



COUGAR CHRONICLE

704.296.3088

cata.ucpsnc.org

@catamonroenc

Summer Edition: 32 days until the start of the 2026–2027 school year

As summer begins to wind down, we hope you have had the opportunity to relax, recharge, and enjoy time with family and friends. I hope this season has provided moments to create lasting memories and prepare for the opportunities ahead. The countdown is on, just 32 days until we welcome our students back on Monday, August 24. Teachers return Friday, August 14th and its full speed ahead! We are looking forward to an exciting new school year filled with learning, growth, new experiences, and opportunities for every student to succeed. Enjoy the rest of your summer, stay safe, and take advantage of these final weeks. We look forward to seeing everyone back on campus and kicking off another outstanding year together.

In this addition of the Cougar Chronicle, we highlight the following:

- Technology Updates
- 26–27 Orientation/Open House Schedule
- PSAT/NMSQT Registration (11th graders only)
- Scheduling – Google Form
- Fall Athletic Updates
- K–12 New Lunch Payment Platform & the Free & Reduced Lunch Meal Application
- Edulog Parent Portal – Bus Rider Information
- Student Parking Application Details for 12th, 11th and 10th
- Senior Parking Lot Paint Party
- CADY Senior Portrait Information
- PTSO – Meet our New President
- CATA Spirit Wear – Band Boosters

Mrs. Smith – Principal
Go Cougars!

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Technology Update

- Student Chromebooks were collected, updated, and reimaged over the summer
- Students will not receive a Chromebook if they have an outstanding balance from the previous school year.
- Students must pay the 2026-2027 UCPS Technology fee of \$30 before receiving a chromebook for the 2026-2027 school year.
- Tech fees will be assigned in Infinite Campus on August 1st.
- Contact Kristy Blandino with fee questions @ kristy.blandino@ucps.k12.nc.us

26-27 ORIENTATION SCHEDULE

AUGUST 19TH 2026

NEW TO UCPS FRESHMEN ORIENTATION

10:00-11:00AM

**MEET IN MEDIA CENTER
FRESHMAN ORIENTATION**

11:00AM - 12:30PM

**STUDENTS MEET IN AUDITORIUM
PARENTS MEET IN THE GYM
NEW SOPHOMORES TO UCPS & CATA**

1:30PM - 2:00PM

**MEET IN ROOM 401
EXISTING STUDENT DROP IN**

1:30PM - 3:30PM



26-27 ORIENTATION EVENTS

PTSO MEMBERSHIPS/SENIOR SWAG

SPORTS COMMITTEE

BAND BOOSTER SPIRIT WEAR PICK UP (PRE-SALE ONLY)

CHROMEBOOK DISTRIBUTION (IF \$30 TECH FEE IS PAID)

11TH & 12TH GRADE PARKING PASS PICK UP

**9TH GRADERS WILL RECEIVE A PAPER COPY OF THEIR
SCHEDULE. ALL OTHER GRADE LEVELS MUST UTILIZE THE
INFINITE CAMPUS APP TO VIEW THEIR SCHEDULES**



11TH GRADERS ONLY



REGISTRATION DATE INFO

REGISTRATION ENDS THURSDAY, AUGUST 27 AT 3PM

PSAT/
NMSQT®



PSAT SIGN UP INFORMATION

This is an important announcement regarding an opportunity for rising 11th graders to register for the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) that will be given in the Fall of the 26-27 school year.

At this time, we do not know a specific test date, but it will be sometime mid to late October. This assessment is completely OPTIONAL for any 11th grader who wishes to participate, and UCPS will cover the administration cost.

The school will have a documented list of those who choose to register and more details regarding a specific test date and details will come out once the new school year begins.

If you have questions, please reach out to our testing coordinator, Katelyn Morse.

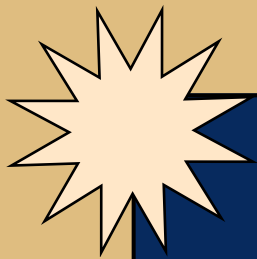
This same information was shared with all juniors families back in early May when it first was shared with the school.

