

Notice of Non-Discrimination

The Board of Education of Carroll County does not engage in discrimination that is unlawful or contrary to Maryland State Department of Education guidance on the basis of age, color, genetic information, marital status, mental or physical disability, ancestry or national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

The Board of Education of Carroll County is firmly committed to creating equal employment and educational opportunities for all persons by providing an environment that supports optimal academic achievement and productive work and is free from any form of unlawful discrimination, including access to school facilities, educational programs, and extracurricular activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Director of Human Resources, 125 North Court Street, Westminster, Maryland 21157, (410) 751-3070.

ADA Accessibility

Carroll County Public Schools (CCPS) does not discriminate on the basis of disability in employment or the provision of services, programs or activities. Persons needing auxiliary aids and services for communication should contact the Communications Office at 410-751-3020 or publicinfo@carrollk12.org, or write to Carroll County Public Schools, 125 North Court Street, Westminster, Maryland 21157. Persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability, may use Relay or 7-1-1. Please contact the school system at least one (1) week in advance of the date the special accommodation is needed. Information concerning the Americans with Disabilities Act is available from the Director of Facilities Management, (410) 751-3177, or the Communications Officer, (410) 751-3020, 125 North Court Street, Westminster, Maryland 21157.

Important Contact Information

West Middle School
60 Monroe Street
Westminster, MD 21157
Phone (410)751-3661- Fax (410)751-3667

Principal:

Shannon Zepp ShannonZepp@carrollk12.org

Assistant Principals:

Joseph Fankibi JosephFankibi@carrollk12.org (All of 6th Grade; A-K 7th Grade)

Jeffrey Hopkins JeffreyHopkins@carrollk12.org (All of 8th Grade; L-Z 7th Grade)

Office Manager and Service Learning Coordinator:

Deniece Schaeffer DenieceSchaeffer@carrollk12.org

School Secretaries:

Carrah Holmes CarrahHolmes@carrollk12.org

Laura Sherfey LauraSherfey@carrollk12.org

Therese Stair TerryStair@carrollk12.org

School Counselors:

Grade 6, Beth Buckalew BethBuckalew@carrollk12.org

Grade 7, Robbie Green RobbieGreen@carrollk12.org

Grade 8, Laura Finch LauraFinch@carrollk12.org

Registrar:

Heidi Robertson HeidiRobertson@carrollk12.org

Nurses:

Borendia Williams BorendiaWilliams@carrollk12.org

Media Specialist:

Stacey Kahler SLKAHLE@carrollk12.org

<https://destiny.carrollk12.org>

For more information on policies not covered in the West Middle Student Handbook, please refer to the CCPS Student/Parent Handbook.

General Policies & Procedures

Academic Honesty

The **CCPS Student/Parent Handbook** states the following policy: Academic Dishonesty/Cheating in any form on a graded assignment will not be tolerated. Examples include, but are not limited to, turning in work as your own when someone else has done all or part of the assignment, knowingly giving/receiving information about answers to homework, quizzes, or tests; and plagiarism.

Unless teachers give students direct permission to use AI (Artificial Intelligence), students are not permitted to use an AI tool in the planning or creation of an assignment. Assignments given to students are designed to help evaluate what they know and can do relative to the course; the use of AI doesn't always reflect what students know and can do. If students or parents have any questions about a specific assignment or tool, please contact your teacher directly and proactively.

Book bags and Backpacks

Students may carry their book bags with them to lunch and to their related arts classes. Whether or not students are permitted to have their backpacks in their academic classes will be a team-by-team decision and will be communicated with students. Students are expected to put their lunches and gym bags in their lockers until they are needed.

Dress Code

The dress code applies to school events and activities both on and off campus.
Please refer to the CCPS Student/Parent Handbook for more information.

Food and Drinks

Students may carry and consume water throughout the school day. Other food or drinks must be stored in the locker and consumed in the cafeteria.

Gum and Candy

Gum and candy is permitted in classrooms at teacher's discretion. Gum and candy may not be eaten in the hallways or on school buses.

Leaving Class

Students requesting to leave class for any reason should first ask the teacher for permission. If students are asking to see another adult in the building, the teacher should see if that staff member is available. Upon approval, the student should sign out with the teacher. These requests should be kept to a minimum. Any business with the office should be taken care of either before or after school or during lunchtime.

