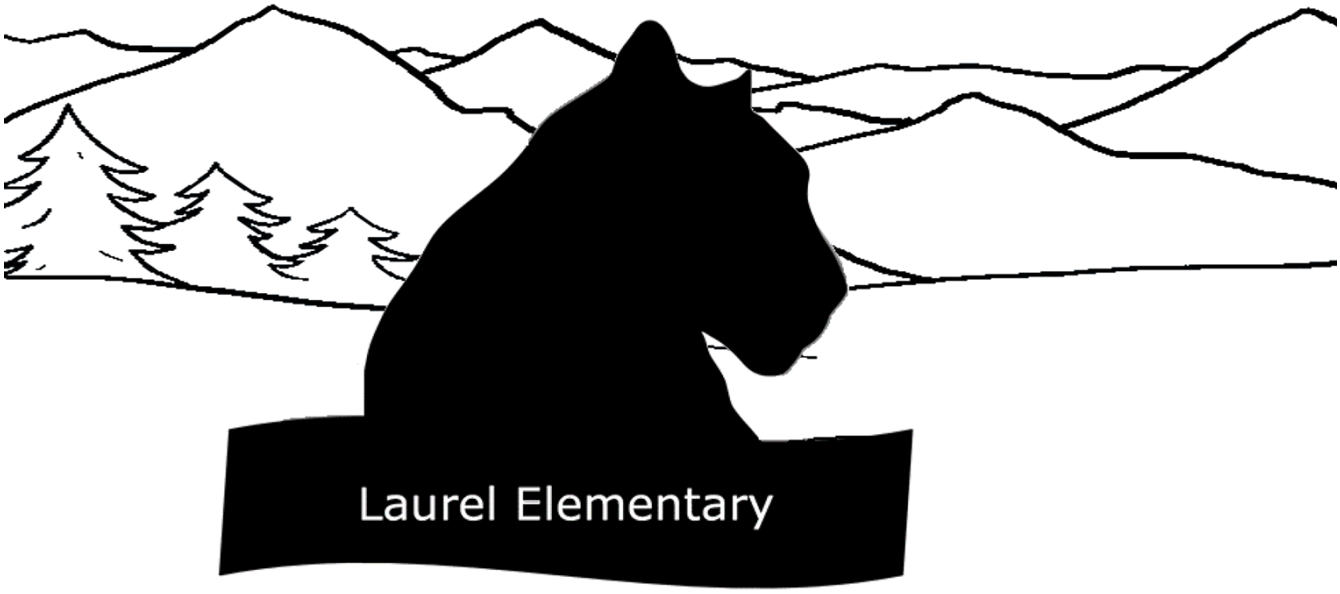
# Laurel Elementary School Handbook

## 2025-2026




**300 Gentry Creek Road**
**Laurel Bloomery, Tennessee 37680**
**Phone: 423-727-2685**
**Fax: 423-727-5250**

## Principals Welcome

Dear Laurel Family,

**Welcome to the 2025–2026 School Year!**

I am so excited and truly blessed to continue working with my Laurel Elementary School family. LES is a close-knit school community built on genuine care and respect. The dedication and hard work of our students, staff, teachers, and parents make all the difference—and it's what makes our school such a special place.

Our teachers and staff are preparing for another amazing school year with a strong focus on student success. One of the most important factors in that success is **open and ongoing communication** between parents, students, and the school. We encourage you to reach out if you have any questions or concerns—please don't hesitate to contact your child's teacher or me directly by phone at **(727) 2685** or by email at **beggers@jocoed.net**.

We offer several ways to stay connected and informed. Please make sure you sign up for at least one of our communication tools:

- Phone
- Email
- Text
- Class Dojo
- JoCo App
- Our websites: www.jocoed.net and laurel.jocoed.net
- Facebook: *LES Panther Pride*

Together, we can build a strong academic foundation for our students—one that will benefit them for the rest of their lives.

At Laurel Elementary, we are committed to creating a safe and supportive learning environment where every student can thrive both academically and personally. Courtesy, kindness, and respect for differences—whether in people, cultures, or perspectives—are values we live by. Every individual is a vital part of our LES family, and we will work together for the success of each one.

I look forward to working with each student and their family as we begin this exciting new school year. Laurel Elementary truly is a special place, filled with caring and dedicated students, parents, teachers, and staff. I'm honored to be a part of this incredible team.

**Here's to a fantastic 2025–2026 school year!**

Warmly,

Brenda Dishman Eggers, Ed.D
Principal, Laurel Elementary School

# Laurel Elementary Faculty & Staff

| Name | Email | Position |
|---|---|---|
| Brenda Dishman Eggers, Ed.D | beggers@jocoed.net | Principal |
| Katelin Vincent | kvincent@jocoed.net | PreK and Kindergarten |
| Megan Heaton | mheaton@jocoed.net | First Grade |
| Canaan Payne | cpayne@jocoed.net | Second Grade |
| Alexis Rose | arose@jocoed.net | Third Grade Homeroom<br>Third Grade ELA & SS<br>Fourth Grade ELA & SS |
| Brian Taylor | btaylor@jocoed.net | Fourth Grade Homeroom<br>Third Grade Math & Science<br>Fourth Grade Math & Science |
| Christian Pierce | cpierce@jocoed.net | Fifth Grade Homeroom<br>Fifth Grade Math & SS<br>Sixth Grade Math & SS |
| Breana Blair | bblair@jocoed.net | Sixth Grade Homeroom<br>Fifth Grade ELA & Science<br>Sixth Grade ELA & Science |
| Jayme Davis | jdavis@jocoed.net | Special Education |
| Cala Courtner | ccourtner@jocoed.net | Gifted Education and Diagnostician |
| Eric Crabtree | ecrabtree@jocoed.net | Physical Education |
| Mathew Parlier | mparlier@jocoed.net | Music |
| Miranda Horne | mhorne@jocoed.net | Visual Art |
| Tammy Jarvis | tjarvis@jocoed.net | Library |
| Evelyn Ainsworth | eainsworth@jocoed.net | Technology |
| Logan Robbins | lrobins@jocoed.net | Counselor |
| Patty Trivett | ptrivett@jocoed.net | Bookkeeper/Secretary |
| Sonya Proffitt | sproffitt@jocoed.net | Custodian |
| Brianne LaMarr | broark@jocoed.net | Instructional Assistant |
| Kerri Greer | kgreer@jocoed.net | Instructional Assistant |
| Jessica Shoun | jshoun@jocoed.net | Instructional Assistant |
| Kayla Roark | kroark@jocoed.net | Instructional Assistant |
| Lilly Webster | lwebster@jocoed.net | Instructional Assistant |
| Shannon Wood | swood@jocoed.net | Nurse |
| Mary Lou Bowers Harris | mbowers@jocoed.net | School Nutrition |
| Tammy Thomas | tthomas@jocoed.net | School Nutrition |

## Laurel Elementary School Schedule

| | |
|---|---|
| 7:30 am | Doors open for students |
| 7:30 - 7:55 am | Breakfast served |
| 8:00 am | First Bell |
| 8:10 am | Tardy Bell |
| 11:20 - 11:50 am | Pre K Kindergarten Lunch in classroom |
| 11:25 - 11:55 am | Third and Fourth Grade Lunch in cafeteria |
| 11:45 - 12:15 pm | First and Second Grade Lumch in cafeteria |
| 12:00 - 12:30 pm | Fifth and Sixth Grade Lunch in cafeteria |
| 3:10 pm | Dismissal Bell - Car riders dismissed from gym for pick up |
| 3:25 pm | Bus riders dismissed to bus room |

## School-Wide Behavior Expectations

At Laurel Elementary, every member of our school community is expected to be **respectful, kind, and cooperative**. We believe that strong character builds strong learners and leaders.

