

WESTERN GUILFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL

2026–2027

STUDENT & FAMILY HANDBOOK

WELCOME TO TIGER NATION

R.E.S.E.T.

Reflect • Engage • Support • Empower • Transform

Leader in Me School

Leading with Purpose. Learning with Passion. Growing Together.

Western Guilford Middle School

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Guilford County Schools

WESTERN GUILFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL

2026-2027 Student & Family Handbook

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 1 - Welcome to Tiger Nation

Section 2 - Family Partnership, Communication & Engagement

Section 3 - Arrival, Dismissal & Transportation

Section 4 - Attendance & Being Present for Learning

Section 5 - Academics, Grading & Student Success

Section 6 - Student Support, MTSS & Student Services

Section 7 - What It Means to Be a WGMS Tiger

Section 8 - Understanding the GCS Student Code of Conduct

Section 9 - Cell Phones, Earbuds, Smartwatches & Personal Electronic Devices

Section 10 - WGMS Student Dress Code

Section 11 - Safe, Respectful & Supportive Schools

Section 12 - Student Life, Activities & Belonging at WGMS

Appendices, Resources & Family Acknowledgments

SECTION 1

WELCOME TO TIGER NATION

Belonging • Leadership • Partnership • Growth

Welcome to Western Guilford Middle School and Tiger Nation! Our Student & Family Handbook is designed to help students and families understand the expectations, procedures, supports, and opportunities that shape the WGMS experience.

This handbook works alongside the Guilford County Schools Student & Family Handbook, the GCS Student Code of Conduct, Board of Education policies, and other district requirements. When a district policy or requirement applies, WGMS will follow that governing guidance. School-level procedures in this handbook are intended to make those expectations clear and practical for our students and families.

At Western, we believe students are developing not only academically, but also as leaders. Our work is grounded in high expectations, strong relationships, student voice, family partnership, and the belief that growth happens when students have both support and accountability.

R.E.S.E.T. - The Tiger Nation Mindset

R.E.S.E.T. is more than a school-year theme. It is the mindset we are building throughout Tiger Nation.

At Western Guilford Middle School, we believe growth requires the ability to pause, learn, adjust, and move forward. **R.E.S.E.T.** gives students, staff, and families a shared way to approach learning, relationships, challenges, mistakes, and continuous improvement.

Reflect • Engage • Support • Empower • Transform.

These five actions shape how we approach *teaching and learning, student support, leadership, behavior, relationships, and school improvement*. When something is working, we strengthen it. When something is not working, we do not remain stuck, we **R.E.S.E.T.**

R.E.S.E.T. does not mean starting over or lowering expectations. It means using reflection, support, ownership, and action to make the next decision better than the last one.

Our goal is for R.E.S.E.T. to become more than something Tigers can recite. We want it to become how Tiger Nation *thinks, responds, grows, and leads*.

- **Reflect:** Pause, learn from experiences, and consider what our choices and results are teaching us.
- **Engage:** Participate actively in learning, relationships, leadership, and the life of our school.
- **Support:** Make sure students have the academic, behavioral, social, and emotional support needed to grow.
- **Empower:** Develop student voice, ownership, confidence, and leadership.
- **Transform:** Use what we learn to make meaningful changes that improve outcomes for students and our school community.

What Is Leader in Me?

Western Guilford Middle School is a Leader in Me school. Leader in Me is a whole-school approach that helps students develop leadership, responsibility, goal setting, problem-solving, collaboration, and other skills that support success in school and beyond.

Leader in Me is based in part on The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, adapted to help students understand and practice habits of personal and interpersonal leadership.

Leader in Me is not just a club or program for selected students. Every Tiger participates.

When Will My Student Experience Leader in Me?

Students will engage in Leader in Me learning and leadership development each morning during Lead Block for approximately 30 minutes.

During Lead Block, students will have opportunities to learn and apply the 7 Habits, set and monitor goals, reflect on academic and personal growth, strengthen relationships and community, develop student voice and leadership skills, and engage in activities connected to schoolwide priorities and student success.

Learning does not end when Lead Block ends. Students will be encouraged to apply these habits throughout the school day, in classrooms, relationships, extracurricular activities, decision-making, and their lives beyond WGMS.

Leader in Me: The 7 Habits

As a Leader in Me school, WGMS uses the 7 Habits to help students develop responsibility, goal setting, collaboration, communication, and personal leadership.

7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens	Description of Habits
Be Proactive	Take responsibility for your actions and choices.
Begin with the End in Mind	Set goals and think about the outcomes you want to achieve.
Put First Things First	Prioritize what matters most.
Think Win-Win	Look for solutions that respect the needs of others and yourself.
Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood	Listen to understand before responding.
Synergize	Work with others to accomplish more together.
Sharpen the Saw	Take care of yourself and continue growing physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially.

Our Tiger Nation Culture Commitments

Culture is what people consistently experience. These commitments guide how students, staff, families, and community members work together to build Tiger Nation.

- **Transparency:** We communicate clearly, ask questions, and seek understanding.
- **Support:** We seek first to understand and help one another grow.
- **Accountability:** We own our responsibilities, choices, actions, and impact.
- **Trust:** We build trust through honesty, consistency, respect, and follow-through.
- **Consistency:** We create clear expectations and predictable experiences across Tiger Nation.
- **Collaboration:** We share responsibility, value different perspectives, and synergize around what is best for students.

How It All Connects in Tiger Nation

	What does it mean?	What does it look like?
Our Culture Commitments	<i>WHO WE ARE BECOMING</i>	The experience we commit to creating for students, staff, families, and one another.
R.E.S.E.T.	<i>HOW WE GROW</i>	Our shared mindset for reflecting, adjusting, supporting one another, taking ownership, and continuously improving.
Leader in Me & the 7 Habits	<i>HOW WE LEAD</i>	The leadership habits and skills students explicitly learn during Lead Block and practice throughout their day.

Together, these are not separate programs or slogans. They are *connected* to parts of how we are building Tiger Nation. Our **Culture Commitments** name the culture we want people to experience. **R.E.S.E.T.** gives us a mindset for continually growing toward that culture. **Leader in Me** gives our students concrete habits and leadership skills to help them take ownership of that work.

How to Use This Handbook

- This handbook explains the school-level routines and expectations students and families will encounter most often.
- It summarizes some district requirements in family-friendly language; it does not replace official GCS Board policies, the GCS Student & Family Handbook, or the Student Code of Conduct.
- Throughout the handbook, WGMS may distinguish between a GCS requirement and a WGMS procedure so families can understand what is districtwide and what is specific to our school.
- When procedures change because of district guidance, safety needs, staffing, transportation, or other operational circumstances, WGMS will communicate those updates to students and families.
- When something is unclear, we encourage students and families to ask questions. Strong partnerships begin with clear communication.

Our Shared Goal

Students should know what is expected, understand why it matters, know where to go for support, and have opportunities to learn and grow when mistakes happen.

SECTION 2

OUR TIGER NATION COMMUNITY

Belonging • Partnership • Leadership • Growth

A Message from Principal Arrington

Dear Tiger Nation Students and Families,

Welcome to the 2026–2027 school year at Western Guilford Middle School!

Middle school is an important season of growth. Our Tigers are discovering who they are, developing their voices, becoming more independent, making mistakes, celebrating successes, and growing into the young people they are meant to be. Our responsibility is to create a school where they can do all that while being known, challenged, supported, and empowered.

At Western, we believe *high expectations* and *high support* belong together. We will challenge students academically, expect them to make responsible choices, and help them take ownership of their learning and behavior. When they struggle or make mistakes, we will work alongside them to reflect, learn, and make the next decision better than the last.

Families are essential partners in that work. We want you to feel informed, welcomed, heard, and connected. When questions or concerns arise, we commit to communicating directly and respectfully, seeking first to understand, and keeping the student at the center.

This handbook creates a shared starting point. It explains what students and families can expect from WGMS, what we ask in return, and the routines and expectations that help *Tiger Nation* learn, lead, and grow together.

We won't get every moment right and growth doesn't require perfection. It requires reflection, accountability, support, and a willingness to keep moving forward.

That's the R.E.S.E.T. mindset.

We are excited about what is possible this year and grateful your family is part of Tiger Nation.

Let's make it a great year!

Chase A. Arrington

Principal

Western Guilford Middle School

Once a Tiger, Always a Tiger!

Our Mission, Vision & Shared Commitments

Our Vision

Every Tiger is known, challenged, supported, and empowered to grow as a learner and leader.

Our Mission

Western Guilford Middle School partners with students, families, and our community to create a safe, joyful, rigorous, and inclusive learning environment where students develop the knowledge, habits, confidence, and leadership skills needed to thrive.

What Students Can Expect from Us

- A safe, welcoming, and respectful place to learn and belong.
- Learning experiences that are engaging, challenging, and meaningful, with opportunities to think, collaborate, ask questions, receive feedback, and show what you know.
- Clear expectations and support when challenges arise.
- Adults who listen, build relationships, and respond with care and accountability.
- Opportunities for student voice, reflection, leadership, and celebration of growth.

What We Ask of Students

- Come ready to learn, participate, and grow.
- ***Be Proactive:*** Own your choices, learning, behavior, and belongings.
- Treat people, property, and our school community with dignity and respect.
- Ask for help, accept feedback, and learn from mistakes.
- Use your voice and leadership to make Tiger Nation stronger.

What We Ask Families

- Partner with us around your student's attendance, learning, behavior, and well-being.
- Stay connected and regularly review your student's academic progress.
- Communicate questions and concerns ***early, directly, and respectfully.***
- Encourage your student to advocate for themselves, take responsibility, and use available support.
- Approach challenges with the shared understanding that ***we are on the same team: your student's team.***

A Tiger Nation Partnership

Students are at the center. Families know their children. Educators bring professional expertise. When we communicate, listen, and work together, we create stronger outcomes for students.

