

# *Weddington Christian Academy*

## Upper School Handbook

2026-2027



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Dear WCA Families,

Welcome to Weddington Christian Academy! We are honored that you have chosen to partner with us in your child's educational journey.

At WCA, we believe that every child is uniquely created in the image of God and has been gifted with a purpose. It is our privilege to provide a safe, nurturing, and Christ-centered environment where students are challenged academically, encouraged spiritually, and supported as they grow socially and emotionally.

Our mission is to provide an education of the highest academic excellence while equipping students to become devoted followers of Jesus Christ. Through strong academics, meaningful relationships, and a biblical worldview, we seek to cultivate both a love of learning and a love for the Lord.

As we begin this school year together, we look forward to partnering with your family to help your child discover their God-given gifts, develop strong character, and grow in wisdom and faith. It is our prayer that each student leaves WCA well-prepared for future success and committed to living a life that honors Christ.

Thank you for entrusting us with the privilege of educating your child. We are excited about all that God has in store for the year ahead.

In Christ,

**Alexus Leebrick**

Head of School

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# MISSION & VISION

## MISSION STATEMENT

WCA provides an education of highest academic excellence and Christian spiritual development in a faith community that challenges the mind, prepares the heart, and nurtures the soul; encouraging students and families to represent Christ in action and service.

## VISION STATEMENT

WCA will help students develop a love for God by nurturing their souls through a daily faith walk. WCA will teach students to be lifelong learners by challenging their minds in academic subject areas. WCA will lead students and families to serve others in our local and global community by touching their hearts to develop Christ-like love and compassion.

## ACCREDITATIONS

Weddington Christian Academy is accredited through the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and Cognia. Our dual accreditation means that we adhere to internationally recognized standards of excellence and quality in education, supporting continuous school improvements, and leading students to become followers of Jesus Christ.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The WCA Board of Directors is made up of representatives from each leadership committee of Weddington Methodist Church (WUMC). The Board meets regularly and is responsible for making and approving policy for WCA. The Board is also responsible for providing encouragement and support to our school. They are listed below.

|                 |                                      |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Cindy Hicks     | Chairperson                          |
| Steve Graybill  | WMC Finance Chair                    |
| Steve Brown     | WCA SPRC Representative              |
| Caran Shaw      | Member at Large                      |
| Jim Lonon       | Member at Large                      |
| Logan Wyant     | Member at Large                      |
| Alexus Leebrick | WCA Head of School                   |
| TiLisa Durham   | WCA Financial Administrator          |
| Art Kite        | WMC Business Administrator           |
| Kendra Wallace  | WMC Executive Director of Operations |

## STAFF DIRECTORY

### **Administrative/Support Staff**

|                       |                                                |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Mrs. Alexis Leebrick  | Head of School                                 |
| Mr. Brad Deiter       | Vice-Principal of Technology and Communication |
| Mrs. Kristi Wiliford  | Vice-Principal of Curriculum and Instruction   |
| Mr. Greg Barkman      | Upper School Principal                         |
| Mr. Jared Sanders     | Athletic Director                              |
| Mrs. Julie Lesslie    | Office Administrator                           |
| Mrs. Mary Beth Roth   | Upper School Office Administrator              |
| Mrs. TiLisa Durham    | Financial Administrator                        |
| Mrs. Sandra Santiago  | Afterschool Administrator                      |
| Mrs. Heather Garafolo | Lower & Middle School Guidance Counselor       |

### **Upper School Teachers**

|                       |                                                        |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Mrs. Laureen Arab     | Art                                                    |
| Mrs. Brandy Autrey    | Middle School ELA/Social Studies, 6th Grade Homeroom   |
| Mrs. Angela Barker    | Middle School Science, 8th Grade Homeroom              |
| Ms. Jordan Bezek      | Music                                                  |
| Mr. Burt Brooks       | High School Math, 11th Grade Homeroom                  |
| Mr. Brad Dieter       | Drama                                                  |
| Mrs. Gabriela Dunkel  | High School English/Language Arts, 10th Grade Homeroom |
| Mrs. Susie Evans      | High School Spanish                                    |
| Ms. Ashley Gaines     | High School Science                                    |
| Ms. Kathy Glasheen    | High School Science                                    |
| Ms. Renee Myers       | High School Bible, DE Coordinator, 9th Grade Homeroom  |
| Mr. Jared Sanders     | Health and Physical Education                          |
| Mrs. Nicole Simoneaux | Middle School ELA/Social Studies, 7th Grade Homeroom   |
| Mrs. Jennifer Snow    | Middle School Math                                     |
| Mr. James Vasquez     | High School History                                    |

# GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES

All Weddington Christian Academy (WCA) policies are created to provide an orderly, healthy and happy school environment that promotes the general welfare, safety and learning environment of each student. Parents and students are expected to support and comply with these policies.

## NON DISCRIMINATION POLICY

WCA admits students of any race, gender, religion, or ethnicity to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality, or national origin.

## FINANCIAL POLICY

WCA does not seek any federal or state funding apart from the NCSEAA Opportunity Scholarship and ESA+ Grant. We are solely dependent on the financial commitment of our families since we operate on a tuition/fee basis. Specific financial information is provided in each Enrollment packet. Tuition and fees cover the cost associated with the education of our students. However, class events and field trips may arise during the year that are "extra" and not included in Tuition and Fees. The cost of these events will be as economical as possible.

Students will not be allowed to attend class unless tuition payments are current or payment arrangements have been made with the WCA Business Office. Debts may also lead to the withholding of academic records (i.e., transcripts or report cards).

Lunch and Before/After School Care, and various clubs and activities that are offered after school are optional services that are offered to our families. As such, each service has a separate cost and is not included in the tuition payment.

## NCSEAA OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIP AND ESA+ GRANT

Congratulations on receiving the scholarship and/or ESA+ grant.

Things recipients should know:

1. Make sure WCA is chosen as your school of choice.
2. All fees must be paid to WCA when they are due.
  - a. New student application fee is due when applying.
  - b. Enrollment fees are due when your enrollment has been accepted.
  - c. A non-refundable, non-transferable deposit of \$1,000 is due by June 1.
  - d. The activity fee is due by August 1.
  - e. The Security Resource Officer fee is due by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month beginning in

August.

- f. Tuition is due as set forth in the payment plan scheduled by the recipient.
3. The payment schedule will be adjusted to reflect the anticipated funds from the State as a balloon payment at the end of the year.
4. The recipient is responsible for all payments above the anticipated State amount.
5. Funds from the State are disbursed twice a year – Fall and Spring.
6. If the funds from the State exceed the total tuition and fees paid by the recipient, WCA will issue a check for the difference, by mail, to the account owner.
7. If funds from the State are less than anticipated, the recipient is responsible for paying the difference in the semester of the shortage.

Please contact WCA's Financial Administrator, TiLisa Durham, with any questions you may have regarding the Opportunity Scholarship and/or ESA+ Grant.

## WITHDRAWALS AND DISMISSALS

An atmosphere of unity must be in place to have a successful learning environment. WCA reserves the right to dismiss a student for the following reasons:

1. Failure of any family to meet financial obligations. For example, tuition payments which are in arrears or more than 30 days late.
2. Failure of WCA to meet a student's academic, emotional, social or spiritual needs
3. Failure of a student to correct inappropriate behavior when discipline is administered.
4. Engagement of parents in behavior that dishonors, disrespects, or seeks to discredit any parent, teacher, administrator, member of church staff or WCA.

When a child is accepted as a student at WCA, a one-year financial commitment is made between the school and the student's family. However, if a student withdraws for any reason, the withdrawal must be handled formally through the WCA Administrative and Financial Office. The request must be in writing and state the reason for the withdrawal.