Our behavior is guided by the **Six Pillars of Character**:

- **Trustworthiness** – Be honest and dependable.
- **Respect** – Treat others the way you want to be treated.
- **Responsibility** – Do your best and take ownership of your actions.
- **Fairness** – Play by the rules and listen to others.
- **Caring** – Be kind, helpful, and compassionate.
- **Citizenship** – Do your part to make our school and community better.

Learning and practicing good behavior and self-discipline is just as important as academics. By the time students leave Laurel Elementary, they will have a strong foundation in the social skills and character traits that lead to success—in school, in relationships, and in life.

## School Mission

To prepare students to be successful citizens who show respect for others, have good moral character and display a good work ethic while laying the foundation for students to be college and career ready.

## School Vision

To provide quality education by guiding students in their pursuit of attaining lifelong success.

## School Beliefs

1. All students are capable of achieving individual growth through hard work and commitment.

2. All students will have a variety of opportunities to learn and apply knowledge and skills to real-world situations in order to reach their highest potential.

3. Our school provides effective leadership providing a safe environment that is conducive to learning.

4. Education is a team effort that requires responsible participation from the family, the student, the faculty, and staff to build a better community.

## School Improvement Goals

1. Laurel Elementary School will meet or exceed the state's attendance rate of 93% and meet the Tennessee State AMO for the Chronically Out of School indicator.

2. Students in Grades 2nd -6th will show growth of a 3 or higher on TVAAS and also meet or exceed the state AMO goal of students having Met Expectations or Exceeded Expectations in the areas of Reading/Language Arts and Math on the state assessments.

3. Students will continue to use technology in the classroom and at home.

4. Parents and Community members will be more involved in the learning process at each level, and family engagement opportunities will focus on Reading/Language Arts.

5. An increased focus on Math will allow students to be more fluent in basic Math skills such as computation, math fluency skills (addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, counting and matching the written numbers to numerals).

## Laurel Elementary School Code of Conduct

1. Follow all school, and classroom rules.

2. Be respectful, courteous, and kind to others.

3. Be truthful.

4. Practice self-discipline to build goodwill and friendships.

5. Take pride in representing yourself as a Laurel Leader.

## Laurel Leader Pledge

At Laurel Elementary School, we expect all students to be Laurel Leaders. Laurel Leaders shine with pride because they serve as positive role models for others. We will begin each day of school with a Moment of Silence, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the Laurel Leader Pledge:

### Laurel Leader Pledge

I am a Laurel Leader.

I am proud to be a Panther.

I will be at school on time and prepared every day.

I will do my best on every assignment with resilience and determination.

My words and actions will show respect, kindness, and acceptance to all.

I will show self-control and responsibility in all I do.

I will make a positive contribution because I care about my school and community.

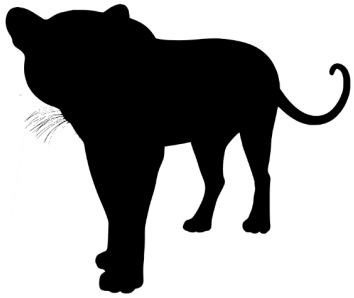
I will do this for myself because I am worth it.

I am a Laurel Leader.

## Grading Scale

In grades K-8, the basic grading system for subject-area grades is to be expressed by the letters "A", "B", "C" "D", and "F", with corresponding numerical values.

A (90-100)
B (80-89)
C (70-79)
D (60-69)
F (0-59)



## Parent Conferences

Elementary School Parent Conferences are scheduled at each elementary school on Wednesday, September 10, 2025, and on Wednesday, March 11, 2026 from 1:00 until 4:00 pm. In addition to the two scheduled Parent Conference Days, parents/guardians and teachers are encouraged to schedule additional conferences as needed. Teachers cannot visit or conference with parents/guardians when they have student responsibilities, especially during arrival and dismissal time each day. To allow for an uninterrupted conference and to protect instructional time, parents/guardians are asked to call the school, email, or send a note to request a meeting at a time convenient for both the parent/guardian and the teacher. Parents/guardians may call the school to ask for a teacher to call them. To keep from interrupting instruction, teachers will return calls to parents/guardians during planning time or at the end of the day if possible. Whenever possible, school faculty and staff will return calls within 24 hours.

## Communication Binder

Every student will have a Communication Binder that will be used daily for communication between the home and school. Please check your child's binder **every day**, as will the teacher. This binder will be used to transport important items to and from school and home, such as student work, assignments, notes from the teacher, notes from the parent/guardian, newsletters, lunch money or other money (in a sealed envelope), permission forms, etc. The binder is an excellent communication tool for school and home.

## Other Home-to-School Communications

Please look for informational handouts of upcoming events that will contain important dates, events, and information for parents/guardians. Also, please check the Laurel School website at http://laurel.jocoed.net, the LES Panther Pride FaceBook group, the Johnson County Schools TN app, and *The Tomahawk* for school news. Other useful communication tools are our outside sign on the gym that will be used for reminders of upcoming events, and the bulletin boards in our entryway. We will also use our call-out telephone system to keep parents/guardians informed. Please be sure to update your phone, email and cell phone numbers in Skyward regularly so that you will receive messages. Please let us know if you have ideas for increasing our home-to-school communications.

## Homework

Homework is assigned to support and reinforce our classroom instruction. Homework should be completed by the student under the supervision of the parent/guardian or another responsible family member. Please contact the teacher immediately if your child is struggling with homework assignments. A designated time and place should be provided at home for your child to study and complete homework assignments each evening without distractions. Also, parents/guardians are encouraged to read with their children for 15 minutes each night. It is motivating for students to see their parents/guardians reading newspapers, magazines, cookbooks, manuals, etc. Try making homework/study time an enjoyable family activity. Homework help will be available each morning from 7:30 - 8:00 am.

## Laurel Literacy Pledge

Research continues to show that students who are good readers perform better academically than students that are struggling readers or do not enjoy reading. It is our goal that all students learn to love reading. **We ask that all students in grades K-6 spend 10-20 minutes engaged in a reading activity at home every night.** The students may have reading material sent home, choose anything appropriate to read, or you may read to the student something of interest. The time spent reading will increase the reading material that the students are exposed to, which will, in turn, encourage them to become better, independent readers.

## Dress Code

Students are expected to dress and groom in a neat, clean, and modest manner that is appropriate and

shows respect for the entire school community. Clothing and accessories should not distract or interfere with the operation of the school as well as not present a health or safety issue for the student.

