



# WITHROW UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL

2488 Madison Road, Cincinnati, OH 45208  
Phone: (513) 363-9200 | Fax: (513) 363-9220  
[www.https://withrow.cps-k12.org](https://withrow.cps-k12.org)

## Dear Withrow Parents & Guardians,

As we continue prioritizing the safety and security of our students, we want to remind you that **Withrow University High School will again require all students in grades 9–12 to use clear backpacks for the 2025–2026 school year.** This policy will go into effect on **the first day of school, August 20, 2025.**

### Clear Backpack Guidelines

- **All students must bring a clear backpack** to school each day.
- **Small non-transparent bags (no larger than 6" x 9" x 5")** may be used *inside* the clear backpack to carry personal items such as toiletries or makeup.
- Students are encouraged to **bring only essential school items** and leave personal trinkets or non-academic items at home.



### Extracurricular Activity Bags

- Students participating in **extracurricular activities** (e.g., athletics, band, dance) may bring non-transparent bags containing activity-related items.
- These bags **must be stored in designated areas upon entry into the building** and may not be carried throughout the school day.

### Non-Clear Backpack Procedure

- Students who arrive with a non-clear backpack will be required to **leave the backpack at the front of the building (unlabeled).**
- Backpacks will be available for **pickup at the end of the school day**, and students will retrieve them on an **honor system.**
- **Withrow University High School is not responsible for lost or stolen items.**

We value your privacy and appreciate your support in keeping our school safe. Our goal is to provide all students with a secure, inclusive, and high-quality learning environment.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school directly at **(513) 363-9200.** Please review our **Frequently Asked Questions** document for more information.

Thank you for your support and we look forward to an amazing school year!

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A clear backpack is:

- Completely CLEAR on all sides except the bottom
- Backpack-sized or similar: Smaller CLEAR bags are permitted
- Still subject to inspection by the Security and Safety team

<p><b>Clear backpack requirement applies to ALL STUDENTS.</b></p> <p>El requisito de mochila transparente es para <b>todos los estudiantes</b></p>  	<p><b>Lunch bags/boxes DO NOT have to be clear, but are subject to inspection.</b></p> <p>Las loncheras <b>NO</b> tienen que ser transparentes, sin embargo, pueden ser sujetas a inspección</p>  	<p><b>Students may CARRY A POUCH no larger than 5.5" x 8.5" to hold personal items.</b></p> <p>Los estudiantes pueden llevar una <b>bolsa</b> no mayor de 5.5" x 8.5" para artículos personales</p>  
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The only exceptions permitted are:

- A small non-transparent pouch for personal hygiene items.
- School-approved sport-specific carrying case for athletic equipment.
- School-approved instrument-specific carrying case for band equipment.
- School-approved cases for medical equipment.

## **PROHIBITED ITEMS- NOT ALLOWED IN BUILDING**

Non-clear backpacks are not permitted in the building. Students who bring a non-clear backpack must leave it at the front of the school, unlabeled, and retrieve it at the end of the day at their own risk. Items will not be labeled and will be returned using the honor system. Withrow University High School is not responsible for lost or stolen property.



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## Frequently Asked Questions

**What are the size specifications for the clear backpack?** It must be backpack-sized or smaller; the student should be able to carry it easily.

**Are mesh backpacks allowed?** No. Mesh backpacks are not allowed. Students are permitted to only use clear backpacks.



**Can the backpack have mesh pockets?** Yes. Mesh side pockets are allowed on the backpack (see example).



**Can the front pocket of the backpack have a mesh organizer?** Yes. A mesh organizer inside the front pocket is allowed (see example).





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**Will athletic/spirit bags and instrument cases, which are not clear, be allowed in schools?** Yes, however, these bags must be stored as soon as the student arrives at school. They must be placed securely in fine arts classrooms or athletic locker rooms as designated by school administrators.

**Will backpacks with padded backs be accepted?** No. The backpack must have clear visibility through all dimensions excluding the backpack bottom (see example).



