline begins at 9:05 and ends at 9:20. If you arrive after 9:20, please park and walk to the front office to sign in your child.

2. Students should be ready to unload the vehicle once you have come to a stop in the unload zone.

3. Please have cell phones turned off.

4. Pull up to the first cone near the dumpsters so we can have about 5 cars in the “Unload Zone” at one time.

5. All cars in the “Unload Zone” will unload at the same time.

6. Children will unload only in the “Unload Zone.”

7. For safety, have your child exit your car on the right side of your vehicle.
FOOD PRACTICES

Matthew Whaley will operate as an Allergy Aware school and will follow practices to control, to the best of our ability, student contact with known allergens. If your child has a known allergy, please inform Ms. Wells, our school nurse.

• Please do not send any peanuts or foods containing nuts to be eaten as snacks in the classroom. It is fine to send these products for your child’s lunch, which is eaten in the cafeteria. Staff clean table surfaces after every class’ meal.

• Students will not engage in any classroom projects/activities that involve peanut butter (like bird feeders) or peanut shells.

• All food served during the school day in WJCC schools, including celebrations, must meet the Smart Snacks in Schools standards. If a teacher chooses to serve food at classroom events, he/she will provide specific information to families to ensure all served foods meet the Smart Snacks in Schools standards. For more information regarding Smart Snacks in School, please visit: https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks

• Celebrations are a special time for children. However, a food-centered celebration can create a difficult experience for the food-allergic child or child with a health condition. For this reason and to adhere to the Smart Snacks in School guidelines, we will discontinue the practice of distributing sweets and snacks for celebrations, including birthdays. Please do not bring or send baked goods such as cupcakes, cookies, or candy to distribute to students. If you would like to send in a special treat for your child’s class, we ask that you send cut fruit or vegetables or consider a nonedible treat such as stickers, pencils, or a book or physical activity gift such as a Frisbee, hula-hoop, or jumprope to your child’s class. Please check with the classroom teacher to know whether there is a classmate with an allergy to a fruit or a vegetable, when choosing food options for a celebration.

• We welcome families to join their children during lunch. If you are bringing a special lunch to school for your child, please help us keep all children safe from the possibility of ingesting food allergens by providing food items for your child only.

• If your child ate a nut containing food for breakfast, we would greatly appreciate your making sure that his/her hands are washed with soap and water before leaving for school. Water alone, or hand sanitizer, does not do the trick! It is the mechanical removing of the nut protein from the skin that is needed.
HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Families are encouraged to communicate often with their children’s teachers and other school staff, particularly when there is a change that may impact a student’s social/emotional well being, physical health, or academic progress.

The communication tips:

- Phone calls: leave a voice message for the teacher. Office staff will not interrupt instruction.
- In the case of a change in dismissal or an emergency, send a dismissal note to the teachers or call the office to speak directly to the office staff.
- Send notes to explain absences from school on the day of the student’s return to school.
- Emails to the teacher should include the child’s name in the subject line so the teacher will recognize emails caught by the filter.
- Student work and important school and PTA information and notices will be sent home daily or weekly (check with your child’s teacher) in his/her blue folder.
- Families are strongly encouraged to regularly check their ParentVUE account to monitor student’s grades and access important class information and learning resources.
- If a parent or guardian needs a ParentVUE activation code, please contact Mrs. Randall, the Registrar.

Access important forms, WJCC documents such as the Code of Conduct, calendar, family life curriculum, and sign up for WJCC text alerts on the WJCC website at https://wjccschools.org/back-to-school/.
HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS

Goals of homework:
- Extend student learning through meaningful practice
- Engage families so parents and guardians are knowledgeable of what their children are learning
- Respect the differences in students’ schedules, interests, and access to learning tools outside of school

With those goals in mind, you can expect the following homework this year (differentiated by grade level and students’ instructional needs):
- **NIGHTLY READING** – Numerous research studies define the volume of meaningful reading a child engages in as a significant factor in his growth of critical, lifelong reading skills. Nightly reading might include being read to, shared reading, and independent reading (as appropriate by grade and instructional needs) and is elevated in effect when followed by conversation about what was read.
- **PRACTICE NUMBER AND NUMBER SENSE SKILLS** such as counting, basic addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division facts, and using math in practical ways around the home.
- **REVIEW STUDY GUIDES, INTERACTIVE NOTEBOOKS, and VOCABULARY** (as appropriate by grade level). Discussing what your child is learning, asking him to explain/demonstrate concepts, skills, and vocabulary, and sharing your experiences with that information are very powerful ways to reinforce and increase the meaning of what your child is learning.
PATRIOT PLAY

Our goal for Patriot Play is to

- create a more inclusive social experience for all students
- increase student activity, and
- teach students activities and games and how to use a variety of play equipment they can use during other play experiences.

Twice weekly, during students’ regularly scheduled recess time, students will engage in Patriot Play. Led by our PE teacher, Mr. Bowling, our SHIP Wellness Integration Specialist, Mrs. Lenahan, and our school counselors, Mrs. Almasian and Ms. Green, teachers and volunteers will teach children new games, engage students in cooperative play, and reinforce social emotional learning in the context of the playground.