- Clothing must fully and completely cover the entire area of the body from armpit to armpit in width and from armpit to mid-thigh in length on both sides of the body.
- Tops must have straps (1/2 inch or more) or sleeves and provide adequate coverage so as not to expose the midriff, cleavage, back, undergarments, or be see-through.
- Pants must be worn at the waist and cover undergarments at all times. Leggings or tightly fitting knit pants should be worn with tops meeting the mid-thigh rule.
- Pajamas, blankets, and bedroom-type shoes are only allowed on designated days, i.e., Dr. Seuss Day or Pajama Day
- Shoes must be worn at all times, both inside and outside the building.
- Sunglasses, hats, hoodies, and other headgear are not to be worn inside the building except on designated days i.e., Crazy Hat Day.
- Clothing with suggestive slogans or pictures that promote drugs, alcohol, profanity, violence, tobacco, or other inappropriate products or messages is not permitted.

If dress code violations occur, students may be provided with appropriate clothing or the parents/guardians will be contacted to bring a change of clothing to school. All students in Pre-K through Second grade are encouraged to have a complete change of clothing at school for emergencies.

## Make-Up Work

Classwork and tests missed during an absence may be made up when students return to school. The student should request for make-up work on the day he/she returns to school after an absence. Make-up work not turned in will result in NO Credit given for that assignment and will not be allowed to be made up at a later time.

Each day of absence affords one day of make-up work opportunity. Students have a maximum of five (5) days to make up work missed due to the absences(s). However, the period of time allotted to make up the work may be extended by the teacher. Please note that students may expect to do more paperwork than those in attendance because it is necessary to make-up for missed classroom experiences.

## Bringing Items to School

Please do not allow your child to bring expensive personal items or large sums of money to school. General school supplies and necessary personal items are all that students need to bring to school. Lunch money, picture money, etc. should be placed in a sealed envelope in the communication binder. If special items can be brought for special projects or events, you will receive a note from the school. All personal items should be marked with the student's name. If an inappropriate item is brought to school, the item will be held in the school office until a parent/guardian comes to retrieve it. The following items are never permitted at school: knives, weapons, matches, fireworks, tobacco products, vapes, and any illegal

substances. Please review the Johnson County Schools Student Handbook for more specific information on discipline and code of conduct.

## Morning Procedures

Staff will be on duty each morning at the gym doors for students arriving by bus and for students dropped off by passenger vehicles. For your student's safety, please do not drop off a student at school before 7:30 a.m. Please make sure that your child safely enters the gym before you leave the parking lot. Pre K students will be signed in at the gym doors just inside the gym. For our students' safety, students are not permitted to wait outside the doors for school to open. Once inside the gym, students will be seated in designated areas.

Breakfast will be served each morning beginning at 7:30, we ask **that if you want your child to have breakfast, they should arrive before 7:50 am.** All students should be in their classrooms before 8:10. **Any student arriving after 8:10 must report to the office with a parent/guardian to be signed in and receive a tardy slip.** Teachers will not admit students to the classroom without a tardy slip. Students who come to school late miss necessary instruction, plus their late entrance disrupts classroom instruction for other students. Children must develop the life-long habit of regular and punctual attendance. Please remember that unexcused tardies or early dismissals disqualify a student for Perfect Attendance.

## Afternoon Procedures

If you must pick up your child before 3:10, the parent/guardian must come to the office to sign the child out. Please remember that early dismissals disqualify a student for Perfect Attendance. When release begins at 3:10, all car riders will be picked up at the gym canopy. An adult will be at the canopy to help students enter the car from the right side. Car riders are not permitted to wait outside to be picked up from school. Pre-K students will be signed out at the gym doors just inside the gym. For safety, only adults listed by parents/guardians on the Student Data Sheet will be permitted to pick up students. At 3:25, bus riders will be taken to the designated waiting area by their teachers. Pets are not allowed inside the building.

## Pick-Up and Bus Room Expectations

Show respect for yourself and others
Raise your hand if you need an adult's attention
Keep all items, other than assigned tasks in your backpack or bookbag while waiting.
Remain seated at the designated table until your name or bus number is called
When your name or bus number is called, put all items in your backpack quickly and neatly before standing and walking to the door.

## Changes In Afternoon Transportation Routines

If you want your child to have a change in his/her regular routine, the parent/guardian must send a note specifying the change. Notes should include the parent/guardian's signature and a phone number where you can be reached if there are questions. Students may not go home with one another on a bus or car

without a note from both students' parents/guardians giving permission. Without a parent/guardian note, or speaking with a parent/guardian directly, we cannot change a child's daily routine. **If you need to call the school to make a change, please do this by 1:00 pm.**

## Emergency Early Dismissals

Each parent/guardian will need to complete an Emergency Early Dismissal Plan at the beginning of the school year. The teacher will keep these on file to use whenever there is an emergency dismissal due to weather, water or power outages, etc. Please keep this form current and up-to-date if you have changes during the school year. For your child's safety and instructional needs, your child's teacher needs to be informed immediately of any changes in jobs, addresses, phone numbers, pick-up list, etc.

Please keep informed about school delays, closings, and early dismissals by making sure that a current working phone number is on file so that you will receive call-outs from our automated system. In addition, school closing information can be found on the school system website: www.jocoed.net.

## Bus Transportation

Laurel Elementary School is served by two buses, Bus #33 and Bus #40. The following is a list of roads that each bus travels. We will keep you updated on any changes. **If your address changes please update the school in a timely manner.**

### Bus #33

Shingletown Road
Hawkins Road
Ackerson Creek Road
Dry Stone Branch Road
Red Brush Road
Deer Creek Crossing
Fox Hollow Road
Furnace Creek Road
Huggins Road
Eastridge Road

### BUS #40

Hwy 91
Waters Road
Trout Run Road
Beaver Walk Road
Deer Run Road
Wilson Road
Greer Branch Road
Sugar Creek Road
Branch Road
Dollarsville Road
Dry Branch Road
Taylors Valley Road
Wilson Road

## Bus Rules:

The following rules were adopted by the Johnson County Board of Education. An agreement form will be sent home at the beginning of the school year for parents/guardians to sign. In order to maintain conditions and an atmosphere suitable for learning, no person shall enter a school bus except students assigned to that bus or parents/guardians of students or other persons with lawful and valid business on the bus. The school bus is an extension of school activity; therefore,

students shall conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with the established standards for safety and classroom behavior. Students are under the supervision and control of the bus driver while on his/her bus and all reasonable directions given by him/her shall be followed.

The principal of the student transported shall be informed by the bus driver of any serious discipline problem and may be called upon to assist if necessary. A student may be denied the privilege of riding the bus if the principal determines that his/her behavior is such as to cause disruption on the bus, or if he/she disobeys state or local rules and regulations pertaining to student transportation. The suspension of a student from riding the school bus shall follow the same procedures as for any other school suspension. Any student who gets off the bus at any point between the pick-up point and the school must present the bus driver with a note of authorization from the parent/guardian or the principal of the school that the student attends. Any student wishing to ride a bus other than his/her designated bus must have written parental permission and the approval of the principal or his/her designee. If approved, a bus pass will be issued by the office and the pass must be given to the bus driver upon boarding the bus. Students who transfer from bus to bus while en route to and from school shall be expected to abide by the discipline policies adopted by the Board and rules adopted by the staff of the terminal school.