SECTION 3

STAYING CONNECTED TO TIGER NATION

Clear Communication • Family Partnership • Shared Responsibility

Strong family-school partnerships depend on clear, timely, two-way communication. We want families to know where to find information, who to contact, and how to get support when questions or concerns arise.

Our Communication Commitment

We want families informed, welcomed, heard, and connected. Communication should help us solve problems, celebrate students, and keep learning at the center.

Keep Your Contact Information Current

Guilford County Schools uses contact information in Infinite Campus for important school and district communication. Families should keep phone numbers, email addresses, home addresses, emergency contacts, and other student information current.

- Update available information through Infinite Campus.
- Contact the WGMS Data Manager when assistance is needed with student or family records.
- Notify the school promptly of changes involving address, custody, guardianship, or authorized contacts.

Accurate contact information is especially important during emergencies, inclement weather, early dismissals, and other time-sensitive situations.

Our Primary Communication Tools

Infinite Campus

Infinite Campus is the official GCS student information system. Families should create and regularly use a Campus Parent Portal account to:

- View grades and attendance.
- Access progress reports and report cards.
- Review available student and family information.
- Receive information connected to the student record.

ClassDojo

WGMS uses ClassDojo for routine school and classroom communication, including:

- School and classroom announcements.
- Reminders and celebrations.
- Teacher/family communication.
- Updates about the day-to-day life of Tiger Nation.

ClassDojo does not replace Infinite Campus as the official student information system or GCS emergency communication channels.

Canvas

Families may create a Canvas Parent/Observer account to view course information and assignments. Students can provide the Observer code needed to connect an account.

GCS App, Website & District Notifications

Families should monitor the GCS App, WGMS/GCS websites, ClassDojo, and district notifications for calendars, announcements, closures, delays, early dismissals, and other important information.

Who Should I Contact?

The fastest path to a solution is usually to begin with the person closest to the question.

Question or Need	Start Here
Classwork, assignment, grade, classroom routine, or classroom concern	Classroom teacher
Attendance question or absence documentation	School Social Worker / Front Office
Infinite Campus, enrollment, address, or student-record question	Data Manager / Front Office
Social-emotional, peer, academic-planning, or student-support concern	School Counselor / Student Support Staff
Special education / IEP question	Student's EC Case Manager / EC Staff
Section 504 question	School Counselor / 504 Contact
Transportation or bus concern	GCS Transportation and/or WGMS Front Office
Athletics question	Coach and/or Athletic Director
Schoolwide safety, serious student concern, or unresolved school-level matter	Principal / Assistant Principal(s)

Habit 5: Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood

When concerns arise, we encourage everyone to begin with curiosity, listen for understanding, share the relevant facts, and keep the student's needs at the center of the conversation.

Questions, Concerns & Problem Solving

When possible, begin directly with the staff member closest to the concern. If additional support is needed, involve the appropriate school leader.

To help us respond effectively:

- Describe the concern clearly and specifically.
- Share relevant dates, assignments, messages, or other information.
- Allow reasonable time for staff to review the concern and respond.
- If the concern remains unresolved, ask for support from the appropriate school leader.

This pathway is intended to help us solve problems, not create barriers between families and school leadership.

Some matters have specific GCS procedures, including discipline, student assignment, disability-related concerns, discrimination, harassment, bullying, retaliation, and Title IX. When applicable, WGMS will follow the appropriate district process.

Communication About Student Information

WGMS protects student information in accordance with applicable requirements. Staff may discuss educational information with parents, legal guardians, and others authorized under law or district procedure.

Written consent may be required before WGMS can exchange information with an outside provider or another person who is not otherwise authorized.

Families should provide current custody or guardianship documentation when it affects access to student information or educational decision-making.

Language Access & Accessible Communication

Families should be able to understand and participate in communication about their student.

If your family needs interpretation, translation, sign-language support, or another communication accommodation, please notify WGMS as early as possible so appropriate support can be arranged.

What We Ask Families

Family engagement is more than receiving information. Families can stay connected by:

- Reviewing grades, attendance, and assignments with your student.
- Communicating questions or concerns early.
- Participating in conferences, events, and feedback opportunities when possible.
- Celebrating progress and growth.
- Asking questions when something is unclear.

A Note About Response Times

Staff members spend much of the school day teaching, supervising students, and responding to student needs. An immediate response may not always be possible during instructional hours.

WGMS staff will make reasonable efforts to respond in a timely manner.

Urgent safety concerns should be communicated directly to the front office rather than relying only on email or an app message.

Before You Hit Send

Middle school is an important time for students to develop *self-advocacy*.

When appropriate and safe, consider helping your student ask the question, seek clarification, or communicate with the teacher first. Families remain important partners; ***student voice and family partnership can exist together.***

Be Proactive + Seek First to Understand

Communicate early. Ask questions. Listen. Keep the student at the center. Then work together toward the next best step.



SECTION 4

THE SCHOOL DAY AT WGMS

Arrival • Dismissal • Transportation • Daily Routines

Predictable routines help more than 700 Tigers arrive, learn, and return home safely each day. Families can help by knowing the arrival and dismissal plan, communicating changes early, and following staff directions during these busy times.

The WGMS School Day

Instructional Day: 8:20 a.m.–3:20 p.m.

Students should be in the appropriate location and ready for instruction when the school day begins. Students arriving after the tardy bell must enter through the secure front entrance and follow the school check-in process.

Habit 3: Put First Things First

Prepare transportation, materials, and other needs ahead of time so the school day can begin with purpose.

Morning Arrival

Car Riders

Car riders enter campus from College Road. The Lindley Road entrance is reserved for school buses and designated school operations during arrival and dismissal.

Families should:

- Follow WGMS staff directions and the established traffic pattern.
- Pull forward as directed so multiple vehicles can unload safely.
- Have students ready to exit promptly at the designated unloading area.
- Have students exit from the safest side of the vehicle.
- Remain in the vehicle while in the active car rider line.
- Park in a designated space if a student needs assistance with a large item or if you need to enter the building.
- Avoid cell phone use while moving through the car rider line.
- Never drive around vehicles ahead of you unless directed by staff.

WGMS may use grade-level lanes or zones to improve traffic flow. Families should follow posted directions and school communication regarding current procedures, including directions for households with students in multiple grade levels.

Bus Riders

Bus riders should follow GCS Transportation procedures and the directions of drivers and WGMS staff. Students should report directly from the bus to their designated morning location.

Transportation eligibility, routes, stops, and district transportation services are managed by GCS Transportation.

Walkers

Students who walk to or from school should use designated crosswalks and safe routes and follow applicable WGMS release procedures. WGMS requires parent/guardian authorization for a student to be released as a walker.

The Lindley Road bus area may not be used as an alternate car drop-off or pick-up location.

Bicycles & Skateboards

Students may ride bicycles to school with parent/guardian permission. Bicycles must be stored in the school-designated area and may not be ridden on campus sidewalks, driveways, or parking areas.

WGMS is not responsible for lost or damaged bicycles.

Skateboarding is not permitted on campus.

Entering the Building

During regular morning arrival, students should use the entrance assigned by WGMS staff near the gym.

After the tardy bell, students must enter through the secure front entrance on the College Road side and complete the school check-in process.

For everyone's safety, **students should never open exterior doors for visitors or allow anyone to bypass the school's secure entry process.**

Afternoon Dismissal-

The school day ends at **3:20 p.m.** Students must report directly to their assigned dismissal location and follow staff directions.

Student Is A...	Dismissal Expectation
Car Rider	Report to the designated car rider area and wait for the school release process.
Bus Rider	Report directly to the assigned bus loading area and follow boarding directions.
Walker	Leave campus promptly using the approved route once released.
After-School Participant	Report directly to the approved, supervised activity. Students may not remain on campus unsupervised.

Know Before You Go

Students should know how they are getting home before the school day begins.

Families should not rely on calling or texting students during dismissal to change the plan. Dismissal is one of the busiest and most safety-sensitive parts of the school day.

Car Rider Pick-Up

Afternoon car rider pick-up occurs on the **College Road side of campus**.

Families should:

- Follow the established traffic pattern and staff directions.
- Remain in the vehicle while in the active pick-up line.
- Keep passengers inside the vehicle while waiting.
- Never ask a student to leave the supervised dismissal area and walk through the parking lot to meet a vehicle.
- Park in a designated space if you need to enter the building.
- Keep emergency vehicle lanes clear.
- Allow vehicles to merge as directed.

WGMS may adjust traffic patterns when safety, construction, traffic, or operational needs require it. Changes will be communicated to families.

Transportation Changes

Whenever possible, ***make afternoon transportation arrangements before the student arrives at school.***

Same-day changes must be communicated to the WGMS front office before 2:00 p.m. using an approved school communication method.

Requests received after 2:00 p.m. may not be accommodated because dismissal operations are already underway.

Students may not independently change how they are going home.

Riding or leaving with another student requires appropriate parent/guardian authorization and school approval.

Habit 1: Be Proactive

Make the plan early. If something changes, communicate with the school as soon as possible.

Early Dismissal

We understand that students occasionally need to leave school early. To protect instructional time and ensure a safe dismissal process:

- ***Whenever possible, notify the front office of a planned early dismissal before 2:00 p.m. Early dismissals must be completed by 2:30 p.m.; after that time, students will be released through the regular 3:20 p.m. dismissal process.***
- An authorized adult must complete the front-office checkout process and present identification when required.
- Students may not leave a classroom or campus directly with a family member without being released through the front office.
- Provide any required attendance documentation when applicable.

Whenever possible, families are encouraged to schedule appointments outside the instructional day.