### **The following items apply to withdrawal and dismissal.**

1. Registration, Application and Curriculum Development fees are non-refundable.
2. Tuition must be paid for the current month plus one additional month.
3. The account must be current with a (0) zero balance BEFORE report cards or transcripts will be released to parents or other schools.

## COMMUNICATION POLICY

WCA strives to maintain high standards in all areas of communication to the WCA family.

Any communication, written or oral, mailed or hand-delivered, emailed, shared via Facebook, Twitter or on any blog must be submitted to the Admin team for approval. The information will then be sent out via the WCA communication channels. We reserve the right to modify, amend, supplement, and delete any part of the information prior to distribution. WCA families and employees are not allowed to distribute outside materials such as invitations, flyers, advertisements, etc. without approval of WCA administration.

All incoming communication should be directed through email or by a phone call to the front office. Please allow staff members 24 hours to respond. *Please do not initiate any cell phone communication to staff members during the instructional day unless you have been requested by a teacher or administrator to do so.*

## GUIDANCE AND STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

In partnering with WCA's mission for students to think and live in a manner that brings glory to God, Guidance and Student Support Services will provide social and emotional support to students from a biblical perspective, ultimately aiming to enrich their overall development in their time here at Weddington Christian Academy.

Guidance and Support Services will provide individual support, conduct classroom guidance lessons, assist in crises, meet with staff and parents as needed, and serve as a resource for social, emotional, and spiritual wellness. In some circumstances, an outside referral will be recommended upon individual student needs.

### **Confidentiality Statement**

Matters discussed in the Guidance and Student Services Department will remain confidential from those not involved in the student's care. Those involved in the student's care include parents, relevant faculty, staff, and administration on a "need-to-know" basis for the student's overall benefit. Establishing a trusting relationship is important for Guidance and Support Services and the student. As a result, age-appropriate students will be informed of these confidentiality terms when possible.

# STUDENT CONDUCT

WCA expects students to behave in a way that is consistent with biblical standards and promotes a healthy educational environment. Students are expected to comply with the rules and regulations of WCA with a positive attitude. When corrected by a teacher, a student must comply immediately and without argument.

## WE ARE THE HAWKS

A student who is **HONORABLE** will:

- Believe in Jesus Christ and his teachings
- Seek to know and exhibit Christ's commandment to *Love One Another*
- Demonstrate compassion to other students and staff
- Acknowledge and affirm students and staff
- Show consideration for others who may be different
- Exhibit kindness toward others with intentional acts

A student who is **ACCOUNTABLE** will:

- Value honesty and demonstrate truthfulness
- Model good behavior
- Respect others and self
- Take responsibility for all choices
- Graciously accept consequences of all choices

A student who **WORKS** hard will:

- Demonstrate a positive attitude toward teachers
- Demonstrate effort in classwork and homework
- Respectfully utilize teacher feedback to improve
- Utilize suggested components of curriculum to support learning at school and home
- Use technology responsibly to enhance learning
- Show effort when given mission outreach opportunity

A student who is **KNOWLEDGEABLE** will:

- Humbly accept their unique, intellectual gifts from God
- Develop a purpose-driven work ethic
- Participate in class as a team player
- Work independently without distracting others

- Turn in assignments on time
- Study for routine tests
- Show academic progress in all subjects

A student who is **SUCCESSFUL** will strive to be a respectful, Christlike member of the WCA family:

- Honorable
- Accountable
- Hard worker
- Knowledgeable

## THE HONOR SYSTEM

Christian education promotes a higher standard of personal behavior. All WCA students are honor bound to refrain from lying, cheating, stealing, bullying, intentionally damaging the property of another student and/or remaining silent when having knowledge of these actions by another student. The following are examples of ways in which the Honor System may be broken. These behaviors will not be tolerated for any reason.

1. Lying is an intentional misrepresentation of the truth. Lying may include giving a false impression or breaking a pledge to another person.
2. Cheating is giving, receiving, or attempting to give or receive unauthorized help on a test, assignment, or submitting another's work as one's own (refer to "Plagiarism Policy," p. 16 and "Guidelines for Using Artificial Intelligence", p. 13).
3. Stealing is taking anything that belongs to someone else without the consent of the owner
4. Bullying is using words or physical force with malicious intent to intimidate another student whether in person or through electronic means (i.e. social media.)
5. Intentionally damaging the property of WCA, faculty, staff, administration, or another student.
6. Withholding information when a student has personal knowledge of an Honor Code violation.

The above behaviors will not be tolerated for any reason. Exhibiting these behaviors will lead to disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion from WCA.

## PROPERTY DAMAGE

If a student damages or loses any property belonging to WCA (i.e. library book, curriculum book, chair or desk, PE equipment, computer, etc.), his/her parents are responsible to pay for and/or

replace the damaged or lost item.

## INAPPROPRIATE ITEMS FOR SCHOOL

Anything that erodes the learning environment is inappropriate to bring to school. School administration will be the final decision makers on any particular item. Here are some examples of items that distract students from learning:

- Personal electronics (mobile phones, earbuds, game consoles)
- Toys (ie: fidget spinners, trading cards)
- Wheelies, skateboards
- Gum or candy
- Tobacco or nicotine products of any kind
- Personal hand sanitizer
- Anything else that erodes the learning environment at school

If discovered, these items must be voluntarily surrendered by the student to an administrator and will be returned only to a parent.

## UPPER SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICY

At Weddington Christian Academy, discipline is viewed as an opportunity for growth, discipleship, and restoration rather than punishment. Our goal is to help students develop Christ-like character, self-control, responsibility, and respect for others. Every behavioral correction should point students toward God's grace, truth, and loving instruction.

When a behavior concern arises, teachers will take time to speak privately with the student in an age-appropriate manner. The purpose is to help the child understand the impact of his or her choices, take responsibility, and learn how to make wiser decisions moving forward. Whenever possible, discussions will connect behavior expectations to biblical principles and a growing relationship with Christ.

After a consequence has been completed, students should experience full restoration within the classroom community. We desire for children to learn from mistakes without being defined by them. Through prayer, encouragement, and accountability, students are reminded that God's grace allows us to learn, grow, and begin again.

Parents are vital partners in the discipleship and development of each child. Teachers will communicate behavioral concerns promptly through phone call, email, or other established methods. Early communication helps ensure that home and school work together to support the student's growth.

Based on these principles, WCA's Upper School behavior framework is outlined below:

### Tier 1 Infractions (1 Demerit)

These are minor procedural and behavioral deviations that disrupt the learning environment, and show a lack of respect and personal responsibility.

- **Dress Code Violations:** Wearing non-regulation apparel or failing to maintain a neat appearance. This includes hair length and color.
- **Tardiness:** Arriving late to class, chapel, club, or other school activity without a valid pass or note.
- **Classroom Disruption:** Minor off-task behaviors like talking out of turn, throwing items, or making distracting noises.
- **Unprepared for Class:** Failing to bring required textbooks, fully charged devices, or writing materials.
- **Misuse of Technology:** Utilizing school devices for non-educational activities, such as playing games, browsing unapproved sites during instruction, or failing to turn in your phone at the beginning of the school day.

### Tier 2 Infractions (3 Demerits)

These offenses involve a direct disregard for communal boundaries, property, or explicit teacher instructions.

- **Inappropriate Language:** Using foul or crude language, slang, or unkind words aimed at peers.
- **Public Displays of Affection (PDA):** Engaging in hand-holding, hugging, or other physical displays of affection on campus.
- **Disrespect to Staff or Peers:** Rolling eyes, mimicking, talking back, or showing passive defiance toward faculty or fellow students.
- **Disregard for Property:** Littering, mistreating textbooks, or minor mishandling of school property.
- **Skiping Class, Club, or Detention:** Unexcused absence from a scheduled class, assembly, or assigned disciplinary period.