## Riding School Buses:

Safe transportation is an integral part of the total educational program within the Johnson County School System. The primary purpose of school buses is to transport pupils from home to school and return safely. The Johnson County Board of Education recognizes that the safe operation of school buses is only possible with the full cooperation of parents/guardians, students, and school staff. Riding the school bus is a privilege extended to students that can be taken away at any time for disruptive or unsatisfactory behavior. All children being transported are under the authority of the bus driver and must obey his/her directions. If your child is to go home any other way than he/she normally goes, he/she must bring a written note from home stating this. Students may not use the phone to make these arrangements. The principal may suspend passengers from riding on a school bus for inappropriate and unacceptable behavior. Specific expectations of school bus passengers are found in the School Board Policy Handbook and are sent home at the beginning of each school year.

“A pupil shall become ineligible for pupil transportation when his/her behavior is such as to cause dissension on a school bus, or when he disobeys local rules and regulations pertaining to pupil transportation.” This quotation is from State Rules, Regulations and Minimum Standards.

Following is a list of specific rules/regulations for pupils who ride a school bus:

1. Pupils are under the supervision of the bus driver from the time they leave home until they reach home in the afternoon.
2. Once seated on a bus, the pupil will not be allowed to change seats without the permission of the bus driver.
3. Drivers may assign permanent seats to pupils on the bus if the drivers wish to do so.
4. Pupils will not be permitted to have any dangerous toys or other items on the bus.
5. Science specimens that are to be taken to school must be in plastic containers or enclosed in cardboard or wooden boxes.
6. NO soft drink bottles will be permitted on the bus.
7. NO glass containers will be allowed on the bus.
8. Pupils will not use tobacco in any form on the bus.
9. Pupils will not be excessively noisy while on the bus.
10. Pupils will be let off a bus only at their designated destination unless written permission from their parents/guardians gives authority for the principal to inform the bus driver to do otherwise.
11. Buses will not stop at stores or permit pupils to make purchases.
12. Pupils will pay for any damage done deliberately to the bus.
13. Pupils will not be permitted to throw any objects while on the bus.
14. Pupils will obey the driver without any backtalk.
15. Pupils will not use any vulgar language on the bus.

If a pupil misbehaves on the way to school or home and refuses to obey the driver, the driver will report this to the principal or transportation supervisor, and in turn, the principal and transportation supervisor will determine the appropriate disciplinary action. If suspended, every reasonable effort will be made to notify the parents/guardians of the suspension before the suspension begins. During a suspension from riding the bus, the child is required to attend school; but the child or the parents/guardians must furnish transportation. Any offense considered serious enough would be brought to the Board of Education on the first offense. Students waiting for a bus at a school are under the authority of the principal of the school where the students wait. The principal of that school is authorized to take appropriate disciplinary action if the student disobeys the principal or the teachers.

## School Security

For the safety and security of our students and staff, **all doors** will remain locked during the school day. You will be required to use the "intercom bell system" to be allowed in the building. Security cameras are used to monitor school safety. When entering the building during school hours, please go immediately to the school office to sign in and receive a visitor's badge to wear. If you have not been entered into the Raptor system, you will need to bring a government-issued ID with you the first time. Please remember to sign out and return your visitor's badge when leaving school.

## Parent/Guardian Involvement

We encourage parents/guardians to be active participants in their children's education. We welcome parents/guardians to be involved in Laurel Elementary School's school-wide and classroom activities. Parents/guardians will receive advance information about activities and other parent/guardian opportunities. We also encourage grandparents to be active participants at Laurel School.

Volunteering is a great way to get involved at Laurel Elementary School. Volunteers are often needed to help with projects, classroom activities, and school-wide events. Volunteers are reminded to conduct themselves professionally and to dress appropriately for the school setting. All school adults, whether staff or volunteers, serve as role models for our students.

## Custody Documentation

The parent/guardian must provide the principal with copies of any legal documents pertaining to joint or sole custody rights or other court orders. The school has no lawful means of prohibiting an estranged parent/guardian from picking up his or her child unless official documentation is on file in the school office.

## Discipline Procedures

Each teacher has developed a classroom discipline plan and will inform students and parents/guardians of behavior expectations, consequences, and incentives. Students need to learn to accept responsibility for their actions and understand that there are consequences for inappropriate behaviors. Parents/guardians will be contacted in cases of continuing misbehavior. Most discipline situations can be resolved in the classroom with the help of teachers, students, and parents/guardians. If a discipline problem cannot be resolved in the classroom, it will be necessary for the teacher to refer the student to the principal for administrative involvement. Office referrals can result in:

- teacher/student/principal conference
- preferred seating for breakfast, lunch, and/or bus room
- breakfast detention
- extra assignment
- student note to parent acknowledging the problem/issue which is signed by the parent and returned to school
- ASD (After School Detention)
- parent/guardian conference
- an individual behavior plan or contract
- restitution made by the student

- loss of field trips, assemblies or special events
- in-school suspension at Laurel
- Silent Lunch
- classroom time-out
- time-out in another classroom
- referral to the school counselor
- referral to community resources
- Disciplinary Hearing Authority (DHA) referral
- alternative placement
- out of school suspension
- corporal punishment (paddling)
- other actions depending on the severity of the behavior.

## Zero Tolerance Offenses

In order to ensure a safe and secure learning environment, the following offenses shall not be tolerated:

1. Bringing to school or being in unauthorized possession of a firearm on school property; Unlawful possession of any drug, including any controlled substance, controlled substance analogue, or legend drug on school grounds or at a school-sponsored events
2. Use, possession, sale, or distribution of drug paraphernalia, including, but not limited to, vape pens/products used with or associated with evidence of THC and/or CBD products; and
3. Aggravated assault or assault that results in bodily injury upon any teacher, principal, administrator, any other employee of the school, or school resource officer.
4. Threats of mass violence on school property or at a school-related activity.

Committing any of these offenses shall result in a student being expelled from the regular school program for at least one (1) calendar year unless modified by the Director of Schools. Modification of the length of time shall be granted on a case-by-case basis. Students that commit zero tolerance offenses may be assigned to an alternative school or program at the discretion of the Director of Schools.

When it is determined that a student has violated this policy, the principal shall notify the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system as required by law.

## Anti-Hazing Policy (Board policy 4.3012)

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe learning environment that is free from hazing for students and staff members. Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational and athletic goals of Johnson County Schools and are prohibited at all times.

**General Statement of Policy -**

No student, teacher, administrator or other school district employee, contractor or volunteer shall plan, direct, encourage, aid or engage in hazing.

No student, teacher, administrator or other school district employee, contractor or volunteer shall permit, condone or tolerate hazing.

Apparent permission or consent by a person being hazed does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.

A person who engages in an act that violates school policy or law in order to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization or team shall be subject to discipline for that act.

This policy applies to hazing behavior that occurs on or off school property and during and after school hours.

The school district will act to investigate all complaints of hazing and will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator or other school district employee, contractor or volunteer who is found to have violated this policy.

**Definitions**

"Hazing," means committing an act against a student, or coercing a student into committing an act, that creates a substantial risk of harm to a person, in order for the student to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization, or for any other purpose. The term hazing includes, but is not limited to:

Any type of physical brutality such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electronic shocking or placing a harmful substance on the body.

Any type of physical activity such as sleep deprivation, exposure to weather, confinement in a restricted area, calisthenics or other activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.

Any activity involving the consumption of any alcoholic beverage, drug, tobacco product or any other food, liquid, or substance that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.

Any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism, that subjects a student to extreme mental stress, embarrassment, shame or humiliation that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student or discourages the student from remaining in school.

Any activity that causes or requires the student to perform a task that involves violation of state or federal law or of school district policies or regulations.