Lockers

Maryland Public School Law, Article 7-307, establishes the authority of school administrators to search a student or locker. Lockers are school property and are subject to search by an administrator at any time. All students are assigned a locker. Combinations are maintained by homeroom teachers. Students who provide their own locks for those that do not have them, must share the combination or a key for the lock with their homeroom teacher.

Personal Property

Students should not bring any personal item from home that would distract them or others from learning. Staff members may confiscate any personal item that is causing a disruption to the school day. Personal items include cell phones, electronic gaming devices, athletic equipment, and toys.

Use of Personal Electronic Devices (cell phones, portable gaming systems, earbuds)

Students are expected at the beginning of each school day to go directly to their lockers and then report to homeroom, at which time electronic devices are not to be used throughout the building for the remainder of the day. All students now have 1:1 laptops and there is no reason for cell phones to be used in class. The expectation is that student phones and personal electronic devices are off and away during the day. If a student is found with a cell phone, gaming system or earbuds out during the school day without permission, the item will be confiscated and turned into the office for the remainder of the day, and a referral will be written.

Personal Electronic Devices Liability and Misuse

Carroll County Public Schools assumes no responsibility for the loss, damage, theft, or charging of personally owned portable electronic devices and/or related accessories brought to school or on the school buses. Students bring these devices to Carroll County Public Schools at their own risk.

Disciplinary action, as outlined in the Carroll County Public Schools Student Handbook, shall be taken when a student fails to follow the directions of a staff member regarding portable electronic devices or if reasonable belief exists that the student has violated the procedures and expectations established by the school.

Selling Items

The sale or distribution of gum, candy, or any other items, including non-school fundraiser items, is prohibited at all times. School organizations, teams, and clubs will occasionally sponsor in-school fundraisers, which must have prior approval of the administration.

Health & Safety

Medications/Illness

If a student needs to take medication during school hours, a CCPS Medication Form must be completed before any representative of the school can administer prescription or non-prescription medications. These can be obtained from the school nurse. It is important to note that all medication must be brought to school by a parent or guardian. Students may not transport medication. **Please refer to the CCPS Student/Parent Handbook for more information.**

Conflict Resolution

There are times when students experience conflict that may require an outside person to help resolve the problem. We offer several interventions to students through our School Counseling Department and Administration:

- Mediation with a School Counselor - Students are asked to first contact their school counselor when there is an issue that needs attention.
- Administrative Intervention

Attendance Policies

Arriving to School

As students arrive to school, they are expected to report immediately to their locker if needed and go to homeroom. Walking the halls and visiting other areas of the school are not permitted. Students will not be permitted in the building until 8:05 am and will be dismissed at 3:10 pm.

Dismissal

Families may elect one way home for students on the emergency card. Parents/Guardians must provide written notification for any change to this routine.

Early Dismissals

When a student needs to be dismissed from school before the end of the school day, the school must be notified in writing. A child may only be removed from school by a parent or legal guardian. Other persons wishing to remove a child from school may do so only with written permission from the parent.

In the case of a custody agreement, a non-custodial parent may pick up a child from school as long as he or she has written permission from the custodial parent, and there is no court order on file with the school otherwise prohibiting this action. It is the intention of Carroll County Public Schools to remain neutral in matters concerning separation, divorce, and child custody. However, school officials may intervene and make decisions in order to ensure the safety and welfare of the child, as well as maintain order and decorum in the school. In case of an emergency, an administrator will make a reasonable attempt to contact the parent. If unable to do so, an administrator will make a reasonable attempt to contact the individual(s) designated on the emergency card. If this contact cannot be made, an administrator may authorize removal and/or transportation as appropriate.

Absences

If a student is going to be absent or late to school, a parent or guardian should notify the school office before 9:30 a.m. by calling the school at 410.751.3661 or emailing us at WMLattendance@carrollk12.org.

Alternatively, a student may bring in an excuse note signed by the parent on the day he/she returns to school. The date and reason your student was absent must be included on the note. Excused absences may include:

- Death in the immediate family
- Observance of a religious holiday
- Illness
- Suspension
- Court summons

Tardiness

It is important that students arrive to school on time. Any student who is not in homeroom at 8:35 a.m. is considered tardy and must report to the office to sign in. A written note, signed by a parent, is required for all tardiness.