### Tier 3 Offenses (5–10 Demerits)

These behaviors directly violate core moral principles, compromise safety, or represent an overt, rebellious challenge to school values.

- **Academic Dishonesty (5 Demerits):** Cheating on tests, plagiarizing essays, copying homework, or sharing test answers.
- **Lying or Deception (5 Demerits):** Deliberately misleading a teacher or administrator to escape consequences or shift blame.
- **Bullying or Harassment (5 Demerits):** Engaging in repeated verbal, physical, or digital exclusion and intimidation designed to distress another student.

- **Fighting or Physical Aggression (10 Demerits):** Resolving conflict through physical altercations, pushing, or violent threats.
- **Vandalism (10 Demerits):** Deliberately defacing, breaking, or damaging school or personal property.

#### Tier 4 Critical Offenses (Immediate Administrative Referral)

These actions bypass the traditional demerit tally and trigger immediate suspension, behavioral probation, or an evaluation for expulsion by the school board.

- **Possession of Weapons or Illegal Substances:** Bringing drugs, alcohol, vaping devices, or weapons onto campus grounds.
- **Gross Insubordination:** Overt, aggressive rebellion or explicit refusal to comply with administrative directives.
- **Immoral Conduct:** Severe behavioral violations that break public laws or cross clear moral boundaries established in the school's covenant handbook.

### The Cumulative Escalation System

Demerits accumulate throughout the school year and reset at the beginning of the next school year to provide a fresh start.

| Demerit Milestone | Consequence                                          | Restoration Focus                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3 Demerits        | Parent Notification                                  | Throughout these first few steps, everyone involved (students, teachers, and parents, administrators) will prayerfully work together to identify, and rectify, the behavior pattern.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 5 Demerits        | Lunch Detention                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 10 Demerits       | 1-Day In-School Suspension (ISS) & Parent Conference |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 15 Demerits       | Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) & Parent Conference   | Once a student's behavior has reached this level, everyone involved will be prayerfully evaluating three things: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is there any indication that the student's behavior trend can/will change?</li> <li>2. Can a safe learning environment be maintained at WCA with this student enrolled?</li> <li>3. Should the family pursue other educational resources that are better suited to the needs of the student?</li> </ol> |
| 20 Demerits       | Out-of-School Suspension & Behavioral Probation      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 25+ Demerits      | Discipline Committee Review for Expulsion            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

# FAMILY PARTNERSHIP COMMITMENT

At Weddington Christian Academy, we believe that the greatest opportunity for student growth occurs when the school and home work together in unity. Parents and guardians are essential partners in fulfilling our mission to educate students academically, spiritually, socially, and emotionally through a biblical worldview.

By enrolling a child at WCA, families agree to support the mission, philosophy, policies, and procedures of the school and to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the values of the WCA community.

Just as we expect students to demonstrate Christ-like character, we ask parents and guardians to model these same principles in their interactions with students, faculty, staff, administration, volunteers, and other families.

## WE ARE THE HAWKS: FAMILIES

### HONORABLE FAMILIES

A WCA family will:

- Demonstrate Christ-like love, grace, and kindness in all interactions.
- Speak respectfully about students, families, faculty, staff, administration, church leadership, and the school.
- Seek understanding before making assumptions.
- Support the biblical mission and values of WCA.
- Encourage unity within the school community.

### ACCOUNTABLE FAMILIES

A WCA family will:

- Communicate honestly and respectfully.
- Follow established school policies and procedures.
- Accept responsibility for their actions and communications.
- Address concerns through appropriate channels.
- Partner with school leadership to resolve conflicts in a constructive manner.

## HARD-WORKING FAMILIES

A WCA family will:

- Support student learning by encouraging responsibility and effort.
- Ensure students arrive prepared and ready to learn.
- Read and respond to school communications in a timely manner.
- Participate in opportunities to strengthen the school community.
- Encourage students to respect school expectations both on and off campus.

## KNOWLEDGEABLE FAMILIES

A WCA family will:

- Stay informed regarding school policies, procedures, and events.
- Review student progress and communicate concerns promptly.
- Seek clarification when questions arise.
- Support the educational and spiritual goals of the school.
- Partner with teachers and administrators in promoting student success.

## SUCCESSFUL FAMILIES

Successful WCA families strive to be:

- Honorable
- Accountable
- Supportive
- Knowledgeable
- Christ-centered partners in the educational process

## COMMUNICATION EXPECTATIONS

WCA values open and respectful communication. Parents and guardians are expected to:

- Communicate with faculty, staff, and administration in a courteous and professional manner.
- Address concerns directly with the individual involved before escalating concerns to administration.
- Refrain from gossip, slander, or divisive conversations that undermine the unity of the school community.
- Allow school personnel adequate time to investigate and respond to concerns.
- Respect confidentiality regarding students, families, and personnel matters.

## SOCIAL MEDIA AND PUBLIC COMMUNICATION

Families are expected to represent WCA in a manner consistent with biblical principles and Christian conduct.

Parents and guardians should:

- Refrain from posting defamatory, threatening, harassing, or misleading comments regarding the school, students, families, faculty, staff, administration, or church leadership.
- Address concerns through established school communication channels rather than public forums.
- Use social media in a manner that promotes unity, respect, and Christ-like conduct.

## RESPECT FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL

WCA is committed to providing a safe and respectful environment for students and employees.

The following behaviors are not acceptable:

- Harassment, intimidation, or threats toward any member of the WCA community.
- Abusive, profane, or disrespectful language.
- Disruptive conduct during meetings, events, or school functions.
- Actions that interfere with the educational environment or school operations.

## RESOLUTION OF CONCERNS

When concerns arise, families are encouraged to follow the biblical principles found in Matthew 18:15 and the school's established chain of communication.

Whenever possible:

1. Communicate directly with the teacher or staff member involved.
2. If resolution is not achieved, contact the appropriate administrator.
3. If necessary, concerns may be elevated to the Head of School according to school procedures.

## PARTNERSHIP AND ENROLLMENT

Enrollment at Weddington Christian Academy is a privilege that requires a cooperative partnership between the school and family.

If a parent, guardian, or family member demonstrates behavior that is consistently disruptive, divisive, threatening, hostile, or contrary to the mission, values, or policies of WCA, the administration reserves the right to determine whether the partnership remains in the best interest of the student and the school community. This may include restrictions on campus access, participation in school events, or discontinuation of enrollment.

Our desire is always restoration, reconciliation, and a healthy partnership that supports the spiritual and academic growth of every student.

# TECHNOLOGY

At WCA, we believe technology and the resources of the Internet play an important role in the education of our children. It is our goal to educate our students in the efficient, ethical, and appropriate use of these resources. We also utilize these resources to enrich our curriculum and enhance student learning. Students and parents will be required to sign a technology use agreement. This agreement will be reviewed with all students on the first day of Technology Class and sent home for parents and students to sign.

## REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY

All **high school students** are required to purchase a MacBook for use at school and for homework. Middle school students use school-supplied iPads on a 1:1 ratio.

## GUIDELINES FOR COMPUTER USE AT SCHOOL

- Students will only use technology resources with the teacher's permission and for classroom assignments monitored by the teacher.
- Students will demonstrate digital citizenship by using good manners, appropriate language and showing respect.
- Students will keep all passwords private.
- Students will practice internet safety at all times.
- Students will tell the teacher immediately if they feel threatened or uncomfortable at any time.
- Students will be gentle with and take good care of the technology equipment.
- Students will not look at or search any website without a teacher's permission.
- Students will not share any personal information on the internet. This includes address, phone number, photos, etc.
- Students will not be allowed to send anything from the computer or internet (email) while at school without a teacher's permission.
- Students will use the internet for appropriate learning activities only.
- All high school students will be issued a school email address and Google account.
- High school laptops may only be used at school under teacher supervision.