Students Staying After School

Students may remain after school only for an *approved and supervised* activity, practice, rehearsal, tutoring session, meeting, athletic event, or other school-sponsored purpose.

Students should know where they are reporting and how they are getting home before the activity begins. Families are responsible for arranging prompt transportation when activities end unless other transportation has been specifically communicated.

Inclement Weather & Emergency Schedule Changes

GCS determines whether schools open on time, operate on a delay, dismiss early, or close because of weather or another emergency. Families should monitor official GCS/WGMS communication and keep contact information current in Infinite Campus.

If GCS announces an early dismissal, WGMS will generally follow the transportation plan already established for each student unless the school communicates otherwise.



SECTION 5

ATTENDANCE & ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Be Present • Be Engaged • Know Your Progress • Grow

Attendance and academic success are connected. Students learn best when they are present, on time, engaged, and supported when challenges arise.

Why Does Attendance Matter?

Every day matters. Missing school means missing instruction, practice, feedback, relationships, and opportunities to grow. Students are expected to arrive on time and remain at school through dismissal.

- Attendance is recorded daily.
- Students must attend at least one-half of the instructional day to be counted present.
- Late arrivals and early departures must follow WGMS check-in/check-out procedures.
- GCS defines chronic absenteeism as missing 10% or more of school days for any reason.

When attendance concerns develop, WGMS will communicate with families, seek to understand barriers, and connect students and families with appropriate support.

What Do I Do When My Student Is Absent?

- Contact WGMS and provide your student's full name, grade, date(s) of absence, and reason.
- Submit the written explanation or documentation required by the school's attendance process.
- For planned absences, religious observances, or educational opportunities, contact the school as early as possible.

Excused and unexcused absences are determined according to GCS attendance requirements. Educational opportunity absences must be approved in advance and should not be assumed to include family vacations or trips.

How Does My Student Recover Missed Learning?

Students who miss instruction because of an excused absence or short-term out-of-school suspension will have a meaningful opportunity to make up learning within a reasonable time. Students should check Canvas, Infinite Campus, and teacher communication after an absence and ask questions when expectations are unclear.

The goal is not simply to complete missed assignments. The goal is to recover the learning that occurred while the student was away.

How Do I Know How My Student Is Doing?

Infinite Campus is the primary place for families to monitor grades and attendance. Progress reports and report cards are provided electronically according to the GCS calendar.

- Review grades, attendance, and missing work regularly.
- Ask your student what is going well and where support is needed.
- Contact the teacher early when a grade, assignment, or expectation is unclear.

Grade	Range
A	90–100
B	80–89
C	70–79
D	60–69
F	59 and below
I	Incomplete

A simple family routine: Choose one day each week to review Infinite Campus together. Celebrate progress first, then identify one or two priorities for the coming week.

What If My Student Is Struggling?

Ask for help early. Students and families should begin with the classroom teacher when academic concerns arise. Support may include teacher assistance, classroom intervention, small-group instruction, tutoring, or other targeted support.

Additional academic, behavioral, attendance, and social-emotional supports, including WGMS’s Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), are explained in Section 6.

What Should Families Know About Assessments & Promotion?

WGMS uses classroom, district, and state assessments to understand learning, monitor growth, identify needs, and adjust instruction. Depending on grade level and course, students may participate in assessments such as Oral Reading Fluency, MAZE Comprehension, FastBridge, WIDA, GCS interim assessments, EOGs, EOCs, and final exams. WGMS will communicate applicable testing windows and expectations.

Assessments are evidence, not labels. Scores are considered alongside classroom work, grades, growth, observations, and other evidence to determine what students need next.

GCS uses multiple measures to determine readiness for promotion in grades 6–8. Families should refer to the current GCS Student & Family Handbook for official promotion requirements and procedures. WGMS will communicate early when a student may be at risk of not meeting promotion requirements.

Some middle school students may take high-school-level courses. Credits earned in those courses become part of the student’s high school academic record and may include additional grading, testing, and course requirements.

SECTION 6

STUDENT SUPPORTS:

EVERY TIGER GETS WHAT THEY NEED

Academic • Attendance • Behavior • Social-Emotional • Access

Middle school students do not all need the same thing at the same time. At WGMS, support is not something students have to earn after they fail. We use relationships, student voice, family partnership, classroom evidence, attendance, behavior, assessment information, and other data to identify needs and respond.

Our Support Commitment: High expectations remain high. Support changes based on what a student needs to access those expectations, make progress, and grow.

What Happens When My Student Needs Help?

When a concern develops, WGMS begins by understanding the student and the evidence. We consider the student's strengths, what is getting in the way, what support has already been tried, and what should happen next. Concerns may involve academics, attendance, behavior, social-emotional needs, access to learning, or more than one area.

What Is MTSS?

GCS uses a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) to organize instruction, intervention, and student support. MTSS is not a separate program or a place where students are sent. It is a way for school teams to use evidence, solve problems, provide support, monitor progress, and adjust when a response is not producing the intended result.

Level of Support	What It Means for Families
Core (Tier 1)	Instruction, routines, relationships, and supports available to all students.
Targeted (Tier 2)	Additional support when a student needs more than core support alone.
Intensive (Tier 3)	More individualized and frequent support when needs are significant or persistent.

Support should be matched to need, monitored over time, and adjusted when evidence shows that something different is needed. MTSS does not replace a student's rights under Section 504 or special education law.

Who Can Support My Student?

Students may be connected to support through self-referral, family request, staff referral, schoolwide programming, or a school problem-solving process. Depending on the need, support may include:

Support	How It May Help
<i>Teacher / Academic Support</i>	Classroom concerns, learning needs, missing work, intervention, and academic progress.
<i>School Counselor / Student Support Staff</i>	Academic planning, transitions, peer concerns, problem solving, social-emotional development, and connections to resources.
<i>Social Worker</i>	Attendance concerns and connections to school or community resources, including support for basic needs or homelessness.
<i>Exceptional Children / IEP Team</i>	Specially designed instruction, related services, accommodations, and supports identified through an Individualized Education Program (IEP).
<i>Section 504</i>	Accommodations for eligible students who need support

Support	How It May Help
	to access learning or school activities.
AIG / Advanced Learning	Appropriate challenge, advanced learning opportunities, placement, and advocacy for students needing learning beyond the general curriculum.
Multilingual Learner Support	Language-development services and support for students learning English; language access for families is also available.
School Health / Nursing	Support for documented health conditions, health plans, and medication procedures consistent with GCS requirements.

Families with questions about a specific service should begin with the staff member closest to the concern. The contact guide in Section 3 can help families identify where to start.

How Are Students & Families Involved?

Strong support is a partnership. Families know their children, students have important insight into their own experience, and school staff bring educational expertise and evidence from the school setting.

- Share relevant information about strengths, concerns, changes, and strategies that have helped.
- Ask questions about the purpose of support, intervention, accommodation, or next step.
- Participate in meetings and review progress information when appropriate.
- Help students understand their needs, set goals, ask for help, and take increasing ownership of their growth.

Support is not only intervention when students struggle. It can also include appropriate challenge, acceleration, enrichment, student voice, and leadership when students are ready for more.

What If My Student Needs Help Right Now?

Students should tell a trusted adult immediately when they feel unsafe, are being threatened or harmed, are overwhelmed, are worried about another student, or need immediate help. A trusted adult may be a teacher, counselor, student-support professional, administrator, school nurse, school resource officer, or another WGMS staff member.

Families with urgent school-day concerns should contact the WGMS front office so staff can connect the student to appropriate support. Emergencies requiring immediate medical or law-enforcement response should be handled through the appropriate emergency services.

A Few Important Things to Know

- If you believe your student may have a disability requiring specialized instruction, contact the student's teacher and the WGMS Exceptional Children lead teacher.
- If you believe your student may need accommodations under Section 504, contact the student's teacher and the WGMS 504 coordinator.
- Families should notify WGMS about documented health conditions that may require intervention or accommodation at school. Medication at school must follow GCS procedures.
- Families who need interpretation, translation, or other language-access support should notify WGMS.
- Student-support information is handled in accordance with applicable law, professional standards, and GCS procedures. Staff may need to share information when required to protect a student or another person or to provide authorized services.

SECTION 7

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A WGMS TIGER

Ready to Learn • Respectful • Responsible • Safe • A Leader

At Western Guilford Middle School, expectations are bigger than a list of rules. They describe the learning community we are building together. Every Tiger deserves a school where students can learn, adults can teach, people are treated with dignity, and everyone feels physically and emotionally safe.

The GCS Student Code of Conduct governs student behavior. This section focuses on the everyday choices and routines that help students meet those expectations at WGMS.

The Tiger Standard: Be ready to learn. Be respectful. Be responsible. Be safe. Be a leader. These expectations travel with you throughout the school day, at school events, on transportation, and in digital spaces.

What Does the Tiger Standard Look Like?

Expectation	What It Means	What It Can Look Like
Ready to Learn	Protect learning time and come prepared to participate.	• Arrive on time • Bring materials • Participation • Ask for help
Respectful	Treat people, property, differences, and learning with dignity.	• Use appropriate language • Respect personal space • Care for property
Responsible	Own choices and follow directions and procedures.	• Be where you belong • Complete work • Use passes appropriately • Tell the truth
Safe	Make choices that protect physical and emotional safety.	• Avoid horseplay/fighting • Report threats • Use equipment appropriately
A Leader	Use your influence to make Tiger Nation stronger.	• Solve problems • Include others • Encourage peers • Seek help before conflict escalates

What Are the Everyday Expectations?

Students are expected to protect learning and follow WGMS routines in classrooms, hallways, restrooms, the cafeteria, on buses, and during school activities.