UCPS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WILL NEED TO BE LOGGED INTO THEIR UCPS
GOOGLE DRIVE IN ORDER TO COMPLETE THE FORM:

[HTTPS://DOCS.GOOGLE.COM/FORMS/D/E/1FAIPQLSDROU7KJOQWJWQQLWHVC3N61SRYN3GSDEJ6ERVRXMFP8ENXW/VIEWFORM?USP=HEADER](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIPQLSDROU7KJOQWJWQQLWHVC3N61SRYN3GSDEJ6ERVRXMFP8ENXW/VIEWFORM?USP=HEADER)



SCHEDULING UPDATE

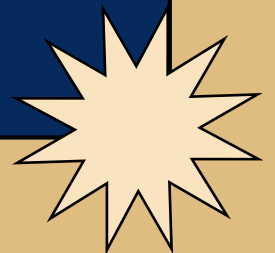


SCHEDULE CHANGE FORM

The schedule change form opens
@ 9:00am on August 17th and
closes @ 4:00pm on August 28th

PLEASE SEE YOUR COUNSELOR HOURS

August 20th from 12:30pm–3:00pm
in the counseling office



ATHLETICS—FALL SPORTS

- 
- **Fall Sports Parent Meeting**
 - August 5th @ 6pm
 - **Fall Sports Picture Day**
 - August 11th @ 12pm - 2pm in the gym
 - **Fall Sports Tryouts**
 - Begin August 29th
 - Check athletic website for practice times
 - **Flag Football**
 - Workouts will begin August 24th
 - Tryouts will begin August 31st
 - Season first contest September 9th



K12PaymentCenter

Beginning July 2026, Union County Public Schools will begin using **K12 PaymentCenter** for school meal payments.

UCPS will no longer use PaySchools Central for school meals. Positive balances from PaySchools Central will transfer to K12 PaymentCenter for the **2026-2027 school year**.

K12 Payment Center will allow families to:

- Securely and safely pay for school meals
- View meal history
- Receive low balance email or text notifications
- Transfer money between siblings (no fee for these transactions)





How do you get started? It's simple!

- Go to www.k12paymentcenter.com in your web browser
- If you already have an account, just log in with your user name and password
- First time users click "Sign Up" then select your state and district from the drop-down lists
- Fill in your information to set up the account
- Click "Manage Students" to add your student(s) with their last name and student ID number
 - Parents should contact the school to obtain their child's student ID number
- Input your credit or debit card information and you're ready to go!

Once you create your account and add your students, you will have access to your student's meal account balance and cafeteria purchase history for **FREE!** When making meal account payment, there is a small convenience fee per transaction (not per child) to cover credit card processing.

For more information or questions about using K12PaymentCenter please go to www.k12paymentcenter.com or email contactus@linq.com

STAY CONNECTED



www.ucpsnc.org

LunchApplication

AVAILABLE NOW!

Online Free And Reduced Applications

You can now apply online for your student to receive free or reduced-price school meals. Your application will be sent from a secure website directly to Union County Public Schools, so you don't need to worry about filling out a paper form that could be lost or misplaced. **LunchApplication.com** has been designed to make it easy for you to know exactly what information you need to provide and to guide you through the process.

Once your application has been received, the district office will determine your eligibility and send you a letter with the results.

LunchApplication.com is an easy, secure and convenient way to apply for free or reduced meals.

To apply, simply go to LunchApplication.com and click "Apply Now."

- Make sure to have your student's full name
- Make sure you have your student's Infinite Campus student ID number
- Make sure you have income information for everyone in your household
- Your session will timeout after 20 minutes of inactivity

