

Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools

www.wjccschools.org

Core Values

Individualism, Integrity, Innovation, Accountability and Collaboration

Vision

Pursuing excellence and championing the success of all students.

Mission

WJCC provides each and every student with the knowledge, skills and values to be a lifelong learner, communicate, think critically, work and live productively and contribute constructively to the lives of others. WJCC is committed to providing the variety of programs necessary to address the range of students' interests and needs as they grow academically, socially and emotionally.

Priorities

- High student achievement for 21st Century success
- Safe, secure and welcoming climate for learning
- Rich, rewarding experience for professionals
- Build trust and authentic partnerships with families and the broader community
- Accountable and trusted leadership

Goals

1. Ensure student progress in mastering foundational academic skills and 21st Century skills.
2. Structure academic programs (e.g., length and frequency, blended learning) to meet the differential needs and interests of students.
3. Develop structures to ensure student and staff physical and emotional safety, student readiness to learn and student engagement in learning.
4. Employ flexible learning resources, particularly using new technologies, to accommodate varied learning styles.
5. Restructure the Division's organization and procedures to engage professionals in shared problem solving and decision-making.
6. Align curriculum, instruction and assessments with research-based, high-yield best practices to help professionals meet the diverse needs of students.
7. Encourage and celebrate innovation and excellence that inspires more creativity and depth in teaching.
8. Establish effective partnerships with families.
9. Engage parents and the community in ensuring student success.
10. Develop and maintain a transparent strategic management system linked to key budget decisions.
11. Employ effective and varied communication methods to involve WJCC stakeholders.

Communication

Good home/school communication is critical to the success of your child and to our mission as a school. School staff will make every effort to actively communicate with our students and families, and we urge you to contact us by phone or in writing at any time.

Communicating with Teachers

If you need to contact your child's teacher, please try to do so before the start of the school day. Upon request, school office staff will be happy to relay a message to the teacher or transfer you to voice mail so your call can be returned at a time when the teacher is not providing instruction. Written communication from parents will also receive prompt attention.

Report Cards

The school year is divided into four grading periods, and written report cards will be sent home at these times. The dates of these progress reports are noted on the school division calendar.

Conferences and Meetings

Parent/Teacher Conferences are held at the completion of the first grading period. In addition to regularly scheduled conferences, parent and teacher meetings are always

welcome. Appointments for conferences should be planned in advance to ensure that adequate time can be scheduled without impacting instructional time. Parent/teacher meetings are typically scheduled before or after the instructional day. Meetings with the principal, assistant principal or other resource personnel may also be scheduled upon request. Please contact any of these individuals or the school office to schedule these appointments.

Newsletters

Regularly scheduled newsletters include communication from teachers, the principal and the PTA. These publications keep you informed of school events, schedule changes and team news.

Telephone Notification System

WJCC utilizes an automated calling system in an effort to communicate important events, schedule changes and other school happenings.

School/Division Web Pages

WJCC maintains a webpage at www.wjccschools.org. Individual school web pages may be accessed from that web address.

General Procedures

Homework

Homework is a logical extension of classroom activities and is designed to enable a student to work independently. It not only reinforces and enriches classroom activities, but also serves as a lesson in responsibility. Parents can assist by providing a set time, an adequate place and an appropriate atmosphere for a child to work. Supervision to the point of seeing that the child fulfills his responsibility is equally important.

Textbooks, Library Books and Supplies

WJCC provides textbooks without charge for each child. Supplemental textbooks, library books and other instructional materials are also available. We encourage children to keep all books clean and in good condition. In the event of lost or damaged books, parents are required to replace the book at fair market value. Students will be asked to provide their own writing paper, pencils or pens, and other school supplies. Lists of required supplies will be sent home by teachers and are also available on the school website.

Scheduled Early Dismissals

The school calendar identifies early dismissal days for students in grades K-5. Lunch will be served on these days.

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 an early dismissal or school closure, announcements are made through the division's telephone notification system, email, Twitter, Facebook, WJCC TV-47 (Cox Cable) and on the division website: www.wjccschools.org.

Be sure your child knows where to go in the event of an emergency closing and make sure the school is notified of any special instructions. Please go over this information with your child. **If this information changes at any time during the school year, remember to notify the teacher and the school office.**

Transfers

If it becomes necessary for a child to move out of his/her current attendance zone, you are required to promptly notify the school office of your new address. The school office will transfer all records to the new school. All school property including textbooks, library books and supplies must be returned to school before the transfer is issued.