A student will be coded for being present for a half day if they are in attendance for less than 3.5 hours but more than 45 minutes.

Excused tardiness may include:

- Doctor appointments
- Dentist appointments

Missing the bus, oversleeping, running late, and other such excuses will be marked as unexcused.

Make-Up Work policy

At the secondary level, it is the individual student's responsibility to request missed assignments upon returning to school. In addition to notifying attendance so that the absence is correctly coded, Parents and/or students are encouraged to contact teachers about make up work. Students shall have as many days as they were absent to turn in completed make-up work, unless an extension is granted by the teacher. *(For example: If the assignment was given while the student was absent for two days, the student will have two days to make up that assignment.)*

Vacations and Pre-planned Activities

Family vacations during the school year are strongly discouraged due to the impact they may have on school performance. It is important for both students and parents to understand that some learning opportunities may be lost. For example, schoolwork such as class participation and discussion or laboratory experiments are difficult, if not impossible, to make up and may have a negative impact on a student's grade.

With prior approval, absences for vacations and activities will be excused and students will be permitted to make up missed work. **Parents must provide a written note to the school via email to the principal 3 days in advance.**

Transportation Procedures

It is Carroll County Public Schools Policy that students may not ride on any bus other than the one they are assigned except in emergency situations. A note from both families involved must be sent to school for approval by an administrator. Upon approval, the student will be given a bus pass. Other arrangements need to be made in non-emergency situations.

Bus Behavior

West Middle School enforces all county rules for buses. If a student receives a bus referral, a copy will be sent to the parent. If a suspension from the bus is implemented, the administrator will attempt to contact the parent by phone with notification of the bus suspension. **Please refer to the CCPS Student/Parent Handbook for more information.**

Parent Pick-Up and Drop-Off of Students

A designated pick-up and drop-off zone is located near the main office entrance. Use the 2nd entrance off Monroe Street at the crosswalk to enter the parking lot. Follow the arrows and bear to the left. Please wait until you have passed the auditorium to drop off your child in the morning or to pick up your child in the afternoon. For safety reasons, students are not to cross traffic in the parking lot when being picked up.

The front entrance is reserved for buses loading and unloading.

Walkers

Students who walk to school may enter the building through the doors in the main lobby, office lobby, or the entrance closest to the gym. Students who arrive before 8:05 AM must wait outside by either the main lobby or

office lobby. During dismissal, walkers will exit the building through these exits:

- Monroe St. at crosswalk
- Wm. Winchester Elem. side
- Breezeway doors
- Media Center exit

Additional Information

Cafeteria Prices

Cafeteria prices can be found here: <https://www.carrollk12.org/operation/financial-services/food-services>

Parents should not bring in food for other students to eat during lunch. Many students have a multitude of allergies that could make them ill if the wrong foods are consumed.

Lunch Charges

Students who forget their lunches may borrow money for that day. They may accrue (3) total lunch charges, which is an obligation that must be paid. Beyond that, students will be offered a cheese sandwich and milk (\$1.25) until the debt is paid in full.

Deliveries for Students

Students may not receive deliveries such as flowers or balloons during the school day. Items that are dropped off for students (such as forgotten lunches or extra clothing) will be placed on a cart in the office and will be available for pick up by students at lunch.

Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities

Students must attend school for a full day to participate in extracurricular activities (after school clubs, PTO events, Intramural sports). In the event of extenuating circumstances, school administration may make an exception. Student eligibility in extracurricular activities may be impacted by poor academic standing.

Field Trips

Participation in school field trips is a privilege. Student eligibility for field trips will be determined by attendance, behavior and/or grades. Students who are excluded from field trips will be provided written work and are expected to attend school. All school and county rules and policies are in effect for field trips. Students and parents will be expected to abide by the rules. Any parent who wishes to attend a field trip as a chaperone must be volunteer trained prior to the field trip. This information can be found on the CCPS website.

Home Access Center

Students' current progress reports, grades, service hours, test scores, attendance, and schedules can be accessed by both parents and students at www.carrollk12.org. Click on the Family Resources icon and then Home Access Center. Parents can receive a password by requesting one using the email address on file with the school. Students may use the same username and password they use at school.