## CELL PHONES, SMART WATCHES, and EARBUDS

Students are not allowed to use cell phones, smart watches, or earbuds during the school day (including before and after school care). If you need to communicate with your student, please do so through the school office. If your student needs to bring his or her cell phone or smart watches to school for an after-school activity, the personal electronic devices will be locked in the closet in the

Upper School entrance. Any student caught using a cell phone or smart watch will receive one warning and then have the phone or watch confiscated. Parents will be expected to pick it up at the front desk. **Students will not be allowed to text or call parents without administrative permission and supervision.**

## SAFEGUARDING STUDENTS WITH TECHNOLOGY

We strongly suggest that parents safeguard their students' use of social media and the internet by having access to their students' email accounts, text messages, and social networks (i.e. Twitter, Snapchat, Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, etc.). At WCA, students are held accountable for how they represent themselves, their families, and WCA in the world through technology. Additionally, it is never appropriate for students and teachers to "friend" each other on social media. Both teachers and students should analyze their own accounts and remove or block members of the other group from their friends list.

## GUIDELINES FOR USING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

The following guidelines are designed to help teachers and students think intentionally about the relationship between knowledge, learning, and technology. Because we value Honor, Accountability, Work, Knowledge, and Success, these guidelines should be guarded.

1. AI is very powerful, but it is never safe to assume that the information AI gives you is correct. It has been known to claim copyrighted content as its own and to give incorrect information.
2. AI is very convenient, but it is never acceptable to cut and paste information from an AI source and claim it as your own.
  - a. All classwork/homework (assigned or submitted) should be the person's original work.
  - b. All content should appropriately fit the requirements of the course.
  - c. All content must provide ample evidence of significant original thinking when given a cursory check.
3. AI presents unique opportunities and may be used in the following situations:
  - a. As a sample to be used for critique and analysis in class.
  - b. As a starting point for class discussions.
  - c. As a jump start for personal thinking on a particular topic.

# ACADEMICS

## STUDENT'S PERMANENT RECORD

The NC General Assembly provisions G.S.115C-554 and G.S.115C-562 exempt non-public schools from all public school laws relating to student record keeping. However, WCA patterns the requirement for records in accordance with G.S.115C-402. This law states that a permanent record is to be maintained indefinitely or until such time as the local administration determines as sufficient after graduation. All records are stored in a locked file cabinet. The record shall contain the following information:

- Birth date information
- Attendance data
- Grading and promotion data (to include high school transcripts)
- Achievement test scores (summative)
- Outside testing as provided
- Previous schools' records provided
- Immunization records

## STUDENT SUPPORT PLANS (SSP)

If your child has an existing IEP or 504 Plan, we will address the recommended accommodations by designing a WCA Student Support Plan (SSP). Throughout the year, as needs arise, we are intent on adjusting our teaching to suit every learner. If your child is struggling, your child's teacher will request a conference to discuss steps to provide learning support. If a SSP seems appropriate, an evaluation by a licensed Educational Psychologist will be required to begin the process. A fee will be associated with an initial SSP or a renewal SSP. Parents will be notified individually of this cost.

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

To graduate from Weddington Christian Academy, students must earn the following credits:

- 4 English credits (English I-IV)
- 4 Math credits (Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Precalculus)
- 4 Bible credits (Old Testament, New Testament, Theology, Worldview & Apologetics)
- 4 Social Studies credits (World History, Civics, US History, Economics & Personal Finance)\*
- 3 Science credits (Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry)
- 2 Foreign Language credits
- 1 Physical Education/Health credit
- 4 Elective credits to include 1 Fine Arts and 1 Computer Science\*

*\*Changes in Graduation Requirements effective with the Class of 2030*

## GRADING SCALE

The following grading scale is used for report cards and grade point averages. Classes are year-long, and grades are assigned each semester.

If a student is not making satisfactory progress, a conference will be held with his/her parents, the classroom teacher and the principal. At the recommendation of the teacher and discretion of the principal, a student who is not progressing may be advised to enroll in a school that better serves his/her needs.

| Grade | Scale  | Unweighted | Honors | Dual/AP |
|-------|--------|------------|--------|---------|
| A+    | 97-100 | 4.0        | 4.5    | 5.0     |
| A     | 93-96  | 4.0        | 4.5    | 5.0     |
| A-    | 90-92  | 3.7        | 4.2    | 4.7     |
| B+    | 87-89  | 3.3        | 3.8    | 4.3     |
| B     | 83-86  | 3.0        | 3.5    | 4.0     |
| B-    | 80-82  | 2.7        | 3.2    | 3.7     |
| C+    | 77-79  | 2.3        | 2.8    | 3.3     |
| C     | 73-76  | 2.0        | 2.5    | 3.0     |
| C-    | 70-72  | 1.7        | 2.2    | 2.7     |
| D+    | 67-69  | 1.3        | 1.8    | 2.3     |
| D     | 63-66  | 1.0        | 1.5    | 2.0     |
| D-    | 60-62  | 0.7        | 1.2    | 1.7     |
| F     | 0-59   | 0.0        | 0.0    | 0.0     |

## HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework is an integral and important component of our academic program. Homework assignments include various types of learning - oral, written and artistic. Students are expected to complete all assignments. Homework is used to expand classroom activities, prepare a student for future assignments, solidify learning, reinforce concepts being taught and promote interest in

a subject. When a special project is assigned as "homework", the student should complete the project independently with minimal parental assistance.

## LATE WORK & ASSIGNMENTS

Students are expected to turn in all assignments on time. A late assignment will be given a 10% grading penalty for each day late, up to three days. After three days, the assignment will be counted as a zero. If a student misses class, they are responsible to get assignments from teachers and make-up the missing work. They will have two days to complete the work once they return to school. Major projects and papers will not be accepted late.

**We do understand extenuating circumstances may occur (e.g. prolonged, severe illness; death of a family member; house fire, etc.). Please notify teachers one of these has occurred.**

## STUDENT AGENDAS

Each student will be given a school agenda. Students will be expected to keep track daily of their assignments and schedule. They will be coached on how to properly use this tool. Upon loss of the agenda, a replacement will be \$5.00.

## GOOGLE CLASSROOMS

Assignments and due dates will be posted in class-specific Google classrooms. All parents will have the option to join the Google classroom so they can access this information.

## PLAGIARISM POLICY

At Weddington Christian Academy, we believe that honesty and integrity are essential aspects of Christian character and academic excellence. Students are expected to submit their own work and properly acknowledge all sources of information, ideas, words, images, research, and other materials used in assignments. Plagiarism includes copying another person's work, paraphrasing without citation, submitting work completed by someone else, unauthorized collaboration, or unauthorized use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools. Consequences will include demerits assigned as a Tier 3 offense and academic consequences as determined by the course teacher.

## STANDARDIZED TESTING

The state of North Carolina requires that all private high schools administer a standardized test in grades 3, 6, 9 and 11. Middle school students complete the IOWA Assessments each May. High school grade levels complete tests from the SAT Suite of Assessments and the ACT as follows:

- Spring semester - grade 9, PSAT 8/9
- Spring semester - grade 10, PSAT 10

- Spring semester - grade 11, SAT & ACT
- Fall semester - grade 11, PSAT/NMSQT

## PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

Middle school homeroom teachers schedule parent-teacher conferences at the end of the first quarter. High school conferences may be requested by a parent or teacher at any time during the school year if needed.