School Pictures

Student photographs will be taken during the fall and spring of the school year. Both individual and group class pictures are available for sale, and parents will be notified in advance. The school receives a commission from the sale of these pictures which is used to provide additional resources for students. Failure to return or pay for pictures can result in future pictures not being sent home and/or loss of participation in non-academic functions.

Fundraising

Fundraising activities that involve students in door-to-door solicitation are prohibited.

Visitors

Parents are always welcome to visit WJCC classrooms. Parent visits should be scheduled in advance with the teacher. **For the safety of every child, all adults must report to the main office.** There, you will sign in and receive a visitor's sticker. Children visiting from out of town must have permission from the principal to attend school with your child.

Student Dress

Children should dress comfortably so they can take part in physical activities with ease and take part in art activities without fear of ruining clothing. For example, long dresses, sandals and clogs make physical activities difficult and potentially unsafe. Remember, students participate in physical education classes weekly and recess on a daily basis so tennis shoes should either be worn or brought to school. **Flip flops, open toe shoes and tennis shoes with wheels have caused injuries and may not be worn.** In a school environment, all children should dress modestly. Biker shorts or pants, short shorts, halter-type blouses, spaghetti strap tops, showing of the midriff or tank tops are not permitted. Makeup and excessive jewelry are also discouraged. Offensive messages on clothing are prohibited. Hats and jackets may not be worn inside by boys or girls except on designated hat days.

Lost and Found

Many articles of clothing and other personal possessions are left by children. Please send your child to the school office if they have lost any items. Items are periodically donated to charity. Please label everything with your child's name.

School Meals

Menus are available online. Children may bring their lunch from home or buy lunch and/or breakfast. Parents may block the purchase of snacks by contacting the cafeteria manager. We encourage parents to set up a cafeteria account. This works on a debit system and may be set up for any amount that is convenient. When funds are running low, a reminder note will be sent home. The parent also has the option of adding funds to a student's account online. Please access MySchoolBucks under 'Parents' on the WJCC home page. Free and reduced-price lunch eligibility forms will be sent home at the beginning of the school year, and parents may request the forms at any time. All lunch and snack prices are determined centrally and may change during the school year. Price information will be provided at the beginning of the year and upon request.

All meals are eaten in the school cafeteria. Breakfast is served 10 minutes before the start of school and a time limit of 10 minutes will be enforced to prevent the loss of valuable instructional time. Breakfast is not served on days with delayed start times.

All meals served must meet standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture; however, the school will make substitutions prescribed by a doctor. Juice may be substituted for milk only with a doctor's note. We encourage healthy eating habits and ask for your assistance in doing the same. **Canned, carbonated soft drinks are prohibited except for field trips.**

Parents are welcome to join their children for lunch. Reservations for parents are not needed and pricing is a la carte.

Parents may want to provide refreshments for special occasions. Please seek approval from your child's teacher in advance. This should not be disruptive to the school environment (classroom, playground, cafeteria, etc.). Please be sensitive to students with food allergies and consider bringing non-food items.

School Rules

Williamsburg-James City County School Discipline Rules and Related Policies are not included in this book but will be sent home separately. **We ask that you review it carefully with your child and sign and return the statement acknowledging receipt.**

Additional rules applying to all students are:

- Respect themselves, the school staff and other students
- Display good conduct at school and on the bus
- Be honest in statements and actions
- Respect the rights and property of others
- Promote school cleanliness and upkeep of property
- Make substitute teachers and visitors feel welcome
- Follow all other classroom rules
- Behave in such a way as to promote safety

Items Forbidden at School

Toys (unless sanctioned by the teacher), CD players, iPods, MP3 players, water guns, radios, video games and other items should not be brought to school. In all cases, where the presence of these items creates a serious problem, the school office will notify parents. Students will be suspended and may be recommended for expulsion if they bring guns, knives or other dangerous objects to school. Look-a-like weapons are also forbidden. Cellular phones must be turned off and stored away. *(See WJCC School Board Policy Manual, Section JFC)*

School Attendance

Attendance at school is very important. It is vital that our children learn early in life the importance of attending school regularly and being on time. **Please try to schedule doctor and dentist appointments outside of school hours when possible.**

Arrival

Students may begin arriving 5 minutes before the scheduled start time. Teachers and other school staff are involved in meetings and planning and are not available to supervise children before then. To be ensured of your child's safety, all parents must observe the arrival time. Please do not drop off your student in the car line until school staff members arrive to provide supervision.