STAY CONNECTED

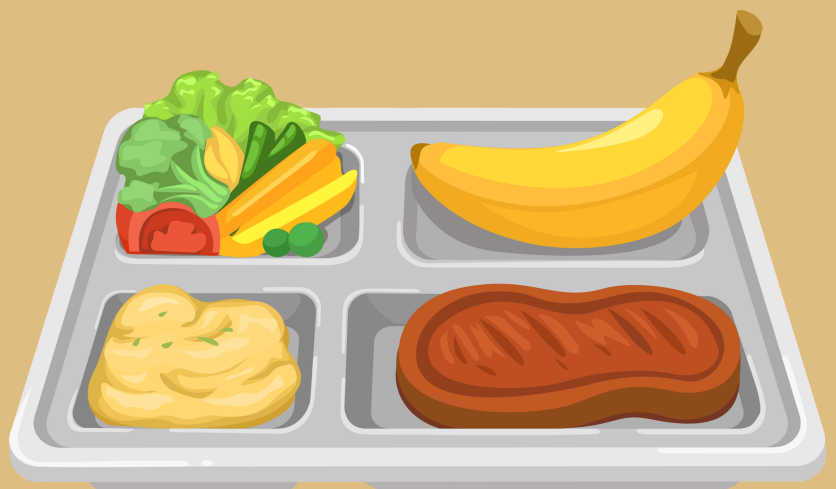


www.ucps.k12.org

Parents, if your student eats lunch in the cafeteria, please note that the payment system has changed. Additional details are provided above.

If you believe your student may qualify for free or reduced-price meals, please complete the application. The sooner you submit the form the quicker you will receive a response.

If your student is approved for free or reduced-price meals, the \$30 technology fee will be waived. Please provide proof of the approval letter to our bookkeeper, Kristy Blandino.





EDULOG PARENT PORTAL APP

UCPS TRANSPORTATION
LINK

Bus Information for the 2026-2027 school year is available on the EduLog Parent Portal.

If your transportation status has changed from the previous school year or you need to set up bus transportation, please complete the Google Form below.

[Change Of Transportation Form](#)

CATA STUDENT PARKING INFORMATION



Seniors will be eligible to apply for a parking pass starting on 7/28 - 7/30

Juniors will be eligible to apply for a parking pass starting on 8/3

Sophomores will be allowed to apply for a parking pass starting on 8/6

Passes are \$50.00 each - non-refundable

The process for purchasing parking passes will be done through a Google form for the 2026-2027 school year. The google form link will go live on the school website on 7/28 at 8am

Students who try and purchase passes during another grade level's time slot will not be processed.

CATA STUDENT PARKING ELIGIBILITY



STUDENT PARKING ELIGIBILITY

- Valid driver's license and proof of insurance. Driver permits are not accepted.
- Complete and digitally sign 2026-2027 parking pass application. The application must be signed by the student and one parent and/or guardian. The form will be available on the CATA website starting at 8am on July 28th
- Pay the \$50 parking fee through Infinite Campus once your parking application is approved by Mr. Smith and you have an assigned spot number. You will go to the Infinite Campus school store to complete the payment process. Please note your student's first and last name as well as spot # in the notes sections.
- Students with outstanding school fees or balances must pay those obligations before their parking application can be processed. You will be emailed the amount you must pay before your parking application is processed. Your spot will not be held while balances are being paid.
- Please email our bookkeeper at Kristy.Blandino@ucps.k12.nc.us for any questions regarding fees.

ADDITIONAL PARKING INFORMATION



Please allow CATA 48 hours to process applications. Parking passes will not be passed out until the \$50.00 fee is paid.

Parking Spot Priority

Parking spot priority is to be assigned based on grade level starting with 12th grade first, then 11th grade, and then 10th grade. Students will be assigned in the order they fill out the form and are approved. Students can select up to three desired parking spots (*refer to the map in the parking google form*)

Map of Parking Lot

Parking Pass Pickup

Parents or students will receive an email at the email address used to complete the parking application once the application has been approved. The email will include the parking spot number. Students may pick up their parking pass during open house on August 19th from 1:30pm - 3:30pm. If you are not able to pick up on August 19th, please park in your assigned spot on the first day of school and see Ms. Bivens first thing to retrieve your parking sticker and place it on your car.

Parking Stickers

This year's student parking pass is a sticker versus a hang tag. Students are required to place the stickers (like oil change sticker) on the inside of their front windshield in the top right corner. The sticker is clear and will say 2026-2027 Student (main student lot) or 2026-2027 East (for PDC side). Faculty and Staff will also have parking stickers to designate their parking spots.

EVENT TIME: 9AM-3PM SPONSORED BY PTSO



SENIOR PARKING SPOT PAINTING
PARTY

Friday Aug 14th

Hydration station and
Senior Pass treats

Pick up Senior Swag Orders

2027



APPROVAL:

- DESIGN MUST BE PRE-APPROVED. **PLEASE SUBMIT TO MR. STEWART VIA EMAIL BY 8/12/26.** APPROVAL EMAIL MUST BE BROUGHT TO EVENT!