If an issue regarding your student comes up that needs immediate attention, please email your child's teacher to arrange a conference. Please allow 24 hours for your teacher to respond to your request. Time to meet and talk during the day is very limited. Therefore, it is preferable to schedule a meeting time outside regular school hours or during special classes. Carpool times are a part of the instructional day and should not be used for conferences.

## SUMMER READING

Students are required to read a novel and complete studies on that novel over the summer. The novel and associated work are on the school's website.

# SERVICE HOURS

## STUDENT SERVICE HOURS

WCA high school students are servant leaders. As such, all WCA high school students are required to complete a total of 80 service hours before graduation (average of 20 hours each year). Certain organizations such as National Beta Club and National Honor Society require additional service hours.

High school students often provide volunteer support at school and church events and service projects. Examples include Angel Tree, Night to Shine, Family Bingo, Operation Sandwich, and Healthy Hawks Fun Run. These hours also count toward the 20 hour total.

In addition, students are encouraged to look for outside service opportunities. Examples include Scouting projects, church service, and community organizations like Common Heart. For service hours outside school, students should supply a contact name and email for verification.

Outside service hours may be completed during the summer vacation, but students are expected to remain engaged with school projects and their classes' chosen ministry focus.

Students are expected to log their service hours on FACTS. Service hours may be added or edited on the Family Members page (Family Portal > Family > Student Name).

## FAMILY SERVICE HOURS

Part of building a strong community of faith at WCA involves all stakeholders participating in the life of the school. Each parent and student is an integral member of the WCA Family.

By participating in the appropriate WCA Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF) activities, annual events, and programs each family will contribute positively to the mission and ministry of our school.

WCA parents are asked to make a commitment of 15 hours of service throughout the year or make a donation to the Hawk Fund valued at least \$10 per hour.

Hours will be logged from July 1 through May 28, with each family logging their service hours on their family page through FACTS (Family Portal > Family > Parent Name). Any hours not completed by the end of the school year will be assessed at a rate of \$10 per hour and billed to the family's account.

Upcoming volunteer opportunities will always be listed in WCA's regular newsletters. Even after reaching 15 hours, we encourage you to stay active in the life of WCA.

## LUNCHES & SNACKS

Please be aware that some students have severe, even life threatening food allergies. Please discuss the importance of not sharing food with classmates at lunch.

Please send in appropriate food containers and include condiments/utensils as needed. Teachers/staff members may not microwave food for students. There will be a microwave for students available in the Youth Center.

### SNACK

WCA requests that each student has one healthy snack option every morning. Students should bring a water bottle to school every day. The following items are not acceptable for snack/lunch: candy, doughnuts, sweet treats, gum, or sodas.

### LUNCH

WCA has a “hot lunch” program available to all students. A monthly menu will be available on the school’s website. Each family has a lunch account available through FACTS Family Portal.

#### Lunch Program Process

- Put money on your child’s lunch account. Lunch each day is \$7.00.
- When lunch is purchased, the cost is deducted from the account.
- Students who are not purchasing a hot lunch, may purchase milk or water for \$1.00
- A low balance summary will be sent as a reminder that funds need added to the prepay account.
- An outstanding lunch balance of more than \$30 at the end of a semester, may lead to the withholding of academic records. (i.e. transcripts, report card)

You may either pack a lunch or buy one for your child. However, if your child does not have lunch, he/she will be given a hot lunch and their FACTS account will be charged.

# ATTENDANCE

School attendance is essential and necessary for academic growth. Successful students attend school regularly and are punctual. Class time is valuable and when absent, students miss instruction/material presentation as well as explanations given by the teacher. Every WCA student is expected to attend school assemblies/programs and other activities unless properly excused. Students must remain on campus until either excused or officially dismissed.

## ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

All absences will be classified as “excused” or “unexcused.” Excused absences include days of school missed from sickness or injury, doctor/dental appointments, funerals, graduations, weddings of family members, or school-approved educational events. Please schedule appointments outside of school hours whenever possible. This allows your student to be present during valuable instructional time.

Absences from school for any reason other than those listed above are considered unexcused. Examples of unexcused absences include family vacations, personal trips, or church trips. A student will be given the opportunity to make up missed work when he/she returns to school.

All absences are considered unexcused unless the office receives a note, phone call or email within three days of an absence. A phone or email does not guarantee that the absence will be excused. If your child is sick, please send an email to the homeroom teacher and to Mrs. Roth ([mbroth@wcahawks.org](mailto:mbroth@wcahawks.org)) by 8:15 on the day of the illness/absence.

Absences immediately preceding or following an official school vacation/holiday will automatically be considered unexcused, unless a doctor’s note is presented to the school.

In high school, attendance is taken daily in each class. **If a student has more than seven absences per semester in any class, they will be asked to provide documentation for those absences and may owe recovery time for those absences.** Recovery time will be set for Wednesday each week during Hawk Block. One recovery session will be required for each class block missed during the absence. (For example, one full-day absence = 4 blocks of recovery).

## ARRIVALS AND TARDINESS

Drop off starts at 8:00 a.m. The WCA school day begins at 8:15. High School students may not enter the Youth Center prior to 8:00 am. Before School Care is offered to all WCA families for \$5 per day. A student must be registered to attend. See *Before School* section for more information.

Any student who arrives for school after 8:20 is tardy. Students will sign in at the Upper School reception area, and a tardy will be recorded in their attendance record. Students will also be marked tardy for individual courses if they are not present at the start of class. Four tardies to the same class will equal an unexcused absence. If there are no teachers in the drop off zone, a parent or carpool driver must walk the student into the office and sign the student in for the day before they go to class. It is unsafe to drop your child off and have them walk in without supervision.

Upon the accumulation of 5 unexcused tardy arrivals, the principal will have a phone conference with the student's parents.

## EARLY DISMISSAL

**A child must be picked up by 2:00 for an early dismissal. If you are unable to get to WCA before 2:00, please follow normal dismissal procedures.** Please do not come to the office after 2:10 to get your child. It is unsafe for you and your child to cross traffic during carpool pick-up.

If your student is under 18 years of age and is not a driver, please send a note or email to Mrs. Roth ([mbroth@wcahawks.org](mailto:mbroth@wcahawks.org)) by 8:15 on the day of the early dismissal. Parents must come to the office to sign out their students.

If your student is under 18 years of age and is driving him/herself to school, please send a note or email to Mrs. Roth ([mbroth@wcahawks.org](mailto:mbroth@wcahawks.org)) by 8:15 on the day of the early dismissal. A parent note must be logged before an under-18 student driver is allowed to sign out of school.

Any student who is at least 18 years old is able to sign him/herself into and out of school; no parent note is required.

## PICK-UPS & DROP-OFFS

**Reminder: No cell phones should be used during pick up or drop off times to ensure the safety of all students, staff, and parents.**

### PICK UP AUTHORIZATION

WCA cannot release a student to anyone who is not on the Student's Pickup Authorization Form for safety and security reasons. Please inform your teacher or the office in advance when you are not picking your child up from school. You may make additions or deletions to the form by logging into your FACTS Family Portal.

Note: An unfamiliar person may be asked to show a valid driver's license to our staff before a child is released to the person.

### MORNING and AFTERNOON PROCEDURES

Enter WCA from Providence Road ONLY and proceed left to the Youth Center parking lot forming up to three lines as necessary to avoid backup on Providence Road. Teachers will be present to assist.

A carpool sign must be visible in the front window until your student is inside the vehicle. A student cannot be released without the school issued sign or without prior authorization from the parent.