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 instructional time.

To ensure that 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. Excessive or chronic tardiness and absenteeism are monitored by teachers, assistants, attendance specialists and the school

social worker. Excessive absences may result in court action.

Tardiness

Tardiness is disruptive to the routine of school. Acceptable reasons for excused tardiness are: illness of student, medical and dental appointments that cannot be arranged out of school hours or bus problems. All children arriving late must be accompanied by their parents and report to the office before going to a classroom. The parent or school staff will complete a tardy slip which will be given to the teacher.

Leaving School Before Dismissal & Parent Pick-up/Drop-off Procedures

Parents are requested not to take children out of school before the school day has ended. Learning continues until the end of the day and much is lost for the individual student through early dismissal.

When a student must be picked up early, parents should send a note with the child notifying the teacher. This note will be forwarded to the office with the attendance list. If circumstances arise that require you to pick up your child before the end of the school day, please call the school office as soon as possible.

Only authorized persons listed on student registration forms will be permitted to pick up your student. All other individuals must have a note from the parent/guardian before a student will be released. Identification of parents and authorized persons will be verified before children are released.

Enrollment, Health and Safety

School Entrance Requirements

Students entering public school for the first time in Virginia are asked to present the following:

- Certified copy of the birth certificate
- Written evidence of adequate immunizations as required in Code of Virginia and in accordance with the Regulations of the State Board of Health
- Written evidence of a physical exam (first time entry into public elementary school only) performed no earlier than 12 months prior to enrollment
- Two (2) proofs of residency (e.g. residence purchase, lease agreement, utility bill dated within 30 days). In addition, you will be required to complete a Residency Verification Affidavit.

Chronic Health Conditions

Case management is implemented for students with chronic health conditions such as diabetes, seizures, severe allergies and asthma. Depending on the severity, an Individualized Health Care Plan may be developed to provide details on a student's specific needs. The school nurse may provide specialized medical care as ordered by the health care provider.

If your child has any health concerns you wish to discuss, you may contact the school nurse by phone or make an appointment to meet with the school nurse at school.

Illnesses and Minor Injuries

Should your child become ill or receive a minor injury during the school day, it may be necessary for you to come to school or send an authorized adult to pick up your child. Each student must be signed out in the school office by an authorized adult.

If the student is deemed well enough to stay in school, most students are able to report to their parent/guardian that they visited the nurse. However, if they are too young to relay a message, the school nurse will make every effort to inform the parent/guardian of minor illness and/or injury by phone or written note.

Children with complaints or symptoms of illness such as vomiting, diarrhea, rash, severe headache, severe cough or sore throat should remain at home. **If your child has a fever of 100 degrees or more, or is vomiting, or has diarrhea, he/she should remain at home for 24 hours after the symptoms are gone (without medication).** These practices are important for your child's health and the welfare of others.

Medication

When possible, parents are advised to give medication at home and on a schedule other than during school hours. However, if medication must be given during school hours, the following rules must be observed:

1. Medication must be brought to school by the parent/guardian and must be brought to the clinic in its original container with the appropriate label intact. (To make this easier, ask your pharmacist to fill an extra container with the amount of medicine that will be needed for school doses. The extra container may be left at school with the nurse.)
2. The parent/guardian and prescribers must complete and sign the Medication Consent Form granting the school nurse or designee permission to administer the medication and to contact the health care provider as needed. This form is available on the school website and at school.
3. For more details, please refer to Policy JHCD.

Emergencies

During school hours, health emergencies (severe injuries or serious illness) will be evaluated by the school nurse or designee. Appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the WJCC Nursing Guidelines and Protocols. At the nurse's or designee's recommendation, the Williamsburg and/or James City County rescue squad may be called to transport the student to a hospital emergency department. The nurse or other appropriate school personnel will stay with the student until the parent can be reached and can join the child.