- Classrooms: Participate in learning, follow reasonable directions, use respectful language, remain in assigned areas, and use materials and technology appropriately.
- Transitions: Move directly to the assigned destination, follow pass procedures, keep hallways moving, and remain in authorized areas.
- Restrooms: Use the space for its intended purpose, respect privacy, keep the area clean, and return promptly to instruction.
- Cafeteria: Follow seating and serving-line routines, use an appropriate voice, clean your area, and remain in the assigned space until released.
- Transportation & Events: Follow staff/driver directions, demonstrate good sportsmanship, remain with the assigned group, and represent WGMS appropriately.
- Digital Spaces: Use technology responsibly. Do not use digital tools to threaten, bully, harass, embarrass, impersonate, or target another person.

What Should Students Do When Conflict Happens?

Students will disagree. Conflict is a normal part of relationships; threats, harassment, bullying, and violence are not acceptable ways to resolve it.

- Pause before responding when emotions are high.
- Use words that communicate the concern without escalating the situation.
- Walk away when appropriate and seek an adult before a conflict becomes physical.
- Do not recruit peers, create an audience, record a conflict, or use social media to intensify it.
- Participate honestly in problem solving when staff intervene.

What If a Student Is Asked to Follow an Adult Direction?

Students are expected to follow safe and reasonable directions from school personnel. Students may respectfully ask for clarification when they do not understand a direction. If a student disagrees, the general expectation is to follow the direction first and seek clarification or support at an appropriate time.

A student who reasonably believes a direction would place someone in immediate danger should seek another trusted adult immediately.

What Happens When a Tiger Makes a Mistake?

Accountability and support belong together. WGMS uses discipline to protect learning, address harm, reteach expectations, and help students make stronger future choices. Some behaviors also require consequences under the GCS Student Code of Conduct.

Depending on the behavior and applicable GCS requirements, a response may include reteaching, reflection, problem solving, family communication, restorative or relationship-repair strategies, intervention, loss of a privilege, a school-based consequence, or suspension.

How Can Families Partner Around Behavior?

- Review WGMS expectations and the GCS Student Code of Conduct with your student.
- Ask your student what happened while remaining open to additional information.
- Share relevant information that may help the school understand the situation.
- Support appropriate accountability and help your student identify what to do differently next time.
- Contact the appropriate WGMS staff member when clarification or support is needed.

The Standard Is Growth: Being a Tiger does not mean never making a mistake. It means learning to own choices, understand impact, accept support and accountability, repair when possible, and make the next decision better.

Once a Tiger, Always a Tiger

Your choices affect more than you. Every Tiger helps create the culture that every other Tiger experiences.



SECTION 8

UNDERSTANDING THE GCS STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Know the Expectations • Understand the Process • Learn • Repair • Grow

The Guilford County Schools (GCS) Student Code of Conduct establishes districtwide expectations for student behavior. This chapter gives students and families a practical overview of the Code so they can understand the types of behaviors included at each level and how disciplinary decisions are made. It does not replace the official GCS Student Code of Conduct.

How Does GCS Organize Behavior?

GCS groups unacceptable behavior into five levels based on severity and the level of harm or disruption to students, staff, safety, well-being, and the learning environment.

Level	General Description
Level I	Minimal disruption; consequences are typically handled at the school level.
Level II	Mild disruption, typically without injury to students or staff.
Level III	Serious rule violations with serious impact on learning, well-being, and/or safety.
Level IV	Serious offenses that threaten safety or substantially disrupt the educational environment.
Level V	Behaviors that may result in indefinite removal from school and school property by the GCS Board of Education.

Important: This table describes the district's levels; it is not a WGMS consequence chart. Families should consult the current GCS Code for the official rule descriptions, behavior levels, and possible responses.

What Kinds of Behaviors Are Included at Each Level?

The summaries below help families understand how behaviors are organized within the GCS Student Code of Conduct. They are not replacements for the complete definitions in the district Code.

LEVEL I - Everyday Expectations & Minor Rule Violations

Generally: Minimal disruption; consequences are typically handled at the school level.

- Noncompliance
- School/class attendance concerns, including tardiness, skipping, or leaving without permission
- Being out of an authorized area
- Profane, vulgar, or obscene language/materials
- Inappropriate dress
- Unauthorized electronic devices or applications during instructional time
- Trespassing
- Gambling
- Invasion of privacy or unauthorized photographs/recordings
- Tobacco or CBD
- Vaping

Possible responses may include *warning/reteaching, family contact, conferences, confiscation or restricted device use, counseling or student-services referral, restorative practices, behavior contracts, restitution, loss of privileges, transportation consequences, MTSS support, and other school-based interventions permitted by GCS.*

LEVEL II - More Significant Disruption or Misconduct

Generally: Mild-to-moderate disruption or misconduct that may require stronger intervention.

- Integrity violations, including cheating, plagiarism, falsification, copyright violations, or improper computer access
- School, class, or activity disturbance
- School transportation disturbance or misbehavior
- Noncompliance with a search or safety precaution
- Unjustified activation of a fire or other alarm
- Possession of incendiary materials
- Property damage
- Theft
- Extortion
- Consensual lewd or sexual behavior
- Threats or false threats
- Failure to report knowledge that another student possesses or intends to bring a firearm
- Bullying, harassment, or discrimination
- Aiding or abetting another student's Code violation

Possible responses may include *responses available at Level I, ISS, alternative classroom assignment, after-school detention or Saturday school, loss of extracurricular/co-curricular participation, transportation suspension, OSS for 1–5 days, MTSS supports, and other responses permitted by GCS.*

LEVEL III - Serious Safety or Conduct Violations

Generally: Serious violations with significant impact on learning, well-being, and/or safety.

- Physical aggression or fighting
- Possession of a dangerous weapon or other dangerous instrument
- Possession of a counterfeit dangerous weapon or instrument
- Narcotics, alcohol, controlled substances, chemicals, or drug paraphernalia
- Sex-based harassment, sexual assault, or violent sexual offenses
- Hazing
- Bomb threats
- Acts of terror

Possible responses may include *responses available at earlier levels, OSS for 1–10 days, reassignment to an alternative learning program or school, and other responses permitted by GCS.*

LEVEL IV - Severe Safety Violations

Includes:

- Arson
- Firearms or destructive devices

These behaviors may result in long-term suspension and/or assignment to an alternative school or program. The GCS Code states that, with limited exceptions, a student must be recommended for a 365-calendar-day suspension for bringing or possessing a firearm or destructive device on school property or at a school-sponsored event.

LEVEL V - Expulsion

Level V refers to circumstances that may justify indefinite removal of an eligible student from school and school property by the GCS Board of Education. The Code states that certain Level III or Level IV violations may result in Level V intervention when the circumstances and aggravating factors warrant that response.

Does Every Student Receive the Same Consequence?

Fair does not always mean identical. The Code provides ranges of possible responses rather than one automatic consequence for every incident. Administrators consider the facts and circumstances of each situation and the mitigating or aggravating factors allowed by GCS.

Two incidents that sound similar may therefore result in different responses. Student privacy also means WGMS generally cannot share another student's disciplinary history, disability information, supports, or consequences when discussing an incident involving your child.

What Can Families Expect When an Incident Occurs?

Step	What It Means
REPORT	A concern or incident is brought to staff attention.
REVIEW	Administration gathers available information and provides the student with an opportunity to share information consistent with the applicable process.
RESPOND	The applicable Code rule and appropriate school/district response are determined.
SUPPORT	When appropriate, WGMS identifies intervention, restoration, re-entry, or other support intended to reduce recurrence and reconnect the student to learning.

Families may ask questions about the behavior attributed to their students, the rules involved, the decision, and any applicable review or appeal process.

Suspension, Due Process & Students with Disabilities

Short-term suspension: A suspension of 10 school days or fewer.

Long-term suspension: A suspension of 11 school days or more. The applicable GCS process governs recommendations, notices, reviews, and appeals.

Expulsion: Indefinite removal by the GCS Board of Education under qualifying circumstances described in district policy and regulation.

Students have procedural protections when disciplinary action is considered. Students with IEPs or Section 504 Plans may also have additional disability-related protections when disciplinary removals occur. WGMS and GCS will follow the applicable process when required.

What Happens After a Consequence?