Upper school students with siblings in JK-5<sup>th</sup> grade will be dropped off and dismissed in the LOWER carpool line in front of the Family Life Center.

*Any student who is not picked up by 3:00 p.m. will go to After School Care and parents will pay for the service upon arrival. Each family is given 1 grace day per semester as we understand emergencies arise. If you are late to pick up your student 4 times, you will be required to register for After School Care and pay the subsequent fees.*

### STUDENT DRIVERS

High school sophomores, juniors and seniors may be issued a parking pass to drive to WCA. Before a student may drive a car to school, a parent must complete and submit the Student Driving Form. Students will be issued a permit tag which must be hung from their rear-view mirror at all times.

All students must park in the designated parking area as soon as they arrive on campus. Once parked, students may not return to their cars during the school day without permission and supervision. Students must obey all traffic laws and yield to pedestrians on campus.

Driving to school is a privilege. Repeated tardiness or other violations of school rules may result in a loss of parking privileges.

## BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

***Students must be registered to attend.*** Registration forms and the fee schedule can be found on the WCA website under *Programs > Before and After School Program*.

### BEFORE SCHOOL

Before School is an additional service available to WCA families and students Monday-Friday between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m.

### AFTER SCHOOL

After School is an additional service available to WCA families and students Monday-Friday from dismissal time until 6:00 p.m. Our program is designed for students in grades JK through 8. If you need care for your high school student, please contact the After School Director to discuss the possibility of your student volunteering with the younger children.

**IMPORTANT: The After School Program is intended for families who truly need these services due to work or other essential commitments. To ensure we have the capacity to support those who rely on this service, we kindly ask that you only enroll your child if there is a genuine need.**

# UNIFORMS

The WCA Uniform Policy promotes modesty and respectful appearance in student clothing. Our uniform requirements are as follows:

All polo shirts, oxford shirts, Peter Pan collar shirts (girls), and polo dresses must be monogrammed with the WCA emblem. All WCA monogrammed pieces must be purchased through Lands' End or French Toast. Parents may not share WCA's logo with any other printing company. Links to both websites are located under the Parent Support tab on the WCA website. Boys and girls may wear long or short sleeve shirts depending on the season and weather.

All dresses, jumpers, shorts, skorts, skirts, and PE uniform shorts must end no more than 4 inches above the knee. Girls should wear socks or leggings in solid colors (white, black, brown, navy.) Patterned tights or leggings are not appropriate to wear with regulation uniforms.

All hoodies/sweatshirts worn to school must have the WCA logo on them and be appropriately sized or be plain in color (navy, black, white, or gray) and have no words or designs on them. Hoodies/sweatshirts must also be appropriately sized. Oversized hoodies will not be permitted. On NUTS Day, hoodies with other logos and designs may be worn.

The main point of the WCA uniform policy is for all students to be dressed uniformly. School uniforms are not to be altered in any way that intentionally pushes the boundaries of the uniform policy.

## DAILY UNIFORM OPTIONS

- WCA polo shirt: white, navy, light blue, hunter green, yellow, and red.
- WCA oxford shirt: white/button down.
- Girls: white, Peter Pan collar shirt or Oxford button down.
- Pants, shorts, skorts, and skirts: khaki or navy
- Jeans: plain denim; no holes or rips; not tight or ultra-skinny, easily grabbed off the leg.

## CHAPEL ATTIRE (WEDNESDAYS)

- Girls may wear a dress in navy, light blue, or hunter green. They may also wear pants or a skirt/skort in khaki or navy with a WCA white oxford or Peter Pan collar shirt.
- Boys may wear pants or shorts in khaki or navy with a WCA white oxford shirt.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION ATTIRE

- WCA gray, logo t-shirt from Lands' End or WCA Spirit Wear t-shirt. (Note: Shirt length should not exceed the length of the shorts.)
- Shorts: sport length—no more than 4 inches above the knee
- Sweat or athletic pants: gray or navy (no leggings)
- Athletic/tennis shoes/solid-colored socks

Students must wear PE clothing to school on PE days. If a student forgets his/her PE clothing, he/she has 1 grace day for the grading period. The 2<sup>nd</sup> offense will result in a 50% grade reduction for that PE class. A student who is not dressed out may not be allowed to participate in the class depending on the activity for the day.

## HAIR

Hair should be clean, neatly groomed, and should not draw undue attention. It should remain a natural color. Boys' hair should be cut so that it is off of their collar and out of their eyes.

## ACCESSORIES

Hair accessories and jewelry should be tasteful and age appropriate. Please use discretion when choosing items. Socks and tights should be a solid color void of patterns.

## UNACCEPTABLE ATTIRE

Dresses and skirts should be loose and not form-fitting. Tops should never be spaghetti straps, strapless, cropped or low cut even with a cover up. Use discretion when choosing footwear regarding color, design, and sparkles.

## EXCEPTIONS

**Students are to wear regulation uniform options unless it is Spirit Day, PE Day, or NUTS Day.** On Spirit Days, students may wear a WCA t-shirt with either denim or khaki bottoms. Girls may also wear leggings under jumpers or skirts.

On PE day, middle school students are to wear approved athletic attire as outlined in the uniform policy (be aware that not everything in our sportswear partner's online catalogue meets our dress code requirements). High school students must wear the standard school uniform when arriving at and departing from school. PE attire may only be worn during scheduled PE/Health classes. Students are required to change back into their standard uniform immediately following the conclusion of the class period.

NUTS Day (No Uniforms To School) is on the last Monday of every month. Students may wear "everyday" clothing options provided their clothing is void of scary or inappropriate logos. NUTS

Day does not allow the wearing of pajama style sweatpants, spaghetti strap tops or crop tops where midriff is exposed. Students who participate in NUTS Day should bring a \$1.00 donation to school. All proceeds benefit the Home of the Good Shepherd Orphanage in Kenya.

## DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS

Dress code interpretation is at the discretion of WCA Staff. Any student who is not dressed according to the Dress Code is in violation. The student will be given a verbal warning on the first offense. If a second violation should occur, a student will receive a written citation that is sent home. Both the student AND parent must sign the citation and return it to school the next day. If a third violation occurs, a parent will be called and must bring a replacement for the clothing or shoes to school that are in violation of the Dress Code.

# HEALTH

## ALLERGIES

If your student is severely allergic to any contagion, this should be indicated on the enrollment forms. Allergies may include peanut or other food allergies, bee stings or fire ant bites. If necessary, medication may be stored in the office in the event a student is accidentally exposed to the known allergen. *If your child has a peanut allergy you must read and sign the peanut policy guidelines in the online enrollment packet*

**If your child's allergies are life threatening and require the use of medicine (benadryl, Epi-Pens etc.) this medicine must always be kept locked in the classroom for the student's safety in the event of an emergency. This medicine will accompany the student to special classes and the playground. Please note that if epinephrine is used, your child will be transported to the hospital via ambulance to follow the protocol designated to the use of this medication.**

## ILLNESS

At WCA, we are committed to promoting a safe, healthy learning environment rooted in compassion and responsibility. In the spirit of Philippians 2:4 *"Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others,"* this policy provides clear guidelines to prevent the spread of illness and care for our students, staff, and families.