**Are transparent colored backpacks allowed?** No. Colored, transparent backpacks are not allowed (see example). Only fully clear backpacks are permitted.



**Are stripes allowed on the backpack?** No. Stripes in any location are not allowed on the backpack (see example).





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**Can the backpack have colored straps?** Yes. The backpack may have colored straps (see example).



**Are leather reinforcements on the corners of the backpacks allowed?** Yes. Leather reinforcements on the corners are permitted. They are not to exceed two inches of coverage on either side of the bag.



**Are company or trademark logos allowed on the front of the backpack?** Yes. Small company and school logos are allowed (see example), in addition to small monograms, but logos blocking the items within the bag, monograms or other visual design obstructions are not.





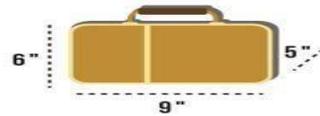
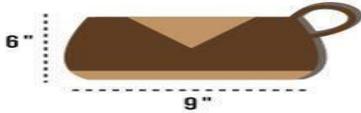
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**Are lunch bags permitted?** Yes. Non-transparent lunch bags no larger than approximately 6" x 9" x 5" (see example below) are permitted to be carried.



**Can multiple small bags be carried in schools in clear backpacks?** Yes. Students must limit non-transparent bags (lunch bags, purses, pouches) to two bags (see examples), regardless of whether they are carried inside or outside the clear backpack.



**Are clear totes, clear purses and transparent plastic bags allowed?** Yes. Clear totes, purses, cinch bags, and bags are allowed (see examples).



**Are students allowed to have a laptop sleeve in their backpack, or are they required to carry the laptop sleeve separately?** Yes. A laptop or Chromebook inserted into a laptop sleeve will be permitted in a backpack. However, the sleeve is subject to search.

**Can I line the inside of the backpack?** No. Fabric, wallpaper or any other material that conceals the contents of the backpack is not permitted.



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**Where do I purchase a clear backpack?** Online retailers such as Amazon are currently carrying clear backpacks. Withrow will assist all families who may not be able to obtain a clear backpack and for those who may require a replacement due to the bag being lost, damaged or stolen.

**Is there a health concern related to carrying clear backpacks (exposure to plastic)?** No. According to current United States Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) research, chemicals released by plastic backpacks are not stored in the human body, so routine, low-level exposures like touching plastic products is unlikely to have long-term negative health impacts. Additional information can be found on the [CDC/ATSDR](https://www.cdc.gov/atsdr) website.

**What about student privacy?** We understand the concern regarding the privacy of certain items students carry in backpacks, such as inhalers or hygiene products. Students will be permitted to carry such items in a small pouch or purse within the backpack. Any non-transparent pouch, purse, or lunch bag should be no larger than approximately 6" x 9" x 5" and may be subject to search.

**What about students that must carry medical items/equipment to school?** An exception will be made for medically necessary items, though carrying cases are subject to search. The student must receive prior approval from the School Administration. Please contact your school nurse or counselor to begin that process.

**Are staff required to carry clear backpacks?** No. Staff are not required to carry clear backpacks, but are urged to be aware of and attuned to students' requirements. Staff items remain subject to search.

**Are visitors and volunteers required to wear a clear back?** No, though visitors and volunteers are subject to search, and need to follow proper entry procedures for all schools. Additionally, **we** will still follow the protocols that have been outlined for all School and Athletic Events for entry screening and attendance.

**Will the clear backpack policy replace metal detectors?** No, the clear backpack policy does not replace metal detectors in our middle and high schools. Clear backpacks are an additional mitigation measure to ensure a safe and secure school environment.

## Additional Information

- Need assistance acquiring a clear backpack? Please contact Withrow High School at 513-363-9200.
- **The Clear Backpack Policy does not replace existing rules regarding prohibited items on school property. Weapons of any kind, drugs, and alcohol are strictly forbidden.**