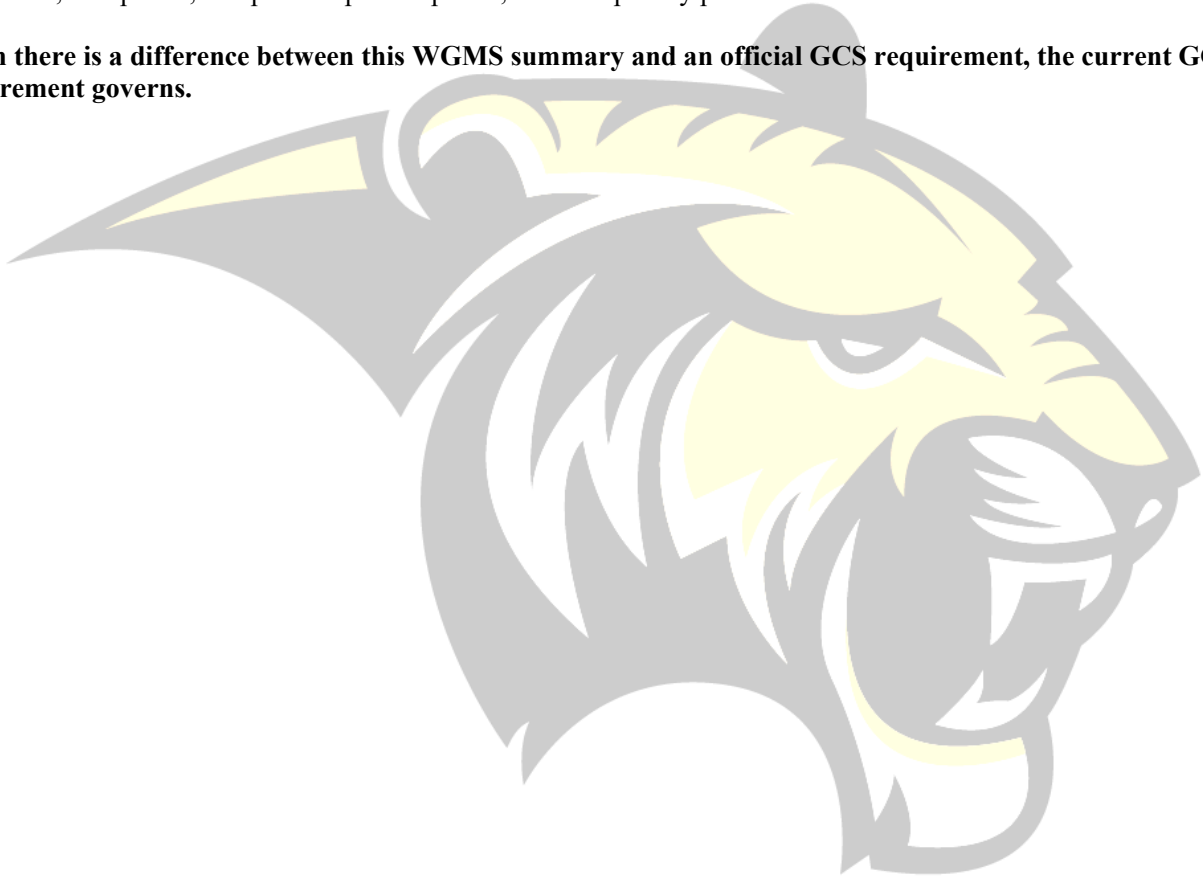
Accountability and support work together. When a student returns from a disciplinary removal, the goal is to successfully re-entry into learning. Depending on the situation, WGMS may clarify expectations, identify missed academic work, reconnect the student with support, address relationships or routines, and monitor the transition back to school.

R.E.S.E.T. for Re-Entry - Reflect on what happened and its impact. Engage honestly in the return plan. Use available Support. Become Empowered to make stronger choices. Transform the next outcome through different actions.

Where Can Families Read the Full Code?

This chapter is intentionally a guide, not the Code itself. Families should use the current GCS Student & Family Handbook, Student Code of Conduct, and Administrative Regulation 4300-R for the official rule language, definitions, exceptions, complete response options, and disciplinary procedures.

When there is a difference between this WGMS summary and an official GCS requirement, the current GCS requirement governs.



SECTION 9

CELL PHONES, EARBUDS, SMARTWATCHES & PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

OFF • AWAY • IN THE LOCKER • FOCUSED ON LEARNING

Personal devices can interrupt attention, increase conflict, and make it harder for students to remain fully engaged. GCS restricts student use of personal electronic devices during instructional time unless an approved exception applies. WGMS uses one simple school-day routine, so students, staff, and families know what to expect.

The WGMS Standard

During the school day, personal electronic devices must be **OFF** and **AWAY** in the **LOCKER**. This includes cell phones, smartwatches, AirPods/earbuds, headphones, personal entertainment devices, and similar communication, recording, or internet-capable devices. School-issued technology is the primary digital tool for learning.

When	WGMS Expectation
Entering the Building	Turn the device off and place it in your assigned locker.
During the School Day	Keep the device off and in the locker during classes, transitions, cafeteria time, assemblies, restrooms, and other school-day activities unless an approved exception applies.
Dismissal	Personal devices may be turned back on after the regular dismissal process unless staff give different directions for a specific situation.

If it is on your person, in your hand, in your ear, or being used during the school day, it is not following the WGMS procedure.

When Is an Exception Allowed?

The current GCS handbook identifies exceptions when:

- A teacher or staff member authorizes use for a specific class activity.
- The device is needed for an emergency.
- Use is included in the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan.
- Use is needed for an approved medical reason.

When permission is granted, the device may be used only for authorized purposes. Students should not be asked to disregard approved disability-related accommodation or health authorization.

Families: How Do I Reach My Student?

If an important message must reach your student during the school day, contact the WGMS front office. Office staff can deliver the message while limiting disruption to instruction. Students who need to contact a parent or guardian should ask a staff member to use an approved school communication method.

Please do not rely on calling, texting, or messaging your student's personal device during the school day.

What Happens If a Device Is Used or Possessed Inappropriately?

The GCS handbook provides that a device used inappropriately may be taken away and returned only to a parent or caregiver, and additional consequences may apply under the Student Code of Conduct. WGMS uses the following progressive confiscation procedure to support consistent implementation:

Occurrence	WGMS Response
1st	Device is confiscated and secured in the front office. Parent/guardian must pick it up. The expectation is reviewed with the student.
2nd	Device is confiscated and secured in the front office. Parent/guardian must pick it up. <i>Students serve 1 day of In-School Suspension (ISS).</i>
3rd	Device is confiscated and secured in the front office. Parent/guardian must pick it up. <i>Students serve 2 days of ISS.</i>
4th & Subsequent	Device is confiscated and secured in the front office. Parent/guardian must meet with the Principal/Assistant Principal before release. <i>Additional intervention or consequences may be assigned consistent with the GCS Student Code of Conduct.</i>

This is a WGMS school-level procedure. A response may be adjusted when the incident also involves another Code of Conduct violation, safety concern, refusal/noncompliance, recording or harassment, testing security, or other circumstances requiring a different response under GCS requirements.

If a Student Refuses to Surrender a Device

When authorized school personnel direct a student to surrender a device, the student is expected to comply. Refusal may create a separate concern under the GCS Student Code of Conduct. *Students should not argue over, hide, transfer, or attempt to retrieve a confiscated device.* Questions about the confiscation can be addressed with administration after the immediate direction has been followed.

Recording, Photographing & Posting

Having a camera or recording feature does not create permission to record at school. Students may not use a personal device to photograph, video, audio-record, livestream, or distribute content in violation of school rules, privacy expectations, the Student Code of Conduct, or applicable law.

- Do not record fights, arguments, disciplinary incidents, or private conversations.
- Do not photograph or record in restrooms, locker rooms, or other spaces where privacy is expected.
- Do not use a device to bully, harass, threaten, embarrass, impersonate, or target another person.

Electronic Devices During Testing

State and district testing rules prohibit students from possessing or using personal electronic, recording, listening, scanning, communication, or photographic devices during testing, including breaks. A violation may affect the validity of the test and may result in additional consequences. WGMS will communicate testing-specific expectations before applicable assessments.

Habit 3: Put First Things First - During the school day, learning comes first. Keeping personal devices off and in the locker removes a distraction before it becomes a problem.

Family Partnership: A simple message from home helps: *“Your phone is for before and after school. During school, keep it off and in your locker, and use the adults and school systems available if you need help.”*

SECTION 10

WGMS STUDENT DRESS CODE

Self-Expression • Readiness • Safety • Respect

Western Guilford Middle School is not a Standard Mode of Dress (SMOD) school. Students may express themselves through clothing while following the WGMS dress-code guidelines below. Our goal is simple: clear, predictable expectations that support safety, respect, and learning without making clothing the focus of the school day.

The WGMS Dress Code at a Glance

Area	Permitted / Expected	Not Permitted
Tops	Cover the midriff and undergarments. When worn with shorts, skirts, or leggings, the top must extend to mid-thigh.	Tank tops; crop tops; prohibited or offensive graphics/messages.
Hoodies	May be worn; hood remains off the head inside the building.	Hoods worn over the head inside the building; prohibited/offensive graphics.
Pants	Jeans, casual pants, and sweatpants are permitted.	Rips or tears above the knee; sagging that reveals undergarments.
Leggings	Permitted when worn with a top that extends to <i>mid-thigh and fully covers the buttocks</i> .	Leggings worn without a top that extends to mid-thigh and covers the buttocks.
Biker Shorts	Must extend to <i>mid-thigh (approximately halfway between the hip and knee) AND</i> be worn with a top that extends to mid-thigh and fully covers the buttocks.	Biker shorts that do not extend to mid-thigh <i>and/or</i> are worn without a top that extends to mid-thigh and covers the buttocks.
Shorts	Must extend to mid-thigh, approximately halfway between the hip and knee.	Shorts and/or Biker Shorts that do not extend to mid-thigh.
Shoes	Sneakers; other shoes with a closed toe and enclosed heel or heel strap. Crocs must be worn in sport mode.	Soccer flops/slides; flip-flops; bedroom shoes; bedroom booties.
Headgear	Religious headwear is permitted.	Wave caps, ball caps, cat ears, bunny ears, and other non-religious headgear inside the building.
Other Items	Items specifically approved by the Principal for an announced school activity or Spirit Week.	Pajamas unless pre-approved; blankets; stuffed animals; bedroom shoes/booties.

Graphics, messages, and images: Clothing and accessories may not display content involving drugs, alcohol, sexual content, profanity, or similar inappropriate material. Other GCS rules may also apply when clothing or symbols create a concern involving disruption, safety, harassment, discrimination, threats, illegal substances, or other prohibited behavior.

Additional safety requirements: Specific classes, athletics, laboratories, performances, or activities may have additional footwear or clothing requirements. Approved accommodation connected to religion, disability, health, or another legally protected need will be addressed through the appropriate school process.

If a Student Is Out of Dress Code

Our first goal is correction and a quick return to learning. Before an administrative consequence is assigned for the dress-code concern, the student will be given an opportunity to correct it using an available option:

- Retrieve a dress-code-approved garment from the student's locker, if available.
- Select an appropriate garment from the student closet in the Counseling Suite, when available.
- Call home to request a change of clothing.