Mandated Health Screenings

The school nurse will screen all Kindergarten, third, seventh and tenth grade students for vision and hearing. Other screenings performed may include speech, fine motor and gross motor, and dental. Students transferring from outside Virginia will be screened within the first 60 days of enrollment. If abnormal results are found, the student is re-screened. If the results are still abnormal, the parent/guardian will be notified and a referral to a health care provider is made. Scoliosis information will be sent home to parents of students in grades 5 through 10.

Playgrounds

Playgrounds are supervised. We encourage you to discuss general school and safety rules with your child. All injuries and complaints are reported to the school nurse, nurse designee or school office personnel.

Bus Transportation

Bus transportation is provided to all students who live far enough from school to make walking impractical and to those students close to school where traffic conditions make walking unsafe. All bus riders should be at their assigned stop at least 10 minutes before the pickup time. You may check for late buses on <http://twitter.com/WJCTier2Buses> or <http://twitter.com/WJCTier3Buses>. You also may call the bus hotline at 603-6483. A note is required if your child rides the same bus, but disembarks at a different stop.

No student will be allowed to ride any bus other than his/her assigned bus without permission from a parent. Occasionally it may be necessary to have your child ride a different bus. **For your child's safety, we must have a written request if a bus change is to be made.** This note must be turned into the school office. Teachers and bus drivers have been instructed not to allow bus changes without notes approved by the school office. Students who do not follow this procedure will ride their assigned bus.

Parent concerns about bus routes or other issues should be discussed with the transportation office (565-0808).

Students who live within safe walking distance of school may walk to and from school with written permission. Children must follow safety procedures and may not arrive at school more than 5 minutes before start time.

Bus Safety

Good behavior on the bus and at the bus stop is essential for student safety. All students riding the bus are expected to:

- Immediately sit down in their assigned seats
- Stay seated when the bus is moving
- Keep heads, arms and legs inside the bus
- Respect other people and their property
- Talk quietly and use polite language
- Throw nothing on the floor or out of the window
- Refrain from eating or drinking on the bus
- Refrain from bringing any pets or animals on the bus
- Be at the bus stop on time
- Cross in front of the school bus if they must cross the street
- Get off the bus only at their assigned stops (unless they have written permission to leave the bus at some other stop)
- **Follow all instructions given by the bus driver**

The bus driver will report to an administrator any behavior problems needing special attention. Continued refusal to follow bus rules will result in loss of bus privileges.

Curriculum Overview

Copies of elementary student standards, grade-level objectives and core content for K-5 students are available for review in school media centers, public libraries and on the WJCC web site.

Reading and Language Arts

The reading and language arts curriculum is designed to improve the achievement of all students as they (1) apply reading and thinking strategies in order to understand, evaluate and respond to a variety of literature and informational texts; (2) communicate knowledge, ideas and feelings through a variety of written products; and (3) use effective listening and speaking skills in communicating with others. Our literature-based, integrated language arts program provides a balanced approach, focusing on comprehension and skill development. Students read and respond to a variety of types of fiction and nonfiction; they also provide a variety of written products. The focus of instruction is in the areas of oral language, comprehension, word analysis and word meaning, literary elements, composition and style, mechanics, usage, spelling, and research and study skills.

Mathematics

The elementary mathematics curriculum enhances student abilities to apply mathematical skills to school, home and daily life experiences and stimulates creative interactions among learners.

The content of the curriculum supports four goals for elementary students: (1) becoming mathematical problem solvers, (2) communicating mathematically, (3) reasoning mathematically, and (4) making mathematical connections. Specific topics include number and number sense, computation and estimation, measurement, geometry, fractions and decimals, probability and statistics, and patterns, functions and equations. Textbooks, manipulatives and technology are all used to support and enhance instruction.

Social Studies

The primary purpose of the social studies program is to prepare young people to be responsible citizens who actively participate in civic affairs, understand their role in a changing global society and who can apply knowledge and skills from their study of history, geography, economics and government. In the elementary curriculum, Virginia and the United States receive primary emphasis.

Science

The elementary science curriculum encourages a “hands-on” approach to instruction. Students investigate scientific methodology and develop their understanding of the

nature of science and technology as they increase their scientific knowledge base. Students in the primary grades are introduced to basic scientific process skills and by fourth and fifth grade are involved in more advanced and formal investigations.