"Student organization," means a group, club or organization having students as its primary members or participants. It includes grade levels, classes, teams, activities or particular school events. A student organization does not have to be an official school organization to come within the terms of this definition.

**Reporting Procedures**

Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of hazing or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute hazing shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school district official designated by this policy.

The building principal is the person responsible for receiving reports of hazing at the building level. Any person may report hazing directly to a school district civil rights officer or to the superintendent.

Teachers, administrators, other school district employees as well as contractors and volunteers shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances or events that might include hazing. Any such person who receives a report of, observes, or has other knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute hazing shall inform the building principal immediately.

Submission of a good faith complaint or report of hazing will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades or work assignments.

**School District Action**

Upon receipt of a complaint or report of hazing, the school district shall undertake or authorize an investigation by school district officials or a third party designated by the school district.

The school district may take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the complainant, reporter, students or others pending completion of an investigation of hazing.

Upon completion of the investigation, the school district will take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, transfer, remediation, termination or discharge. Disciplinary consequences will be administered consistently. They will appropriately discipline prohibited behavior and deter others from hazing. School district action taken for violation of this policy will be consistent with other school policies and applicable collective bargaining agreements and statutory authorities.

**Reprisal-**

The school district will take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator or other employee of the school district, or any contractor or volunteer who retaliates against anyone who makes a good faith report of hazing, or who testifies, assists or participates in an investigation or hearing about a hazing incident. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment.

**Dissemination of Policy -**

This policy shall appear in each school's Student Handbook and in each school's Building and Staff handbooks. Further, it will be disseminated to parents and presented to attendees of the first meeting of the school year of each student organization (including all athletic teams and clubs).

## Questioning of Students by School Personnel

Students may be questioned by teachers or the principal about any matter pertaining to the operation of the school or the enforcement of school rules. Questioning will be conducted discreetly and under circumstances that will avoid unnecessary embarrassment to the student. Any student answering falsely, evasively, or refusing to answer a proper question may be subject to disciplinary action. If a student is suspected or accused of misconduct or an infraction of the student code of conduct, the principal may question the student without the presence of parents/guardians and without giving the student constitutional warnings.

## Questioning by Law Enforcement (At Principal's Request)

If the principal has requested assistance by law enforcement to investigate a crime involving the school, the law enforcement has permission to question a student suspect during school hours. The principal shall first attempt to notify the parent/guardian unless circumstances require otherwise. Questioning may proceed without the attendance of a parent/guardian, but the principal or her designee shall be present during questioning.

## Law Enforcement Initiated Questioning

If law enforcement deems circumstances of sufficient urgency to question students at school for

unrelated crimes committed outside of school hours, the law enforcement shall first contact the principal and inform him/her of the probable cause to investigate within the school. The principal shall make reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian unless circumstances require otherwise. The questioning may proceed without attendance of the parent/guardian, but the principal/designee shall be present during questioning.

## Searches by School Personnel

Having reasonable suspicion, the principal or his/her designee may search any student, place or thing on school property or in the possession of a student during an off-campus, school-sponsored event. When necessary, dogs trained to detect drugs or dangerous weapons may be used to pinpoint areas that need to be searched, but shall not be used to search persons.

## Use Of Video Cameras

Video cameras may be used to monitor student behavior at school and on school vehicles transporting students to and from school or extracurricular activities. Students in violation of bus conduct rules shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with established Board policy and regulations governing student conduct and discipline. The district shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws related to video recordings when such recordings are considered for retention as part of the student's behavioral record as determined by the district and in accordance with the law. Video surveillance shall be used only to promote the order, safety, and security of students, staff, and property.

The director of schools is directed to develop procedures governing the use of video cameras in accordance with the provisions of the law and established Board policies.

## School Food Service

Laurel's school cafeteria offers delicious and nutritious meals for our students, staff, and visitors. Laurel's cafeteria manager is Mrs. Mary Lou Bowers Harris. This school year, we will be continuing the Community Eligibility Provision CEP, which allows all students to eat breakfast and lunch at no charge to the student. Parents, guardians, and grandparents are welcome to come and eat lunch with their student. We ask that you, please notify the cafeteria at 727-2686 by 9:00 am if you plan to eat in the cafeteria that day.

### Lunch Schedule

| | |
|---|---|
| Pre K and Kindergarten | 11:20 – 11:50 am |
| First and Second Grade | 11:45 – 12:15 pm |
| Third and Fourth Grade | 11:25 – 11:55 pm |
| Fifth and Sixth Grade | 12:00 – 12:30 pm |

A la carte and extra food items may be available to purchase, but NO charging is allowed. Students must have money in their account or in hand to give to the cashier to pay for extra items. Please talk with your children about what you permit them to purchase extra in the cafeteria. If you need to check your child's account balance, please call 727-2686.

**Food Prices**

| | |
|---|---|
| Adult Breakfast | 2.50 |
| Adult Breakfast Entrée | 1.50 |
| Adult Lunch | 4.25 |
| Adult Lunch Entrée | 2.50 |
| Coffee (Adult only) | .50 |

**Extras: (when available)**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Biscuits | .50 | Lunch Entrée (student) | 1.50 |
| Bread/Roll | .50 | Ice Cream | .75 |
| Breakfast Entrée (student) | 1.00 | Juice | .50 |
| Cereal | .50 | Milk | .75 |
| Cookie | .50 | Salad Bar | 2.75 |
| Fries/Potatoes | .75 | Vegetable/Fruit | .75 |
| Chips | .75 | Water (8 oz) | .50 |
| Fruit Snacks | .50 | Water (16-20 oz) | 1.00 |
| | | Water (Sport Cap) | 1.25 |

Packed lunches from home are allowed in the school cafeteria, but there is no access to a microwave oven to heat packed food items. Brought-from-home lunch items that need to be kept warm or cold should be packed in thermal containers. **Carbonated beverages are not permitted in school cafeterias. Also, take-out foods from restaurants should not be brought into the school cafeteria. Students may not share food from either their school lunch tray or their lunch box.**

If your child has food allergies or other food-related medical restrictions, please schedule an appointment to talk with the principal and school nurse. At the beginning of each school year, an updated medical statement from the doctor is required to be kept on file at school. If your child is suspected of having a Section 504 condition, a meeting will be held to determine eligibility, and appropriate modifications, and to develop a Section 504 Education Service Plan.
Parents/guardians are encouraged to complete the yellow survey form in the handbook and return it to school with their child.

## Cafeteria Expectations

It should come as no surprise that healthy students are better learners, and proper nutrition plays a significant role in the health of our students. Since most children are in school 7 hours per day, it is not uncommon for them to receive as much as half of their daily calories at school. Eating a healthy diet helps children to make higher academic gains, reduce absences, remain alert during class, fight off illness, and become active, healthy adults. Along with meeting physical needs, one of the most important aspects of eating breakfast and lunch in the school cafeteria is to promote a pleasant atmosphere for socialization and fellowship among peers. To promote a pleasant atmosphere for positive social interaction during meal times in our cafeteria students are expected to:

1. Use appropriate manners and sit properly.
2. Stay seated and raise your hand if you need help or an adult.
3. Use positive, kind, and helpful words in a voice that can only be heard at your own table.
4. Get everything needed from the serving line the first time.
5. Leave your floor, seat, and table neat and clean.