Once the concern is corrected, the student should return to instruction as quickly as possible. Dress-code concerns and administrative responses may be documented in Infinite Campus in accordance with school and district procedures.

When Does It Become a Discipline Concern?

The GCS Student Code of Conduct identifies inappropriate dress as a Level I behavior. A student's response to correction also matters. Refusal to follow a reasonable staff direction, or another behavior connected to the clothing or item, may create a separate concern under the Student Code of Conduct.

How WGMS Will Address Concerns

Dress-code concerns should be handled respectfully, consistently, and with as little disruption to learning as possible.

- Staff will address the clothing or items, not make personal comments about a student's body.
- Whenever practical, concerns will be addressed privately.
- Students will be told what guidelines need to be corrected and given an available opportunity to correct it.
- Questions about exceptions, accommodation, repeated concerns, or disciplinary responses will be referred to administration.
- The same written WGMS guidelines apply to students regardless of gender.

Families Can Help

- Review the dress code with your student before purchasing or selecting school clothing.
- When in doubt about length, coverage, footwear, or an item, choose the option that clearly meets the guideline.
- Consider keeping an approved backup garment available when practical.
- Contact WGMS administration when clarification is needed.

Self-Expression + Belonging: Students do not have to dress alike to belong at Western. Individual choices should remain within the published guidelines and support a safe, respectful, and effective school environment.

R.E.S.E.T. and Move Forward: If a concern occurs, understand what needs to be corrected, use an available solution, return to learning, and make the next choice independently.

District Framework

GCS Board Policy 4316 establishes the district framework for student dress codes and requires schools to publish their written guidelines. If district policy or Superintendent-approved guidance changes, WGMS will communicate any necessary revisions to students and families.

SECTION 11

SAFE, RESPECTFUL & SUPPORTIVE SCHOOLS

See Something • Say Something • Seek Support • Protect Tiger Nation

Every student deserves a school that is safe, welcoming, respectful, and supportive. Safety is a shared responsibility. This section tells students and families what to report, where to seek help, and what to expect when a safety concern is brought to WGMS. The GCS Student Code of Conduct and applicable district policies remain the official governing sources.

What Should Be Reported?

Students do not need to decide whether a concern is “serious enough” before telling an adult. Share what you know and allow trained adults to assess it.

- Weapons, dangerous items, or information that someone intends to bring one to school or a school activity.
- Threats to hurt a student, staff member, another person, or the school community.
- Fighting, physical aggression, assault, or a planned fight.
- Bullying, harassment, discrimination, retaliation, or sex-based misconduct.
- Drugs, alcohol, vaping/tobacco products, unsafe substances, or related unsafe behavior.
- A student who appears to be in immediate danger or other unusual behavior, messages, posts, images, circumstances that may endanger safety.

Safety Comes Before Silence. Reporting a legitimate concern is an act of leadership. Students should not be ashamed of asking an adult for help.

Who Can Students Tell?

Tell a trusted WGMS adult: a teacher, administrator, counselor, social worker, student-support professional, School Resource Officer, coach, club sponsor, bus driver, cafeteria or front-office staff member, or another trusted staff member.

Families should contact the WGMS front office or administration when they become aware of a school safety concern. If there is an immediate emergency requiring police, fire, or emergency medical response, use the appropriate emergency services.

Habit 1: Be Proactive – The safest time to report a concern is before it becomes an emergency.

Report It: Do Not Investigate It

Students should not confront someone suspected of having a weapon, search another student’s belongings, organize peers to investigate, or create an audience around a fight, threat, or crisis.

- Save or show relevant information to a trusted adult when it can be done safely.
- Do not forward threatening or harmful content simply to spread the story.
- Do not arrange, promote, attend, record, livestream, or encourage a fight.
- Do not assume someone else has already reported the concern.

Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination & Retaliation

GCS prohibits discrimination, harassment, bullying, and retaliation and maintains specific reporting and resolution procedures for these concerns. Conflict between students is not automatically bullying; however, conflict may become a disciplinary or safety concern when it involves threats, physical aggression, harassment, discrimination, retaliation, or other prohibited behavior.

- Tell a trusted WGMS adult or administrator.
- Share relevant facts, dates, locations, messages, screenshots, witnesses, or other information when available.
- Continue reporting if new conduct occurs after the initial report.
- Tell administration if you believe retaliation is occurring because a concern was reported.

Reports involving sex-based harassment, sexual misconduct, disability discrimination, or other protected-status concerns will be routed through the applicable GCS process.

Threats, Weapons, Fighting & Unsafe Substances

The GCS Student Code of Conduct addresses threats, dangerous weapons and instruments, fighting and physical aggression, drugs, alcohol, tobacco/vaping, and other prohibited substances or unsafe behavior. Students should never bring a weapon or dangerous item to school for protection, as a joke, or to show others.

When conflict is escalating, walk away when it is safe, tell a trusted adult, and use counseling, administration, or another adult to help resolve the concern before it becomes physical.

Students who are worried about their own substance use or another student's well-being are encouraged to seek help from a counselor, social worker, administrator, school nurse, or another trusted adult.

Emergency Drills, Visitors & Building Security

- Follow staff directions promptly and seriously during drills and actual emergencies.
- Do not use drills for horseplay, wandering, recording, or disruption.
- Students should never open an exterior door for a visitor or allow someone to bypass secure entry procedures.
- Report unknown or unauthorized persons, propped doors, damaged locks, or other potential hazards.
- During an emergency, families should rely on official GCS/WGMS communication rather than rumors or unverified social-media posts.

Some school safety plan details are not publicly shared because releasing operational information could compromise student or staff safety. Keeping family contact and emergency information current supports timely communication.

What Happens After a Safety Report?

The response depends on the nature and urgency of the concern. WGMS may take immediate protective action while staff gather information and determine what school, district, or outside process applies.

- Assess immediate safety and connect students to appropriate adult supervision or support.
- Gather relevant information from appropriate sources.
- Contact families when appropriate and consistent with applicable procedures.
- Use the Student Code of Conduct or another required GCS process when applicable.
- Coordinate with GCS safety personnel, student-support staff, law enforcement, or other agencies when required or appropriate.
- Develop additional support, supervision, or re-entry plans when needed.

Privacy Is Not the Same as Inaction. WGMS may be able to explain steps related to your student's safety or educational experience, but generally cannot disclose another student's confidential disciplinary, disability, educational, or support information.

If You Have Questions About the Response

Begin with WGMS administration. Some concerns; including discrimination, harassment, bullying, retaliation, disability discrimination, sex-based misconduct, and disciplinary consequences; have specific GCS reporting, grievance, review, or appeal procedures. When a district process applies, that process governs.

A Final Word to Tigers: You are never expected to carry serious safety concern alone or prove that something will happen before asking for help. Tell an adult. Keep telling until a trusted adult understands the concern. Your voice can help protect you, another student, and Tiger Nation.

See Something. Say Something. Support Someone.



SECTION 12

STUDENT LIFE, ACTIVITIES & BELONGING AT WGMS

Connect | Participate | Lead | Celebrate | Belong

Middle school is more than moving from class to class. We want every Tiger to find a place to belong, something to contribute, and opportunities to lead. WGMS may offer clubs, athletics, service, academic activities, performances, celebrations, and other student experiences throughout the year.

Offerings may change based on student interest, staffing, sponsors or coaches, facilities, schedules, and district requirements. Current opportunities and participation details will be communicated as they become available.

Habit 1: Be Proactive - Belonging sometimes begins with taking the first step. Ask the question. Attend the meeting. Try it. Join. Volunteer. Lead.

Student Leadership at WGMS

WGMS is a Leader in Me school. We believe every student has leadership potential. Leadership is demonstrated through choices, responsibility, service, collaboration, goal setting, positive influence, and the willingness to make Tiger Nation stronger - not simply through holding a title.

- **Student Ambassadors:** Welcome and represent Tiger Nation through orientations, tours, transitions, special events, and other opportunities.
- **National Junior Beta Club:** Develop achievement, character, leadership, and service while meeting applicable membership and participation requirements.
- **Student Council:** Provide student voice, service, school spirit, and a structured way to share ideas and perspectives.
- **Homeroom Representatives:** Broaden student voice so leadership and participation reach students across homerooms, not only formal clubs or elected offices.

Selection, election, eligibility, meeting, service, and participation requirements for each leadership opportunity will be communicated by the staff members supporting the program.

Clubs, Organizations & Student Activities

Clubs and activities can help students build friendships, explore interests, develop skills, serve others, and practice leadership. Each activity may have its own attendance, membership, behavior, cost, meeting, or participation expectations.

- Listen to announcements and review school communication for current opportunities.
- Attend consistently when you commit to an activity and communicate with the sponsor when you cannot attend.
- Participate respectfully and contribute to the group's purpose.
- Arrange transportation before staying after school.

Students may remain after school only for an approved and supervised school activity. Families are responsible for timely transportation when the activity ends unless school-provided transportation has been specifically communicated.

Athletics

Athletics can build teamwork, discipline, perseverance, fitness, school pride, and leadership. Participation is governed by current North Carolina and GCS eligibility, health and safety, attendance, academic, and participation requirements.

Because eligibility requirements can change or vary by sport, WGMS will communicate current requirements through the Athletic Director, coaches, and official GCS/WGMS information rather than reproducing an eligibility chart here.

- Meet current eligibility and participation requirements.
- Attend required practices, games, meetings, and team activities.
- Maintain appropriate academic, attendance, and behavior habits.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship and represent WGMS positively at home and away events.

Student First. Athlete Second. Athletics should strengthen - not replace - a student's commitment to learning.