PAINT REQUIREMENTS:

- PAINT MUST BE EXTERIOR ALL-WEATHER PAINT. WATER BASED PAINT SHOULD BE USED, OIL-BASED PAINT IS NOT PERMITTED.
- ONCE PARKING SPOT IS ASSIGNED, YOU MAY BE REQUIRED TO PAINT OVER LAST YEAR'S DESIGN.

WHAT TO BRING:

- PROOF OF PARKING PERMIT PURCHASE FROM CATA, YOU MUST BE ON THE PARKING PASS LIST.
- PAINT AND PAINT BRUSHES OR ROLLERS
- USE MASKING OR PAINTER'S TAPE TO TAPE OFF THE LINES AROUND YOUR PARKING SPACE AND THE PARKING SPACE NUMBER. LEAVE FOUR INCHES BETWEEN THE PARKING LOT LINE AND THE TOP OF THE NUMBER ON THE PARKING SPACE.
- BROOM TO SWEEP OFF PARKING SPACE AND CLEAN-UP SUPPLIES
- CHALK TO OUTLINE YOUR DESIGN
- TRASH BAGS

CATA SENIOR PARKING PAINT APPROVAL PROCESS

CATA Membership

Toolkit Link



ORDER YOUR SENIOR PACKAGE TODAY!

MAROON \$52*

- Senior Class T-Shirt
- CATA Senior Yard Sign
- PTSO Membership
(required for PTSO Scholarship consideration)

Senior T-Shirt
w/academies
listed on back

SAVE \$5
Order by 7/31/26
for pickup before
school starts



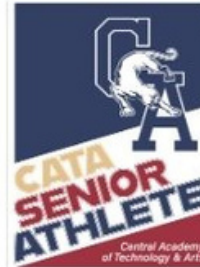
NAVY \$82*

- Senior Class T-Shirt
- CATA Senior Yard Sign
- PTSO Membership
(required for PTSO Scholarship consideration)
- Senior Event Pass



Sports Bundle \$70*

- Custom Senior Button
- Senior Athlete Yard Sign
- Sports Banner



Marching Bundle \$48*

- Custom Senior Button
- Sports Banner

Package Add-Ons...

CATA Senior Parent T-Shirts & Senior, Athlete and Marching Band Buttons, Class of 2027 Magnet and more!



Senior Yard Sign

TO
ORDER
GO TO

cataptso.membershiptoolkit.com
Seniors tab--2027 Senior Swag

*Prices will be \$57 for Maroon Package, \$87 for Navy Package, \$75 for Sports Bundle, \$53 for Marching Bundle for orders placed 8/1/26 and after

2027 CADY Studios

Senior Portrait Information

CLASS OF 2027

Your senior portrait session is an important first step in celebrating your final year of high school.

Which is why we're excited to partner with CADY for senior portraits. For more than 25 years, CADY has served schools with a distinctive approach to senior photography, combining state-of-the-art studios, premier customer service, and the artistry to capture each senior's unique story.

This is a busy year, so we recommend booking your session this summer. CADY offers session options to fit every family's needs. These portraits are perfect way to capture your achievement and can be used for graduation announcements, yearbook ads, social posts, and more.

Remember to book early! We can't stress this enough. CADY's calendar fills up fast, and weekend spots are always the first to go.

Start the celebration now and visit cady.com/schedule to book your senior session today.

Senior Photo Prep

1-2 Months Before

- ☐ Book your session (choose location, date, and time)
- ☐ Start planning your outfits, hairstyle, and props
- ☐ Avoid getting obvious tan lines

1 Week Before Your Session

- ☐ Have your haircut and/or colored, with your hairstyle planned
- ☐ Pack your outfits. We recommend 1 outfit for each scene
- ☐ Have clean, freshly manicured nails for your session
- ☐ Practice some poses so you know what works best for you