## Playground Expectations

- Tell an adult immediately if something is unsafe or if someone is hurt.
- Stay visible to adults at all times in designated play areas.
- Dirt, rocks, sand, gravel, grass, and mulch should remain on the ground at all times.
- Horseplay and fighting are not allowed.
- Use the playground and all equipment appropriately and safely.

**Slides**

- Only one person at a time may be on the slide.
- Slide down in a seated position and feet first.
- Stay a safe distance away from the slide to avoid being hit by the person sliding down.

**Swings**

- Remain seated on your bottom while swinging and hold on to the chains with both hands.
- Swing safely (safe height, avoid twisting or spinning, wait until the swing stops to get off the seat, stay upright)
- Stay a safe distance away from the swings when they are in use by others to avoid being hit.

## Health and Well-Being

## Lice

To prevent the spread of head lice, we will have school-wide head checks during the first week of school. We will continue to have regular head checks throughout the school year to avoid the spread of head lice. Head lice are very contagious and can spread quickly from one person to another. We will do all we can to keep this from being a problem at Laurel Elementary. If a child has nits or lice, the parent/guardian will be notified and will be given a letter that explains the treatment. Parents/guardians can help at home by checking their child's hair as a regular part of their bath or shower routine. Parents/guardians are asked to keep the school informed of potential head lice problems. We will deal with head lice in a direct yet discreet manner that will not cause unnecessary embarrassment for our students and families.

## Drinks in the Classroom

Students are encouraged to have water in a non-breakable container in the classroom.

## Personal Electronic Devices

In order to create a positive learning environment for all students, it is our expectation that personal electronic devices (cell phones, gaming devices, smart watches, music players, headphones, earbuds, etc.) may not be used at Laurel Elementary. We recognize the importance of communication and collaboration in the classroom and will provide Chromebooks and other school-approved electronics for students to use during the school day. We feel that it is imperative that we reduce unnecessary distractions during the school day and strive to keep the focus on our students developing academically while acquiring the necessary skills for face-to-face interaction with peers and adults. If a student needs to contact a parent during the school day for an emergency, he/she should ask permission from the teacher to go to the main office to make the call to the parent. If a parent/guardian needs to get a message to their student, they may call the school office at 423-727-2685 to leave a message. This message will be delivered to the student as soon as possible and in a manner that will not disrupt learning.

*Johnson County Board of Education*
*Use of Personal Communication Devices and Electronic Devices 6.312*

**DEFINITION**

Personal communication devices include, but are not limited to, wearable technology such as eyeglasses, rings, or watches that have the capability to record, live stream, or interact with wireless technology; cell phones; laptops; tablets; earbuds; and MP3 players.

**MEDICAL EXEMPTIONS**

Students who have a medical device that necessitates cellphone access during the school day, may receive an exemption from this policy upon the development of an individual Healthcare Plan consistent with a physician's orders. Such exceptions apply to medical needs only and does not allow cell phone use for other purposes. Applications for medical exemptions shall be made to the school administration, and individual Healthcare Plans and any exceptions from this policy must be approved by school administration.

**RECORDING DEVICES**

Whether on school buses, on school property or at a school sponsored event, students are not permitted to use recording devices (photograph, audio, or video) without administrative approval. A student in violation of this policy is subject to the appropriate grade-level disciplinary action as outlined below.

**SCHOOL BUSES**

K-12 students in transit may use personal communication devices if the device is in silent mode or if earbuds are utilized. A student in violation of this policy is subject to the appropriate grade-level disciplinary action as outlined below.

**ALTERNATIVE PLACEMENT**

Alternative school students and/or students in alternative placements such as ISS, lunch detention, before/after school detention, and Saturday School may not possess personal communication devices. A student in violation of this policy is subject to the appropriate grade-level disciplinary action as outlined below.

**GRADES K-8**

Cell phones, I-watches, Air Pods, Nintendo Switches, or other items which may interfere with instruction should remain in backpacks throughout the school day. We understand that many students have a cell phone for emergencies and after school activities.

The expectation is that these devices will remain in the student's backpack (not in hoodie, shirt or pants pockets, or jackets). If the student doesn't carry a backpack, they must turn the device in at the front office to be picked up at the end of the school day. Students without a backpack will not be allowed to carry these devices.

If a student is seen with their cell phone out and does not have administration's permission, the phone will be confiscated.

Students who share inappropriate photos, derogatory messages, threats against students or staff will be subject to investigation and the loss of cell phone privileges. Cell phones confiscated for these reasons will be handed over to the proper authorities for further investigation. Cell phones will be subject to search and seizure while on school property.

**Confiscation Procedures:**

1st offense: Documented Warning-Teacher will return phone to student at the end of the class period
2nd offense: Phone will be stored in the office and the student may pick up at the end of the day
3rd offense: Parent will be called to pick up phone
4th offense: Parent will be called to pick up phone and the student forfeits the privilege of having a phone at school for the remainder the semester

*Doe, Laurel, MCE, RCE and JCMS are not responsible for any damaged, lost or stolen cell phones, or other electronic devices.*

## Student Attendance

Attendance is a key factor in student achievement; therefore, students are expected to be present each day school is in session. The Director of Schools/designee shall ensure that this policy is posted in each school building and disseminated to all students, parent(s)/guardian(s), teachers, and administrative staff.

The Attendance Supervisor shall oversee the entire attendance program which shall include:

1. All accounting and reporting procedures and their dissemination;
2. Alternative program options for students who severely fail to meet minimum attendance requirements;
3. Ensuring that all school age children attend school;
4. Providing documentation of enrollment status upon request for students applying for new or reinstatement of driver's permit or license; and
5. Notifying the Department of Safety whenever a student with a driver's permit or license withdraws from school.

Student attendance records shall be given the same level of confidentiality as other student records. Only authorized school officials with legitimate educational purposes may have access to student information without the consent of the student or parent(s)/guardian(s).

Absences shall be classified as either excused or unexcused as determined by the principal/designee. Excused absences shall include:

1. Personal illness/injury;
2. Illness of immediate family member;
3. Death in the family;
4. Extreme weather conditions;
5. Religious observances (This does not include religious cruises and revivals during school hours.);
6. Pregnancy;
7. School-endorsed activities;
8. Summons, subpoena, or court order; or
9. Circumstances which in the judgment of the principal create emergencies over which the student has no control.
10. A maximum of three (3) parent notes for the school year.

Written excuses submitted by the parent or student must be the original signed or stamped document. No screenshots, pictures, copies, or other reproductions of an excuse will be accepted unless the document is transmitted directly from the excusing party.

An unexcused absence is any absence that is not excused. Unexcused absences shall include:

1. Parent notes beyond the three (3) allowed;
2. Absences due to extracurricular sports/activities that are not school related;
3. Religious cruises;
4. Religious revivals during school hours.

The principal shall be responsible for ensuring that:

1. Attendance is checked and reported daily for each class;
2. Daily absentee sheets contain sign in/sign out sheets and indicate students present or absent for the majority of the day;
3. All student absences are verified;
4. Written excuses are submitted for absences and tardiness; and
5. System-wide procedures for accounting and reporting are followed.