**If a child displays any of the following symptoms, he/she should be kept at home or will be sent home:**

- Fever
- Diarrhea
- Nasal secretions that are thick, yellow or green, and accompanied by a fever (Cloudy or colored nasal secretions may indicate an allergy. Please check with your doctor to rule out infection.)
- Sore throat with fever or white spots on throat or in mouth
- Cough accompanied by fever, chills, and the coughing up of green or yellow mucus
- Vomiting or nausea
- Eye drainage of any type (should be checked by a doctor to rule out infection)
- Unusual rashes (should be checked by a doctor to rule out bacterial infection)
- Child not feeling well, such as lethargic behavior and/or crying
- Evidence of lice

**Your child may return to WCA when:**

- Fever has been broken for 24 hours **without** medication
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea has subsided for 24 hours
- At least 4 doses of antibiotic have been given over a 24-hour period for any type of strep or bacterial infection
- Child is able to return to daily activities
- In the case of lice, there must be no nits seen in the hair

### Communication of Absence

Parents or guardians are expected to notify both the school office and the Upper School principal as soon as possible when a child will be absent due to illness. Communication may be made via phone call or email.

Please include:

- The reason for the absence (e.g., symptoms or diagnosis, if known)
- The expected duration of the absence, if possible

Timely communication helps the teacher plan accordingly and supports the student's reintegration into classroom activities upon their return.

### EMERGENCY CARDS

An Emergency Contact Card for every student at WCA will be kept on file in the WCA office. This card includes Emergency contact information and phone numbers. It also allows WCA to obtain medical treatment for a student.

**IN THE EVENT OF ANY CHANGE OF ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER, EMAIL ADDRESS, EMERGENCY CONTACTS OR PICK UP PERSONS FOR YOUR FAMILY PLEASE UPDATE FACTS FAMILY PORTAL AND NOTIFY THE FRONT OFFICE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**

### IMMUNIZATIONS

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services requires that all school age children have immunizations to prevent certain childhood illnesses. Student records must be up to date at all times. If your child gets a new vaccine, please bring a copy of the updated record to the office. **It is the responsibility of the parent to provide current immunization records to the school.**

A student may be exempt from the required immunizations for either medical or religious reasons. An exemption letter must be on file in the WCA office. A student's pediatrician should provide a letter for medical exemption and a student's parents must write a letter of religious exemption. *These forms must be updated yearly. In the event of an outbreak, the unvaccinated*

***child will not be allowed to attend school pursuant to North Carolina state law.***

## STUDENT MEDICATION

Students are not allowed to have any medication (cough drops, eye drops, tylenol, motrin etc.) in their possession. Medicine must be kept in the Front Office with a Medication Authorization Form on file completed and signed by a parent or doctor that gives the office permission to administer medicine to your child. The form can be obtained by contacting the front office. **North Carolina state law mandates that the medicine be in the original container, labeled with your child's name and the dosage amount.**

## HAND SANITIZER AND 'CHAPSTICK'

The NC Health Department does not permit students to have personal hand sanitizer. Please do not allow your child to bring these to school.

Students may have a 'ChapStick' for personal use. It should not be shared with other students. If this happens, the student will be asked to leave the 'ChapStick' at home.

## LICE POLICY

WCA is committed to supporting students and families in the event of confirmed or unconfirmed lice. Although an annoying problem, head lice infestation should not trigger undue alarm - just prompt action. Early detection, diligence, and compassion are all that are needed to successfully manage this issue.

**Parents are required to inform the school immediately of a student being exposed to lice.**

In the event of lice exposure, students are NOT permitted to return to school for 24 hours after treatment and confirmed lice free. WCA will need a signed letter/email from the parent stating their child has received the necessary treatment at home or if treated professionally, a note from their healthcare professional.

If lice is suspected at school, parents will be notified and students will be sent home to be treated.

## EMERGENCY & SAFETY PROCEDURES

The safety of each WCA student is important to our faculty, staff and administration. All doors into the Family Life Center (FLC), Youth Center and Annex are locked at 8:15 am and remain locked throughout the day. Children are not allowed to walk between buildings or in the parking lot alone.

### WEAPONS

Students are NOT allowed to bring weapons to school or onto school property. Any weapon WILL be confiscated and parents will be called immediately. Students who do not comply with this rule may be suspended or expelled. Depending on the severity of the violation, police may be called. Weapons may include but are not limited to guns, knives or martial arts weapons.

### PANIC BUTTONS

Panic buttons will be located at the front desk (with Mrs. Lesslie), Youth Center, and Annex (with an assigned educator).

### VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

All visitors must sign-in at the front desk in the FLC regardless of the reason for the visit. This policy includes those helping with a classroom party or event. Any visitors, including parents, must sign in with the front office and receive a visitor badge. Any person in the building without a badge will be asked to go to the front desk and receive a badge.

### STUDENT RELEASE

Students cannot be released to anyone other than those listed as an emergency contact / pick up person. Any person not recognized by WCA staff will be asked to show identification (driver's license.) **Please notify both your child's teacher and the office via email/phone in advance of any changes to normal pick-up procedures for your child.**

### FIRE, TORNADO AND LOCK DOWN PROCEDURES

**Fire Drill-** we will have a fire drill every month. Each classroom has a fire evacuation route posted near the door. Students will practice this route with their class to learn the proper way to evacuate the building should a fire occur.

**Tornado Drill-** we will have at least one drill during the school year. Students will practice proper safety procedures should inclement weather occur.

**Lockdown Procedures** - we will practice these steps once a year. If a dangerous situation should occur on or near campus, WCA will initiate lockdown procedures. No one will be allowed to enter or

leave the campus until the situation is deemed over by law enforcement. Communication will be sent via the Remind app to WCA families.

*All emergency procedures are explained to students in an age-appropriate way and practiced to ensure the safety of our student*

## SECURITY MEASURES

Originally recommended by a security team in 2011 after Sandy Hook, these are updated periodically. The Security team is made up of CMPD Officers, Union County Sheriff's Department officers, SBI (State Bureau of Investigation), Local law enforcement officers, and members of the Secret Service.

- All doors are locked at all times.
- The only way to enter is with a fob (issued only to WCA, WMC Staff and Sheriff's Department) or being buzzed in at the front desk.
- The doorbell has a monitor and intercom which front desk staff activate for unknown guests. We reserve the right to ask for photo identification.
- There are 3 cameras on campus, and the 6 vantage points are monitored at the front desk.
- Local law enforcement visit WCA campus and building with regularity creating a visual that is an automatic deterrent to intruders
- All vendors are vetted, buzzed in, name tagged, and followed throughout the building
- Lockdown drills are prepared and practiced with Union County Officer oversight.
- Teachers and staff have programmed radios at recess and other outings.
- A panic button at the front desk goes straight to law enforcement. (Anticipated response is 5 minutes or less.)

## INCLEMENT WEATHER

*WCA is not required to follow the UCPS policy regarding inclement weather.* If school is delayed or closed due to weather, this information will be available on WBTV, WSOC or WCNC. You may check their websites. If you are signed up for REMIND text messages, you will receive one the evening or morning prior to the closing. An email blast will be sent to all families as soon as a decision is made regarding the status of school for the day. We will also post information regarding the opening/closing of school or a delayed schedule to the WCA website and Facebook page. If we should announce a one-hour delay, WCA will open at 9 a.m. If operating on a two-hour delay, WCA would open at 10 a.m. There will be NO before school care on delayed opening days.

Our priority is to ensure the safety of our students, families, faculty and staff. We reserve the right to decide if days missed for inclement weather will be made up at a later time.

## FUNDRAISING

WCA is a non-profit entity and does not receive financial support from any source. In order to keep tuition costs low, we rely on fundraising.

To provide our schools with extra resources, our policy is to limit major fundraising to two times per year. WCA clubs and other school organizations may hold small events during the year with pre-approval from the principal. Donations made to the school for such events are tax deductible.

### HAWK FUND

The Hawk Fund is our Annual Fund Campaign. The Hawk Fund helps support the school's operating expenses each year and plays a vital role in ensuring the school's stability and sustainability. We need your help to continue meeting any challenges that come our way, while providing our students with the best learning environment possible.