Technology

The technology curriculum teaches students basic vocabulary and keyboarding skills as well as the use of word processing and databases. Students have experiences with a variety of instructional technologies that increase subject-area knowledge and concepts as well as learning about telecommunication and multimedia applications.

Field Trips

Occasional field trips are taken in order to extend and enhance regular classroom activities. Parents will be provided details beforehand and are usually asked to submit written permission. Students who fail to receive written permission when required cannot participate.

Health and Physical Education, Wellness and SHIP

Health and Physical Education, Wellness and SHIP promote social and emotional development and provide instruction in physical fitness, group games, sports skills, nutrition, and personal health and safety. Group relationships and team play are emphasized as are the development of personal habits that promote lifelong wellness. State physical fitness testing is required for all fourth and fifth grade students.

SHIP is an ongoing school-community partnership that creates a culture of wellness for staff, students and their families.

Family Life and Sex Education

Williamsburg-James City County Public Schools offer a comprehensive, sequential Family Life and Sex Education program. The curriculum is developed following SOL guidelines and provides a framework of knowledge and understanding designed to enhance student respect for self and others and promote responsible decision-making and personal behavior. **Notification of parental rights and procedures for opting out of all or part of this curriculum is sent home at the beginning of the year, before any Family Life units are presented to students.**

Art, Music and Physical Education

Teachers in art, music and physical education provide large group instruction in regularly scheduled classes. Appreciation, skills and production are emphasized in art and music classes. Fifth grade students have the option to enroll in a band, strings or general music offering. Students develop fundamental concepts and skills, produce a variety

of artistic products and have opportunities to attend a variety of presentations.

Chorus is available to fifth grade students as an extracurricular activity. Opportunities for specific skill instruction and enrichment classes vary by school.

Library/Media Center Services

A library/media specialist and media assistant are available to help students in this center. The media center is open to all students for checking out books, learning library skills, working on research projects and for participating in enrichment activities. In addition to library books and children's magazines, the media center has audio-visual aids and computers. A professional library is available for staff and parents.

Resource Personnel and Services

Child Study Team

The school Child Study Team meets regularly to process teacher and/or parent referrals and makes recommendations for individual students experiencing academic, social, emotional, behavioral or physical difficulties. The Child Study Team is composed of several resource personnel.

Health Services

A full-time school nurse works cooperatively with teachers and administrators in identifying health problems and handling medical emergencies. The school nurse also assists by serving as a resource to faculty and staff on health and safety issues.

Guidance Services

The elementary school guidance and counseling program consists of a variety of services for students and parents. Individual and small group counseling is provided. Classroom guidance is instructional in nature and includes planned developmental activities that focus on academic, social/interpersonal and career needs. In addition, elementary school counselors consult with parents individually and may provide parent skill groups during the year. No student shall be required to participate in any counseling program to which the parents object. Parents may exercise their right to exclude a child from participating (opt out) in guidance and counseling activities by writing a letter to the principal. Parents have the option, when writing the letter, to exempt students from all facets of the program or to allow participation in some parts of it. **This "opt out" provision is applicable to the current year only and parents must request, on an annual basis, that their child not participate.**

Reading Resource Specialist

The reading resource specialist coordinates the reading and language arts program. This includes meeting with teachers to assist in planning for instruction, recommending and managing instructional and professional materials,

providing staff development and monitoring student progress.

Math Specialist

The math specialist coordinates the school math program. A portion of time is spent working with and monitoring students; the remainder is spent assisting teachers.

Student Support Specialist

A student support specialist is available to assist students who are in need of additional academic assistance. The classroom teacher and specialist work together to meet the needs of students.

Reading Recovery Teachers

Reading Recovery teachers teach identified first grade students on a daily basis, either through small group instruction or individual tutoring. The program's emphasis is early intervention and prevention of reading difficulties. Reading Recovery teachers work closely with K-2 teachers and the reading resource specialist.

Technology Specialist

A full-time technology teacher works with all students and teachers in the computer lab or in the classroom.

Learning Specialists

Learning specialists work with children who have been identified with specific disabilities that impact their learning. These teachers work collaboratively with general education teachers. Instruction most often takes place in the regular classroom, with occasional assistance given in a resource room.

Teaching Assistants

These instructional personnel work with teachers and teams to provide a wide range of instructional and clerical services to benefit all students.