**TRUANCY**

Annually, the Director of Schools/designee will provide written notice to parent(s)/guardian(s) that attendance at school is required. Students shall be present at least fifty percent (50%) of the scheduled school day in order to be counted present. Additionally, notwith standing the previous definition of "present", five (5) unexcused tardies to school or early dismissals from school will be treated as one (1) unexcused absence for the purposes of truancy intervention. Students may attend part-time days, alternating days, or for a specific amount of time as indicated in their Individualized Education Plan or 504 Plan and shall be considered present for school attendance purposes. If a student is required to participate in a remedial instruction program outside of the regular school day where there is no cost to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school district provides transportation, unexcused absences from these programs shall be reported in the same manner.

A student who is absent five (5) days without adequate excuse shall be reported to the Director of Schools/designee who will, in turn, provide written notice to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student's absence. If a parent/guardian does not provide documentation within adequate time excusing those absences or request an attendance hearing, then the Director of Schools shall implement tier two of the progressive truancy plan described below prior to referral to juvenile court.

***Progressive Truancy Plan***

Tier I of the progressive truancy plan shall apply to all students within the district and include schoolwide prevention-oriented supports to assist with satisfactory attendance. These supports shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Monitor attendance date
- Clarify attendance expectations and goals
- Establish a positive and engaging school culture
- Educate and engage students and families
- Recognize good and improved attendance

Tier II of the progressive truancy plan shall be implemented after the student accumulates five (5) unexcused absences, but before referral to juvenile court, and includes the following:

1. A conference with the student and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s);
2. An attendance contract, based on the conference, signed by the student, the parent(s)/guardian(s), and the Attendance Supervisor/designee. The contract shall include:

    a. A specific description of the school's attendance expectations for the student;
    b. The attendance contract if effective from the date signed until the end of the student's career with the Johnson County School System; and
    c. Penalties for additional absences and alleged school offenses, including additional disciplinary action and potential referral to juvenile court.

3. Regularly scheduled follow-up meetings to discuss the student's progress; and
4. A school employee shall conduct an individualized assessment detailing the reasons a student has been absent from school. The employee may refer the student to counseling, community-based services, or other services to address the student's attendance problems.

Tier III shall be implemented if the truancy interventions under Tier II are unsuccessful. Tier III shall consist of the following interventions:

- Truancy Review Board
- Saturday School (if applicable)
- After-school classes
- Case assigned to school social worker
- Referral for services (DCS, FCIP)

The interventions shall address students' needs in an age-appropriate manner. Finalized plans shall be approved by the Director of Schools/designee.

**MAKE-UP WORK**

Students are fully expected to make up work missed while they were absent. Immediately upon returning to school, the student must contact their teacher(s) concerning arrangement for

make-up work. A parent/guardian may request make up work prior to the student returning to school by calling the respective school office.

Each day of absence affords one day of make-up work opportunity. Students have a maximum of five (5) days to make up work missed due to absence(s). However, the period of time allotted to make up work may be extended at the discretion of the teacher. Please note, that students may expect to do more paperwork than those in attendance because it is necessary to make-up work for classroom experiences missed.

**STATE-MANDATED ASSESSMENT**

Students who are absent the day of the scheduled end-of-course (EOC) exams shall present a signed doctor's excuse or shall have been given an excused release by the principal prior to testing to receive an excused absence. Students who have excused absences will be allowed to take a make-up exam. Excused students will receive an incomplete in the course until they have taken the EOC exam.

Students who have an unexcused absence shall receive a failing grade on the EOC exam which shall be averaged into their final grade.

**CREDIT/PROMOTION DENIAL**

Credit/promotion denial determinations may include student attendance; however, student attendance may not be the sole criterion. If attendance is a factor prior to credit/promotion denial, the following shall occur:

1. The student and the parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be advised if the student is in danger of credit/promotion denial due to excessive absenteeism; and
2. Procedures in due process are available to the student when credit or promotion is denied.

**DRIVER'S LICENSE REVOCATION**

A student who has more than ten (10) consecutive or fifteen (15) unexcused absences during any semester shall be ineligible to retain a driver's permit or license.

**ATTENDANCE HEARING**

Students with excessive (more than five (5)) unexcused absences or those in danger of credit/promotion denial shall have the opportunity to appeal to an attendance hearing committee appointed by the principal. If the student chooses to appeal, the student or his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be provided written or actual notice of the appeal hearing and shall be given the opportunity to address the committee. The committee will conduct a hearing to

determine if any extenuating circumstances exist to excuse an absence(s) or to determine if the student has met attendance requirements that will allow him/her to pass the course or be promoted. Upon notification of the attendance committee decision, the principal shall send written notification to the Director of Schools/designee and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student of any action taken regarding the excessive unexcused absences. The notification shall advise parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to appeal such action within two (2) school days to the Director of Schools/designee.

The appeal shall be heard no later than ten (10) school days after the request for appeal is received.

Within five (5) school days of the Director of Schools/designee rendering a decision, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) may request a hearing by the Board, and the Board shall review the record. Following the review, the Board may affirm or overturn the decision of the Director of Schools/designee. The action of the Board shall be final.

## THIRD-GRADE PROMOTION/RETENTION LAW ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students who fall into the criteria for required attendance in summer programming in order to be promoted to the fourth grade must attend with a 90% rate. Of the 20 days required for summer school attendance, students must attend 18 days. These days will be documented and options for make-up days will be provided by the summer programming committee.

Below, you will find Attendance Questions and Answers that may help when you are uncertain about attendance. The policy in its entirety can be found online at www.jocoed.net Policy 6.200.

## ATTENDANCE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

**What am I supposed to do when my child is too sick to go to school, but I cannot get a doctor's appointment?**

Contact the school to let them know the child is sick. You may bring the child to school and let the school nurse check the child. The nurse may assist you in getting a doctor's appointment. If the nurse verifies that the child is sick, the absence will be excused.

**My child seems to catch every bug that goes around. We spend a lot of time in the doctor's office. Are all these absences excused?**

Yes. If your child visits the doctor, get a doctor's note. Turn the note in to the school within ten (10) days. If the child has the note and forgets to turn it in, the parent/guardian is responsible.

Most doctors now will fax notes directly to the school. Appointments for non-emergency situations should be scheduled after school or during school vacations if possible.

**When my child wakes up complaining of feeling ill but gets to feeling better, should I keep the child at home or take him on to school?**

Take the child to school. Alert the school nurse or teacher that the child was feeling ill earlier in the day. One rule of thumb says if the child does not have a fever, rash, diarrhea, or vomiting, take the child to school. Of course the parent/guardian knows the child best.

**My child does not want to go to school. I am tired of fighting with him every day about going to school. What can I do?**

Don't fight. Be firm. Let your child know that absenteeism is not an option. Talk to your child. Try to find out why he doesn't want to go to school. Talk to the school. Let's work together to find a solution. Let the child be involved in the process. Take action. Your child may need more supervision, after-school tutoring, or counseling, an evaluation to determine if he or she has a learning disability, or help with an alcohol or other drug problem. However, the problem may be as simple as the child not getting enough sleep at night. Perhaps the child is being influenced by his peers. Know your child's friends. Don't give up, and don't give in!

**If my child is suspended from the bus, I have no way of getting him to school. Is this an excused absence?**

No. Bus transportation is a privilege. Students must be taught to behave on the bus and follow bus rules. The parent/guardian is responsible for getting the child to school.