### HARRIS TEETER VIC

During the month of August, you may link your VIC card to WCA. Our VIC number is 2903. HT donates a portion of the profits to us when we purchase HT store brand products. This is an easy way to help WCA while buying groceries for your family.

## Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF)

Every parent, teacher, staff member and administrator is a member of WCA's Parent Teacher Fellowship. We encourage all to be involved. The PTF's role is to support the mission of WCA and to help foster a spiritual partnership between parents, faculty and staff in the education and training of our students. The PTF assists school leadership in various fundraising and social activities as needed throughout the year.

An executive board of PTF members exists to provide leadership and direction for the committee. Any parent can join and attend monthly meetings.

### ROOM PARENT

Every classroom will have a room parent. The room parents are responsible for working with classroom teachers to plan class events, as well as, enlist volunteers to help with each school wide event. School wide events are listed on the school calendar.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### LOST & FOUND

WCA is not responsible for the loss of personal property. All clothing, especially sweaters, jackets, sweatshirts, coats, lunch boxes, water bottles, and backpacks should be clearly labeled with your child's name using a permanent marker. If your child loses something, these items are placed in the lost and found bin. At the end of the semester, unclaimed items will be donated to a local charity.

### FIELD TRIPS

Field trips will be taken throughout the year for community service projects, education purposes and classroom activities. Permission forms will be sent home electronically for each event. Forms should be submitted by the date listed on the form.

WCA sponsors an overnight retreat for high school students each fall and an overnight trip to Savannah, SC in 8th grade.

### OUTREACH

WCA, as a family, is very blessed with material possessions. We participate in several programs throughout the school year that allow our students to reach out to those who are less fortunate. Individual classes often choose to do a mission project in conjunction with an area of study and/or their holiday party.

All WCA students must complete 80 service hours before they graduate from high school. Please see the SERVICE HOURS section for more information.

### GRIEVANCES

When questions, problems, or grievances come up, we recommend speaking directly to the person (teacher, administrator or Principal) concerned. The following guidelines should help clear up any misconceptions or problems.

- If the problem originated in the classroom, seek to resolve the problem with the teacher.
- If the problem is not resolved to your satisfaction, take the concern to the Principal.
- If the grievance is not resolved, you or administration may recommend it be taken to the WCA Board of Directors.

As we seek to resolve a problem or issue, we must remember to be Christ like in word and action. The faculty, staff and administration of WCA are available to assist you with any issues or concerns you may have.

# *Weddington Methodist Church*

## *Anti-Bullying Policy*

Students who participate in the ministries of Weddington Methodist Church, including youth ministries, children's ministries, Weddington Christian Preschool and Weddington Christian Academy, have the right to participate free from the fear of bullying, harassment, and intimidation. Bullying de-values, isolates, frightens, and affects an individual's ability to achieve and must be taken seriously. It has long term effects on those engaging in bullying behavior, those who are the subjects of bullying behavior, and those around them, and is not acceptable in any form. Ministry leaders, teachers, students, parents, caregivers, and members of our church community have the responsibility to work together to address bullying.

### Our definition of bullying:

Bullying can be defined as intentional, repeated behavior by an individual or group of individuals that causes distress, hurt or undue pressure.

Bullying involves the abuse of power in relationships. Bullying can involve all forms of harassment, humiliation, domination, and intimidation of others.

Bullying behavior can be verbal, physical, social, or psychological.

Weddington Church considers the following behaviors to be examples of bullying.

#### Physical:

- Hitting, kicking, punching, scratching.
- Pushing, shoving, spitting.
- Forcing others to hand over food, money or something that belongs to them.
- Sexual assault and unwanted 'touching'.
- Forcing someone to do something they are uncomfortable doing.

#### Verbal:

- Name calling.
- Teasing, insults, put-downs, verbal abuse, sarcasm, insults.
- Threatening of any kind.
- Making fun of someone because of their appearance, physical characteristics. or cultural background.
- Sexualized comments or innuendo.
- Making fun of someone's actions.

### Indirect (social and psychological):

- Excluding others from the activity or the group, ignoring, ostracizing or alienating others.
- Spreading untrue stories or slander about others.
- Making inappropriate gestures.
- Taking, hiding, or damaging something which belongs to someone else.
- Sending nasty emails, SMS, instant messages, or other public slander.
- The inappropriate use of websites, chat-sites, or camera phones.

### Statement of Purpose

All the members of the church community have a shared responsibility to create a safe and happy environment, free from all forms of bullying.

Weddington Methodist Church aims to provide students with a safe and caring environment in which students can access quality teaching, learning and fellowship. Also, where they can be supported in making positive informed choices.

Any inappropriate behavior that interferes with the teaching, learning, and well-being of Weddington Methodist Church students is unacceptable.

### Students can expect to:

- know that their concerns will be responded appropriately.
- be provided with appropriate support.
- take part in learning experiences that address key understandings and skills relating to bullying and harassment.

### Responsibilities of Members of the Weddington Methodist Church Community

All members of the Weddington Methodist Church community have a responsibility to promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity and actively work together to resolve incidents of bullying behavior when they occur.

### Students have a responsibility to:

- Behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity.
- Reinforce the message that bullying is not accepted or tolerated.
- Refrain from bullying others.
- Assist someone who is being bullied.
- Inform Weddington Methodist Church staff if they are being bullied or if they see someone else being bullied.
- Follow Weddington Methodist Church's anti bullying policy.

Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:

- Be aware of the church's anti bullying policy and assist their children in understanding bullying behavior.
- Support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the Weddington Methodist Church anti bullying policy.
- To model appropriate behavior.
- To reinforce the message that bullying is not accepted or tolerated.
- To instruct their children to tell the appropriate authorities if they are bullied.
- To watch for signs that their child may be bullied.
- To speak to the appropriate ministry leader if their child is being bullied, or they suspect that this is happening.

Weddington Methodist Church has the responsibility to:

- Provide students with strategies to respond positively to incidents of bullying behavior.
- Provide parents, caregivers and students with clear information on strategies that promote appropriate behavior and consequences of inappropriate behavior.
- Follow up on complaints of bullying, harassment and intimidation.

Staff at Weddington Methodist Church have a responsibility to:

- Model appropriate behavior.
- Respond in an appropriate and timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the Weddington Methodist Church anti bullying policy.
- Respect and support students in all aspects of their learning.
- To reinforce the message that bullying is not accepted or tolerated.
- To treat seriously all reports or observed incidences of bullying.
- To report incidences of bullying to the appropriate ministry leader.
- To be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying.
- To ensure that students are actively supervised at all times.

## Strategies to Deal with Bullying

At Weddington there is a strong message that bullying is not accepted and will not be tolerated.

Students can expect that their concerns will be responded to by the church staff and that they will be provided with appropriate support (for both the subjects of and those responsible for the behavior).

Students who bully others may face one or more of the following consequences:

- Involvement in a mediation process.

- Referral to the church counselor.
- Parents may be contacted by the church.
- Privileges may be withdrawn.
- Sanctions such as detention and/or suspension,
- Serious incidents of bullying may require Police involvement.

Weddington Methodist Church provides a range of effective programs to ensure a safe and secure environment promoting personal growth and excellence in all students. We aim to develop confidence and self-esteem to empower students to take responsibility for themselves and their actions. As part of this, the anti-bullying message is consistently communicated to students.

**These programs may include:**

- A proactive social skills program.
- Anti-bullying programs.
- Consultation with Weddington Christian counselor.

This policy is communicated to staff via staff meetings, to students via assemblies, and to parents via the church newsletter, enrollment meetings, and the church website.