Contacting Students during the School Day

To minimize classroom interruptions, students may not take phone calls during the school day. If necessary, a message can be delivered during class changes or lunch.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers, administrators, and support staff about their children's progress throughout the school year. Appointments outside of the parent conference nights must be made through the individual teacher or team leader. Other effective means of communication are via telephone and e-mail. It is requested that all e-mail communication be in reference to school and/or student information. Forwarded e-mails (junk e-mails) are not appropriate for school communications.

Physical Education

Enrollment in Physical Education class is required and participation in physical education activities is expected. All students must wear appropriate attire that allows for safe and athletic movement, including footwear. Please see the dress code as described in your student's PE Syllabus. While students are not required to change, that is the best form of hygiene and students are encouraged and provided an opportunity to change. West Middle has PE uniforms available for purchase. A note must be submitted for any student who needs to sit out of PE class for any reason. If students need to be excused from class for two or more school days, a note from a physician is required. Students can expect to have outdoor Physical Education until the

Thanksgiving holiday. During the winter months, both outdoor and indoor activities will be planned according to weather conditions.

Permission to Photograph, Video or Audio Tape

Throughout the school year, Carroll County Public Schools and the media cover school activities. They may use a student's photograph, video image, or voice for educational purposes or publication when covering school activities with or without identification by name. If the parents do not wish to have their child appear in a videotape or photograph, or have his/her voice reproduced on tape, they should notify the school principal in writing. It is assumed that parents and guardians consent to their children being photographed, videotaped, audio taped, or published unless written notification is received by the school.

Service Learning

All Maryland students must complete 75 hours of service learning prior to graduation. Students may earn service hours beginning the summer after the completion of grade 5 through grade 12; and may complete the requirement any time during that period. Students must complete a minimum of 55 Service-Learning hours by the end of the eleventh grade to be promoted to senior status. 6th grade students earn 20 hours at the end of their 6th grade year for completing Outdoor School and 8th grade students will earn 10 hours for completing Family & Consumer Science class (FACS). Throughout the school year, service-learning opportunities are advertised through our PTO Facebook page and our School Messengers.

Service-learning activities with the purposes of serving the school community must meet the service-learning quality practices articulated in Maryland's Seven Best Practices of Service-Learning to be counted toward the service-learning graduation requirement. These projects should be structured to meet greater needs in the areas of health, education, environment, or public safety identified within the school community. Service learning hours can be recorded at [Online Service Learning Hours Entry \(carrollk12.org\)](http://carrollk12.org).

Visitors to the Building

Parents and legal guardians are encouraged to meet administrators and staff, view the school facilities, gain knowledge of instructional programs, volunteer, and attend special events and celebrations. At the same time, it is important that such visits do not interrupt instruction, distract students or staff, or interfere with other students' right to privacy.

The following guidelines apply to requests for visiting classrooms and the cafeteria:

1. For security reasons, all visitors must have a photo ID and sign in at the main office upon arrival.
2. Parents wishing to observe any of their children's classes must arrange those visits in advance with the appropriate teacher and administrator.
An administrator or designee may be available throughout the observation to answer questions. Every effort shall be made to limit interference with instruction and distractions to students and staff during visits. Visitors will be asked to remain seated in a designated area and will not be permitted to speak to staff or students during class. Should a parent/legal guardian have questions for the teacher, a separate appointment should be scheduled for that purpose. Visitors wishing to observe a class are asked to arrange for other children in their care in order to minimize disruptions. Classroom observations shall last no longer than two (2) hours, include no more than two (2) individuals at a time, and be limited to one (1) time per marking period. If a representative of the family (i.e., advocate attorney, etc.) is observing, that visit shall count as the quarterly observation.
3. To protect the privacy rights of students, class may not be videoed or audiotaped and no pictures may be taken. Cell phones, laptops, and other technology may not be used during the visitation and should be left in the main office or kept out of sight.
4. Students not enrolled in Carroll County Public Schools are prohibited from visiting or shadowing other students while school is in session.
5. School administration may terminate a visit when a visitor interrupts instruction, distracts students or staff, or interferes with other students' right to privacy.
6. Trespassers may be arrested and prosecuted.