PARTIOT PRIDE EXPECTATIONS

The Matthew Whaley learning community recognizes that there are key character traits directly linked to student success:

- Safe
- Respectful
- Responsible
- Hardworking

From the first day of school, we have worked with our children to help them understand what it means to demonstrate those traits at Matthew Whaley in the classroom, hallways, restrooms, cafeteria, playground, and on the bus. We hope you will reinforce the importance of being safe, respectful, responsible, and hardworking in order to be the best student every child can be. If your child comes home wearing a Patriot Pride sticker, please ask him/her why a staff member gave the sticker and let him/her know you are proud of his/her choices.
# Patriot Pride Schoolwide Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hallway/Stairs</th>
<th>Cafeteria</th>
<th>Restroom</th>
<th>Playground</th>
<th>Choice Time</th>
<th>Auditorium</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SAFE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hold on to the hand railing.</td>
<td>Sit down quickly.</td>
<td>Swing straight.</td>
<td>Please no competitive games.</td>
<td>Keep hands and feet to yourself.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keep hands and arms to your sides.</td>
<td>Sit on your seat.</td>
<td>Use hands, feet, and equipment properly.</td>
<td>Play without hard running or throwing</td>
<td>Return to class in an orderly fashion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>On the stairs travel one step at a time;</td>
<td>Line up quietly when waiting for choice or teacher pick-up.</td>
<td>Stay in your assigned areas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keep a hand on the rail.</td>
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<td>Walk until you get to the field or blacktop area.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RESPECTFUL</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Stay silent.</td>
<td>Use a quiet voice.</td>
<td>Use quiet voices.</td>
<td>Take turns.</td>
<td>Keep chalk and balls off the school walls.</td>
<td>Applaud at the appropriate time.</td>
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<td>Use quiet feet.</td>
<td>Wait your turn.</td>
<td>Wait your turn.</td>
<td>Use kind words.</td>
<td>Be a good sport.</td>
<td>Show respect for the presentations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use lockers quietly.</td>
<td>Use your best manners.</td>
<td>Respect others’ privacy.</td>
<td>Be a good sport.</td>
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<td><strong>RESPONSIBLE</strong></td>
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<td>Move quickly to where you are going.</td>
<td>Make sure you have all you need before you sit down.</td>
<td>Clean up after yourself.</td>
<td>Pick up all equipment when done.</td>
<td>Line up as soon as you hear your class is called.</td>
<td>Wait for the signal before standing and exiting the auditorium.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arrive on time.</td>
<td>Raise your hand when you need help.</td>
<td>Clean your area.</td>
<td>Pick up your belongings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Follow adult directions.</td>
<td>Clean your area.</td>
<td>Line up quickly at the signal.</td>
<td>Line up quickly at the signal.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>HARDWORKING</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Use silent hands, feet, and voices so others can be hardworking.</td>
<td>At breakfast eat silently and quickly so that your can start learning.</td>
<td>Return to class as quickly as possible so you can continue learning.</td>
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<td>After breakfast go straight to class.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fire Drills</td>
<td>Morning Drop-off</td>
<td>Bus Arrival</td>
<td>Bus Dismissal</td>
<td>Cafeteria Dismissal</td>
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<td><strong>SAFE</strong></td>
<td>Be ready to listen and follow directions.</td>
<td>Wait for Matthew Whaley staff to assist you.</td>
<td>Walk on the sidewalk.</td>
<td>Walk behind your teachers and others in a line until you reach the bus.</td>
<td>Walk behind staff and others in a line until you reach the cafeteria.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Exit the building silently.</td>
<td>Exit the car on the right hand side.</td>
<td>Keep hands and arms to yourself.</td>
<td>Keep your hands and feet to yourself.</td>
<td>Keep hands and arms to yourself.</td>
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<td>Stay with your class.</td>
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<td>Use a quiet voice.</td>
<td>Use a quiet voice.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Walk in a line.</td>
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<td>Keep food and drink in your backpack or lunchbox.</td>
<td>Keep food and drink in your backpack or lunchbox.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Remain silent at all times.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RESPPECTFUL</strong></td>
<td>Walk Quietly</td>
<td>Walk Quietly</td>
<td>Use kind words.</td>
<td>Walk Silently.</td>
<td>Walk Silently.</td>
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<td>Speak and act appropriately towards adults and other students.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RESPONSIBLE</strong></td>
<td>Move back into the building quickly and quietly.</td>
<td>Go straight to breakfast or class.</td>
<td>Move quickly to where you are going.</td>
<td>Take your backpack and other belongings with you when you get off the bus.</td>
<td>Sit in your assigned area until your caregiver signs you out.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Arrive on time.</td>
<td>Keep your backpack and belongings to yourself at all times.</td>
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<td>Follow adult directions.</td>
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SAFETY DRILLS

Over the course of the school year, our school holds safety drills to ensure that students and staff know what to do in the event of an emergency. These drills include, but are not limited to fire, tornado, earthquake, and lockdown. Sometimes these drills will be planned and other times we will hold spontaneous exercises to assess everyone’s ability to respond quickly to emergencies.

Prior to drills, staff will talk with students about the purpose of the drill and what will happen to prepare students for this very important safety exercise. During the drill, our emergency response partners from the Williamsburg police and fire departments join us as we simulate how we would respond to an emergency. Together we will examine our procedures and responses during the drill.

Please note that if you arrive at our school during a drill, you will be asked to remain outside until the drill concludes. We appreciate your cooperation and apologize in advance for any inconvenience.