Field Trips, Events & Celebrations

Field trips, assemblies, performances, dances, social events, Spirit Weeks, and other school experiences are extensions of the school day. Students remain subject to the GCS Student Code of Conduct, WGMS expectations, safety procedures, and any event-specific directions.

- Return required permission or consent information by communicated deadlines.
- Follow directions from staff, chaperones, drivers, coaches, venue personnel, and other authorized adults.
- Remain in assigned or authorized areas and arrange transportation when required.
- Demonstrate respectful audience behavior, sportsmanship, and care for property.
- Follow WGMS dress and personal-device expectations unless a specific exception is announced.

Spirit Days and special events may include Principal-approved exceptions to regular procedures. An announced theme does not suspend other school expectations.

When Can a Student Participate After School?

Participation in after-school extracurricular activities is a privilege connected to a student's attendance and behavior during the regular school day.

A student may not participate in or attend an after-school extracurricular activity on a day when the student:

- Serves In-School Suspension (ISS) for any portion of the school day;
- Serves Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) that day; or
- Is absent for more than one-half of the regular school day.

To participate in or attend an after-school activity, a student must attend at least one-half of the regular school day unless an exception is approved by school administration. Families should contact administration when an unavoidable circumstance affects this requirement; approval of an exception is not automatic.

School Day First. Activities Second. Students must meet the expectations of the regular school day to participate in the opportunities that follow it.

Balancing Activities & Academics

- Know when assignments, projects, practices, games, meetings, and events occur.
- Communicate with teachers, coaches, and sponsors before conflicts become emergencies.
- Use available academic support and avoid overcommitting.
- Make time for rest, responsibilities, and well-being.

Habit 3 + Habit 7: Put First Things First + Sharpen the Saw - Leadership includes knowing when to participate, when to prioritize, and when you need time to recharge.

Belonging at Western: You do not need a title, uniform, trophy, or club membership to matter in Tiger Nation. Every Tiger has something to contribute.



APPENDICES, RESOURCES & FAMILY FORMS

Western Guilford Middle School | 2026–2027

Appendix A: 2026–2027 GCS Traditional Academic Calendar

Appendix B: Student Walk-Home Parent/Guardian Authorization

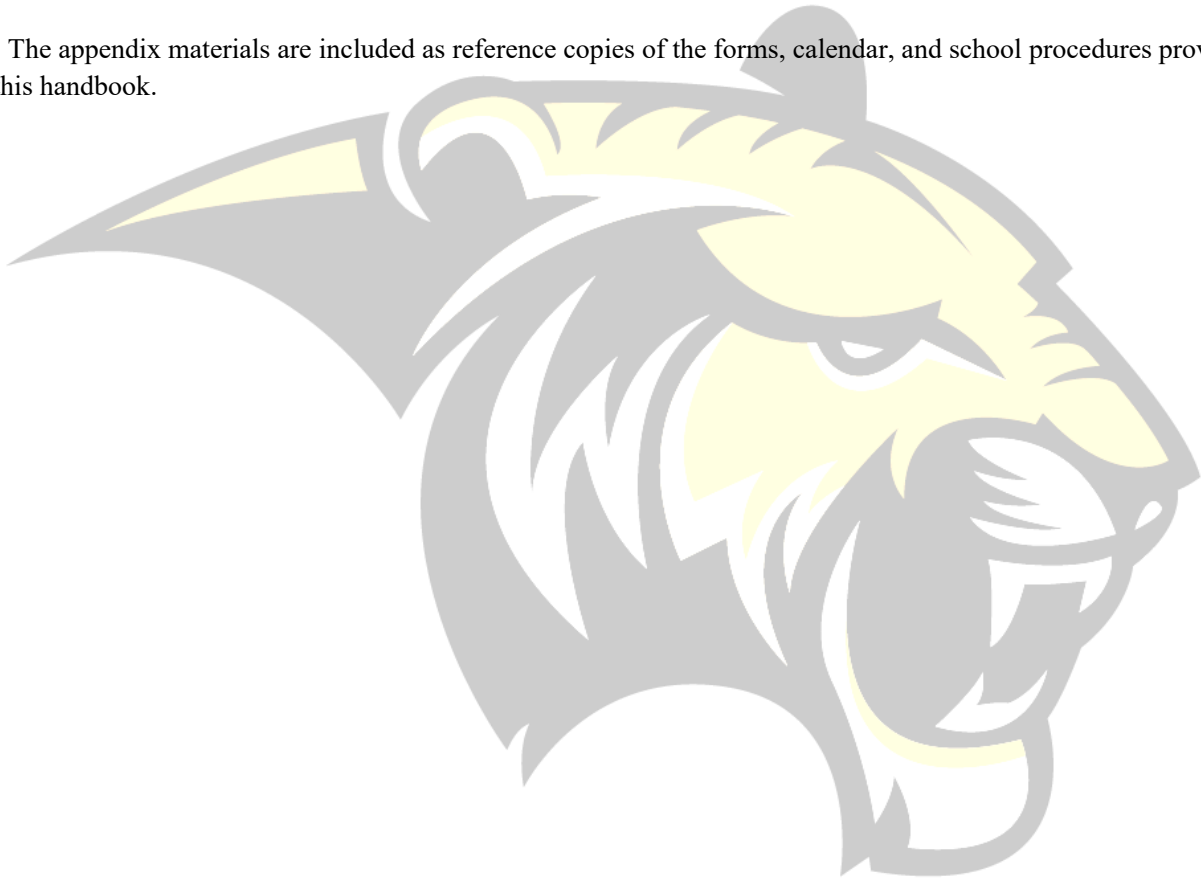
Appendix C: Two-Way Consent for Release/Sharing of Confidential Information

Appendix D: Complete WGMS Dress Code

Appendix E: WGMS Classroom Behavior Response Process & Classroom Behavior Log

Appendix F: WGMS Cell Phone Policy

Note: The appendix materials are included as reference copies of the forms, calendar, and school procedures provided with this handbook.



Traditional Academic Calendar

2026-2027

2026

August					September					October				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7									1	2
10	11	12	13	14	7	8	9	10	11	5	6	7	8	9
17	18	19	20	21	14	15	16	17	18	12	13	14	15	16
24	25	26	27	28	21	22	23	24	25	19	20	21	22	23
31					28	29	30			26	27	28	29	30

November					December				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4
9	10	11	12	13	7	8	9	10	11
16	17	18	19	20	14	15	16	17	18
23	24	25	26	27	21	22	23	24	25
30					28	29	30	31	

2027

January					February					March				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
				1	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
4	5	6	7	8	8	9	10	11	12	8	9	10	11	12
11	12	13	14	15	15	16	17	18	19	15	16	17	18	19
18	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	26	22	23	24	25	26
25	26	27	28	29						29	30	31		

April					May					June				
M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7		1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31					28	29	30		

- Milestone Day for Students ◆ Mandatory Teacher Workday - No School for Students
● Schools Closed - No School for Students Optional Teacher Workday - No School for Students

Revised by the Board of Education 8/11/2026



August

- 17-21 Teacher Workdays
24 First Day of School for Students

September

- 7 Labor Day Holiday
21 Teacher Workday (Yom Kippur)

October

- 29 End of Quarter 1
30 Teacher Workday (GHOE)

November

- 3 Teacher Workday (Election Day)
11 Veterans Day Holiday
25 Teacher Workday
26-27 Thanksgiving Holidays

December

- 21-31 Winter Break

January

- 1 Winter Break
4 Teacher Workday
18 Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday
22 End of Quarter 2/Semester 1
25 Teacher Workday

February

- 15 Teacher Workday

March

- 22-26 Spring Break

April

- 2 End of Quarter 3
5 Teacher Workday

May

- 31 Memorial Day Holiday

June

- 10 Last Day for Students
11 Teacher Workday



Scan to subscribe to the GCS
online school calendar with your
favorite calendar app

WESTERN GUILFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENT WALK-HOME PARENT/GUARDIAN AUTHORIZATION

Purpose: This form documents parent/guardian permission for a student to leave campus on foot after regular dismissal. A signed form must be approved and kept on file before the student may walk home.

STUDENT INFORMATION

Student's Full Name:	Student ID:
Grade:	Homeroom/Team:
Home Address:	City/ZIP:

WALKING ARRANGEMENT

Authorization requested for (check one): ☐ Every regular school day ☐ Specific days: _____

One-time authorization (optional): ☐ Date: _____

Student will (check one): ☐ Walk alone ☐ Walk with sibling(s)/student(s): _____

Expected destination after dismissal: _____

Special instructions or safety information: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN ACKNOWLEDGMENT

- ☐ I am the student's parent/legal guardian and authorize WGMS to release my student to walk from campus after regular dismissal under the arrangement listed above.
- ☐ I have determined that my student can safely follow the planned route, and I have reviewed traffic, weather, stranger-safety, and communication expectations with my student.
- ☐ I understand that school supervision ends when my student is released from campus at dismissal. I accept responsibility for my student's transportation and safety after release, except as otherwise required by law.
- ☐ This authorization does not permit early dismissal or leaving campus during the instructional day. I will notify the main office in writing of any change or cancellation.
- ☐ WGMS may suspend or revoke this authorization when safety, conduct, emergency conditions, or operational needs require a different dismissal arrangement.

PARENT/GUARDIAN CERTIFICATION

Parent/Guardian Name:	Relationship:
Primary Phone:	Alternate Phone:
Signature:	Date:

Authorization remains in effect through the end of the current school year unless revoked in writing or withdrawn by WGMS.