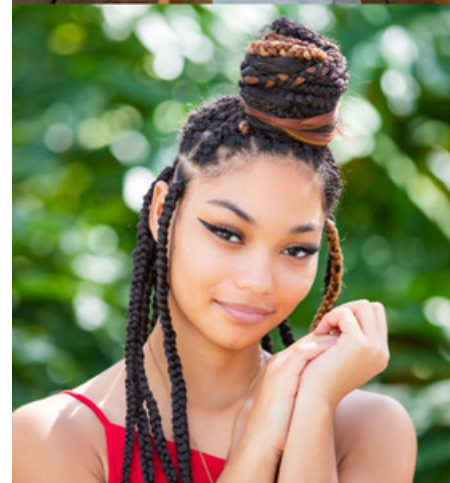
1 Day Before Your Session

- ☐ Confirm studio location in your session confirmation email
- ☐ Get plenty of sleep the night before so you look well-rested
- ☐ Make sure your outfits are wrinkle-free (iron or steamed)
- ☐ Pack your outfits, jewelry, and other accessories
- ☐ Pack your undergarments for your Yearbook and Cap & Gown scenes
 - Drape: spaghetti strap/strapless tank top
 - Tux: white undershirt
- ☐ Pack a make-up bag or hair supplies for touch-ups

Day of Your Session

- ☐ Check for traffic to ensure you arrive on time
- ☐ Bring snacks and drinks

Enjoy Your Portrait Session!



*CADY provides everything you need for your Yearbook and Cap & Gown scenes. You won't need to worry about bringing a tux, drape, pearls, cap or gown. We have you covered!

What to Bring To Your Session

Your Outfit Bag

All sessions come with at least 1 scene. We recommend at least 1 outfit per scene, but the more options, the better. Our top recommended outfits:

- Your favorite outfit
- Your parent's favorite outfit
- Undershirts for your Tux & Drape portraits
- Your favorite shoes
- Jewelry and accessories

Don't Forget Props

Do you play a sport, game, or have a hobby?

Bring the things that make you unique.

Please note if you're attending a session at your school, you must comply with your school's guidelines for props. Seniors have brought:

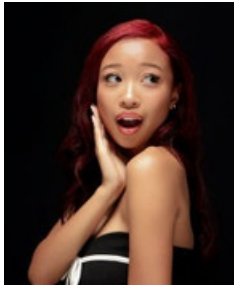
- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| • Pets | • Favorite books |
| • Sports gear | • Art supplies |
| • Sneaker collections | • Music equipment |



Outfit Planner

Pick your outfits and share this chart to your device. Keep track of your outfits and accessories for each scene using Markup or your favorite app.

For more outfit inspiration, visit our [Senior Style Guide](#).



Emerge

List your outfit and accessories:

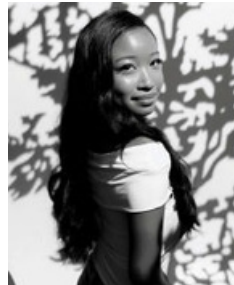
Recommended attire: semi-formal & athletic

Top:

Bottom:

Shoes:

Accessories:



Shadowland

List your outfit and accessories:

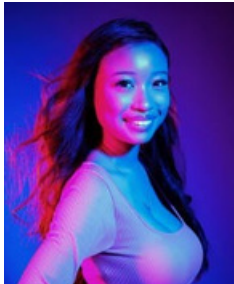
Recommended attire: semi-formal

Top:

Bottom:

Shoes:

Accessories:



WonderLight

List your outfit and accessories:

Recommended attire: casual

Top:

Bottom:

Shoes:

Accessories:



Center Stage

List your outfit and accessories:

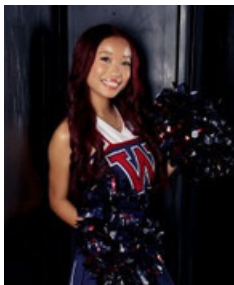
Recommended attire: formal

Top:

Bottom:

Shoes:

Accessories:



Prime Time

List your outfit and accessories:

Recommended attire: semi-formal & athletic

Top:

Bottom:

Shoes:

Accessories:



Timeless

List your outfit and accessories:

Recommended attire: casual

Top:

Bottom:

Shoes:

Accessories:



Exposure

List your outfit and accessories:

Recommended attire: formal

Top:

Bottom:

Shoes:

Accessories:

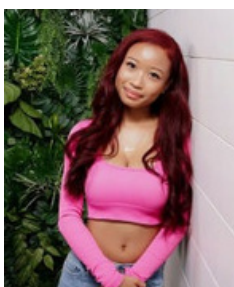


Yearbook

Don't forget your undergarments for your Yearbook and Cap & Gown scenes.