**I am a single parent/guardian. My child is larger than I. When he refuses to go to school, I cannot drag him. What can I do?**

No matter how large the child, the parent/guardian is the one who is responsible for making sure the child is in school. The parent/guardian is the boss. If a child is unruly and the parent/guardian has tried all available options, the juvenile court can intervene. A parent/guardian can file an unruly petition with the court, and the child will be required to appear before the juvenile judge. Also, the parent/guardian may request crisis intervention services from the Department of Children's Services. Counseling services are available locally to assist families. Parent/guardian classes are available to help parents/guardians develop strategies to deal with children.

**My child may have surgery and be required to miss several weeks of school. What should I do?**

If you can schedule your child's surgery during summer vacation or a school break, do so. If not, discuss the situation with the school principal and the child's teacher. Contact Edna Miller at the school system's central office to request a homebound teacher. When your child returns to school, have letters from the doctor to share with school personnel if the student is to have any modifications to a regular schedule. Also, alert the school nurse to the student's condition.

**What are valid reasons for being absent from school?**

Valid reasons for being absent from school include student illness, death in the family, religious holidays, court appearance, and appointments with counselor, dentist, or doctor.

**What happens if a child is referred to Juvenile Court for truancy?**

Parents/guardians and the school need to work together so that court involvement is the last resort. In the past we have seen a variety of consequences for truancy including the assignment of up to six hours of public service work for each day missed, fines up to $50 for each day of unexcused absence, the assignment of a DCS counselor, and payment of court costs. Parents/guardians have been required to take parenting classes, obtain counseling, and in rare cases, parents/guardians have been sent to jail. For older students, poor attendance can also result in the revocation of a student's driver's license. In addition, high school students with excessive absences must make up time or risk losing credit for classes.

**If the school nurse calls and asks that I pick up my child because he is sick, does this count as unexcused?**

No. This will be an excused sign-out.

**We have difficulty paying for the things my child needs. Sometimes she doesn't want to go to school because of this. What can I do?**

Make sure you talk to the cafeteria manager and fill out a form to receive free or reduced meals at school. This information is confidential. The school counselor will provide school supplies for the student. In addition, the school social worker can put families in touch with resources to help during difficult times. School nurses may be able to help provide medical information and resources.

**My child does not feel safe at school. I can't get her to tell me the problem.**

Sometimes it is difficult for children to share their feelings. Sometimes they are fearful and can't explain or pinpoint the cause of their anxiety. Many times these feelings disappear or the child learns how to cope with fears. However, the counselor should be contacted. The counselor is trained to handle these situations and will be observant and try to get to the bottom of these feelings.

**My child has been sent home from school because of nits. It is expensive to keep treating the child. We try hard but don't seem to be able to get rid of the nits. What can we do?**

We understand. Getting rid of nits can be expensive and time-consuming. The school nurse is an expert. She can provide you with resources and information to help you.

**My child doesn't make good grades. He doesn't want to go to school because he is embarrassed. What can I do?**

It is very important to keep encouraging the student. Bad attendance makes it more difficult to do well in school. Contact the teacher. Ask for specific things you and your child can do to improve his grades. Talk with the school counselor. Schools have programs to help students become more successful. Some schools have tutoring programs before and/or after school, computer-assisted programs, and student tutors or mentors. Some teachers will tutor students. The high school has credit recovery. Some summer programs may be available. Since each school is different, your counselor will be able to direct you.

**If my child goes on a field trip, is she excused?**

Yes. The trip will be school related. In effect, the child is counted as present for school.

**What general advice can you give me to help me with my child?**

Keep in touch with your child's school.
Set high expectations for your child.
Make education a top priority.
Be supportive. Offer encouragement and praise.
Teach your child to accept responsibility and realize that actions have consequences. (Don't make excuses or allow your child to make excuses.)
Don't let there be any confusion over who is in charge. The child is not the boss. Teach your child to respect authority.
Relax, be patient, love the child, and enjoy this time in your life.

# Visitor Code of Conduct

Parents, community members, and any other visitors to school property or during school programs/activities

**MUST NOT:**

1. Act in a threatening manner toward another or others.
2. Injure or threaten another or others.
3. Damage school property, or the personal property of another or others.
4. Disrupt classes, school programs or other school activities in any way.
5. Communicate with another or others in an abusive, harassing, or threatening manner.
6. Audio or video record where there is an expectation of privacy (i.e., classroom instruction, locker rooms, etc.).
7. Disrupt school transportation or confront transportation staff on a bus/vehicle, a road, a neighborhood, etc.
8. Distribute or wear materials which are vulgar, obscene, advocate illegal action, promote drugs, or are disruptive.
9. Harass or discriminate against another or others based on protected class status (e.g., race, color, religion, etc.).
10. Enter school property, or certain areas of school property, when otherwise restricted from entering the same.
11. Fail to promptly leave school property upon being directed to do so by school administration or law enforcement.
12. Possess, consume, sell, distribute or exchange alcoholic beverages, tobacco, vaping products, or illegal drugs.
13. Possess or use firearms or dangerous weapons, except in the case of law enforcement officers.
14. Gamble or encourage another or others to gamble.
15. Violate any applicable federal or state statute, local ordinance, or board policy.

If you have questions about this Code of Conduct, please refer to the school system's online Policy Manual located at www.jocoed.net (Policy No. 1.501), and/or contact Central Office using the following telephone number: 423-727-2640.

# 2025-2026 School Calendar

| | |
|---|---|
| July 29, 2025 | Administrative In-service |
| July 30, 2025 | New Teacher In-service |
| July 31, 2025 | County Wide In-service |
| August 1,2025 | Teacher Workday |
| August 4. 2025 | 1st day of school (½ day) |
| August 20, 2025 | Students ½ day/Professional Development for all staff in the afternoon. |
| August 29 - September 1, 2025 | Labor Day (No School) |
| September 10, 2025 | Students ½ day/PT Conf PreK-12 from 1-4 pm |
| September 30, 2025 | Students ½ day/PD for all staff |
| October 13-17, 2025 | Fall Break |
| November 5, 2025 | Students ½ day/PD for all staff |
| November 11, 2025 | Veterans Day/Vacation (No School) |
| November 26-28, 2025 | Thanksgiving Holiday/Vacation (No School) |
| December 19, 2025 | Last day taught before holiday (1/2 day) |
| December 22-January 25, 2026 | Christmas Holiday/Vacation (No School) |
| January 5, 2026 | Teacher Workday |
| January 6, 2026 | Students return (Full Day) |
| January 19, 2026 | **MLK Day - Vacation (See note below) |
| February 16, 2026 | **President's Day-Vacation (See note below) |
| February 26, 2026 | Students ½ day/PD for all staff |
| March 11, 2026 | Student ½ day/PT Conf PreK-12 from 1-4 pm |
| March 24, 2026 | Students ½ day/PD for all staff |
| April 3-6, 2026 | Good Friday/Easter Holiday-Vacation |
| May 18, 2026 | Last Day of school (½ day) |
| May 19, 2026 | Teacher Workday |

Calendar includes 13 stockpiled days.
Please note: All Johnson County Board of Education meetings will take place on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:00 pm unless otherwise notified.

**If circumstances dictate, January 20 (Martin Luther King Day), and February 17 (President's Day) may be used as instructional days. Additional days may be used as instructional days as determined by the Johnson County Board of Education.