FOR SCHOOL USE ONLY

Received By:	Date Received:
Administrator Approval:	Effective Date:

Distribution: Main Office/Student File • Grade-Level Administrator • Parent/Guardian Copy

Western Guilford Middle School

TWO-WAY CONSENT FOR RELEASE/SHARING OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION BETWEEN:

Western Guilford Middle School	and	Agency/School/Person:
401 College Road		Address: _____
Greensboro, NC 27410		_____
Phone: <u>336.316.5833</u> Fax: <u>336.316.5837</u>		Relationship to Student: _____
Phone: <u>336.316.5833</u> Fax: <u>336.316.5837</u>		Phone: _____

Student Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Specific Information to be released:

☐ Unlimited disclosure	☐ Vision testing/reports	☐ Health evaluations
☐ Hearing/Audiological	☐ ADHD/ADD reports	☐ Speech/Language testing
☐ Medical Evaluations	☐ Current Medications	☐ EC Records
☐ Academic Records	☐ Psychoeducational Records	☐ Other

☐ I give my permission for the information checked above regarding this student to be released/shared between Western Guilford Middle School and the named Agency/School/Person(s):

Student's Full Name: _____ Date of birth _____

to be released as indicated. I understand that the released information is for the provision of appropriate educational services for my student. I understand that the released information is protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and that the agency/school/person(s) receiving the information will be responsible for its continued confidentiality. This release is valid for one (1) calendar year and can be revoked in writing, at any time.

.....

Signature must be (1) Witnessed by GCS/WGMS employee, or (2) Notarized by a licensed Notary Public.

Signed by: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Witnessed by: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

NOTE: For EC students, permission can be given only by the student's parent, surrogate parent, or legal guardian. For non-EC students, permission can be given by the student's parent or DSS, if the student is in the custody of DSS. Eligible students can provide their own consent. Any information exchanged is to be shared only between the above-listed agencies/schools/persons.

Western Guilford Middle School

Student Handbook

WGMS Dress Code 2026-2027

Tops

When choosing tops for school remember that standard guidelines require that midriffs and undergarments are to be covered and cannot have offensive graphics (drugs, alcohol, sexual content, profanity, etc.). Guidelines also mandate that when wearing shorts/skirts/leggings the top must reach the student's mid-thigh (half-way between the hip and knee).

Not allowed: tank tops, crop tops

Hoodies

Standard guidelines require that hoodies will not be worn over the head inside the building. Standard guidelines also ban offensive graphics (drugs, alcohol, sexual content, profanity, etc.).

Bottoms

Jeans, casual pants, sweatpants

Leggings are permitted but must be worn with a shirt that extends to mid-thigh (halfway between the hip and knee).

Shorts – must extend to mid-thigh (halfway between the hip and knee.)

Biker Shorts – must extend to mid-thigh (halfway between the hip and knee.)

Not allowed: (1) no rips or tears above the knee (2) no sagging pants that reveal the underwear

Shoes

Sneakers (or any shoe with a closed toe and an enclosed heel or strap around the heel)

Crocs (must be worn in sport mode at all times)

Not allowed: soccer flops, flip flops, bedroom shoes, bedroom booties

Headgear

No headgear is allowed inside the building unless it is religious headwear.

Not allowed: wave caps, ball caps, cat ears, bunny ears, etc.

Additional items not allowed at any time: Pajamas (unless pre-approved by the Principal for Spirit Week), blankets, stuffed animals, bedroom shoes or bedroom boots)

If a student is out of compliance with the dress code and before any consequences are assigned by Administrators the student will be given an opportunity to change by (1) retrieving a dress code approved garment from their locker, (2) selecting a garment from the student closet in the Counseling Suite when available, or (3) calling home for a change of clothes.

WESTERN GUILFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR RESPONSE PROCESS

Quick Guide | 2026-2027

START HERE: IS THE BEHAVIOR MINOR OR MAJOR?**MINOR = TEACHER MANAGED**

Use the 4-step classroom response below.
Behaviors should be observable and measurable.

MAJOR = ADMINISTRATION MANAGED

Contact administration. Do not work through Steps 1-4 first.
If safety is a concern, call for immediate assistance.

MINOR BEHAVIOR: 4-STEP RESPONSE

1 REDIRECT + STUDENT CONFERENCE Document behavior. Conference with the student. Reteach the expectation.	2 PARENT/GUARDIAN CONTACT Document the next incident. Contact home and document the communication.	3 TEACHER CONSEQUENCE + FAMILY CONTACT Assign an appropriate classroom consequence and communicate with home.	4 ADMINISTRATIVE REFERRAL Document the fourth incident and submit the completed behavior log to administration.
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30-DAY RULE: Classroom behavior logs expire 30 days from the first entry.

IMPORTANT: FAMILY COMMUNICATION BEFORE CONSEQUENCES

- **Parent/guardian contact MUST be made before a student serves a teacher-assigned consequence.** Allow reasonable time for the family to receive the communication and be aware of the consequence.
- Communication may include ClassDojo, email, text message, or phone call.
- If you send multiple messages without receiving acknowledgement, please notify administration so we can follow up. Updated parent/guardian contact information may be needed. Sending a message does not always mean it was received.

Thank you for doing your part to keep families informed and supported.

EXAMPLES AT A GLANCE**MINOR — TEACHER MANAGED**

- Cheating/Forgery/Plagiarism (1st offense)
- Disrespectful comments/actions toward teachers and/or peers
- Misusing school property
- Poking without inflicting pain
- SMOD violations
- Talking back/non-compliance
- Excessive talking or excessive blurting out
- Inappropriate language among peers
- Throwing objects
- Physical contact, including public displays of affection
- Tardy twice in a 30-day period (< 5 mins.)
- Defiance with work

MAJOR — ADMINISTRATION MANAGED

- Fighting
- Skipping (≥ 5 mins.)
- Cheating/Forgery/Plagiarism (2nd offense)
- Possession of drugs
- Aggressive physical behavior
- Profanity toward an adult and/or student
- Enacting fire alarm or fire extinguisher(s)
- Possession of alcohol
- Communicating threats
- Gang-related activity
- Lewd, illegal or sexual gestures/acts
- Possession of weapons

Major incidents are addressed by administration. Consequences are assigned within the guidelines of the GCS Code of Conduct.

WESTERN GUILFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL

WGMS CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR LOG

For MINOR classroom-managed behaviors only | 2026-2027

MAJOR BEHAVIOR? Contact administration immediately. Do not complete Steps 1-4 first.

Student Name: _____ Staff Member: _____
 Parent/Guardian: _____ Phone/Email: _____
 Grade Level: _____ Date Log Started: _____ Expires: _____

STEP 1 REDIRECT + STUDENT CONFERENCE*Document the behavior, conference with the student, and reteach the expectation.*

Date: _____ Time: _____ Minor Offense: _____ Student Initials: _____
 Incident Description: _____

Student Conference Date: _____ Teacher Initial: _____ Student Initial: _____
 Reteach / Support Provided: _____

STEP 2 PARENT/GUARDIAN CONTACT*Document the next incident and communicate with the parent/guardian.*

Date: _____ Time: _____ Minor Offense: _____ Student Initials: _____
 Incident Description: _____
 Family Contact Date: _____ Time: _____ Method: _____
 Contact Notes / Outcome: _____

STEP 3 TEACHER CONSEQUENCE + FAMILY CONTACT*Document the incident, contact home, and assign an appropriate classroom consequence.*

Date: _____ Time: _____ Minor Offense: _____ Student Initials: _____
 Incident Description: _____
 Family Contact Date: _____ Time: _____ Method: _____
 Teacher-Assigned Consequence: _____
 Notes: _____

STEP 4 ADMINISTRATIVE REFERRAL*Document the fourth minor incident and submit the completed behavior log to administration.*

Date: _____ Time: _____ Minor Offense: _____ Student Initials: _____
 Incident Description: _____
 Referral Notes / Context: _____
 Submitted to Administration Date: _____ Staff Initial: _____

Teacher consequences may include detention, think-time/reflection, seat change, time out in another classroom, loss of a classroom privilege, restorative conversation, reteaching expectations, or another reasonable classroom-managed consequence.

POLICY ON CONFISCATION OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The following consequences for the confiscation of electronic devices follow **Rule I-6 of the Guilford County Schools Student Handbook 2026-27 USE OF UNAUTHORIZED ELECTROIC DEVICES OR APPLICATIONS DURING INSTRUCTIONAL TIME** (cell phones, AirPods, Smartwatches, hand-held games, etc.)

- **1st Offense: Warning:** Your student _____ was in possession of a/an _____ that has been confiscated and secured in the front office in accordance with Rule 27 of the GCS Student Handbook. Parent/Guardian must pick up the confiscated item in the office.
- **2nd Offense:** Your student _____ was in possession of a/an _____ that has been confiscated and secured in the front office in accordance with Rule 27 of the GCS Student Handbook. Parent/Guardian must pick up the confiscated item in the office. Student will serve 1 day of ISS.
- **3rd Offense:** Your student _____ was in possession of a/an _____ that has been confiscated and secured in the front office for in accordance with Rule i-6 of the GCS Student Handbook. Parent/Guardian must pick up the confiscated item in the office. Student will serve 2 days of ISS.
- **4th Offense:** Your student _____ was in possession of a/an _____ that has been confiscated and secured in the front office in accordance with Rule 27 of the GCS Student Handbook. Parent/Guardian must meet with the Principal/Assistant Principal before the phone is released.

During any North Carolina Assessment/Test the following items are not permitted: Electronic devices. Other than permitted calculators/tablets, students are not allowed to use or have in their possession cell phones or any other electronic recording, listening, scanning, communication, or photographic devices at any time during testing, including breaks. Any student found or observed with a cell phone/electronic device during testing time must be dismissed from testing and a misadministration declared for that student. (*Testing Security, Public Schools of NC, Department of Public Instruction, Division of Accountability 2018*). NOTE: If a student is found to be in violation of testing standards regarding electronic devices, additional consequences may apply.

Parent Signature

Date