Drape: spaghetti strap/ strapless tank top

Tux: white undershirt



Living Walls

List your outfit and accessories:

Recommended attire: casual

Top:

Bottom:

Shoes:

Accessories:



Outdoor

List your outfit and accessories:

Top:

Bottom:

Shoes:

Accessories:



WELCOME

MS. BOSTIC

We're excited to welcome Ms. Heather Bostic as our new PTSO President for the 26-27 school year! Heather is the proud parent of an incoming CATA freshman and is honored to serve as the 2026-2027 PTSO President. She looks forward to partnering with families, teachers, staff, and school leadership to build a strong school community and support opportunities that help CATA students and educators thrive.

Heather works at the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association (TIAA) and has a longstanding passion for education and community service. She currently serves on the Boards of Directors for Union Academy, the American Red Cross (Southern Piedmont), and the Union County Council on Aging.

Heather and her husband, David, live in Monroe with their two children, Hank and Ashley, and are excited to be part of the CATA family.

Also, a big thank you to Ms. Kaylee Meyer who has served as our PTSO President for the past 3 years and will now be serving as Vice President & Senior Committee Chair.

We truly appreciate you!

PTSO - Volunteer Treasurer Needed

We're looking for a volunteer Treasurer to join the CATA PTSO leadership team. Experience with bookkeeping, accounting, or financial recordkeeping is preferred. If you're organized, dependable, and interested in using your skills to make a meaningful impact on our school community, we'd love to hear from you. Training and support will be provided during the transition.

***Contact Heather Bostic if interested
(heatherbostic@icloud.com)***

INVEST IN EXCELLENCE & PTSO MEMBERSHIP 2026-27 DONATIONS

THE ANNUAL INVEST IN EXCELLENCE CATA CAMPAIGN IS THE MAIN FUNDRAISER TO SUPPORT CATA. PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION AS 100% OF ALL MONEY DONATED IS REINVESTED INTO MUCH NEEDED PROJECTS AT CATA.

Previous Invest In Excellence items provided, suggested by the teachers and staff.

- Guidance Office free items closet
- Poster Printer
- New firepits for Homecoming Bonfire
- Science Department lab supplies
- Math classroom supplies
- French online resources
- History classroom supplies
- Pre Engineering 3D filament
- Robots, vacuum and humidifier to reprogram in Information Systems
- Medical lab supplies, online resources and breast cancer lab
- Media Center free items cart
- 10 Classroom Grants for Teachers
- Portrait of a Graduate Pins for Seniors

Items provided by the CATA PTSO last year

- Student treats and Ice Pop Days
- Gave 6 seniors \$500 scholarships
- 5 CATA custom floor mats
- Staff Welcome Back Breakfast
- Tissue Drive (over 400 boxes)
- Gifting Thanks at Thanksgiving
- Staff Holiday Lunch
- PI Day Pie
- Recognition on Staff Appreciation Days
- Restock Second Semester
- Teacher Appreciation Lunch and Gift Cards
- Senior events

CATAPTSO.MEMBERSHIPTOOLKIT.COM
SUPPORT CATA TAB-- PTSO MEMBERSHIP 26-27

DONATION LEVELS



\$30

CATA CAR MAGNET
WITH MEMBERSHIP



\$45

ACADEMY HOODIE ONLY



\$50

ACADEMY TEE,
MAGNET WITH MEMBERSHIP



\$200

CATA SWEATSHIRT BLANKET
OR UMBRELLA WITH
MEMBERSHIP AND TEE

CATA Cougars Spirit Wear Store

Shop for:

CATA Spirit Wear
Band of Blue Spirit Wear



Place your order
by July 27th to have
your items ready for
Open House and
Orientation Day!



[https://shop.sportstoyou.com/
central_academy_band_booster/
shop/home](https://shop.sportstoyou.com/central_academy_band_booster/shop/home)