Whitehaven Elementary STEM School

PARENT - STUDENT HANDBOOK 2026-2027



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Dear Parents,
Welcome to Whitehaven Elementary STEM School, Home of the Innovators, for the 2026-27 school year. The BEST faculty and staff in Memphis Shelby County are here to ensure that your child has every opportunity to excel in all academic areas and achieve at their highest potential. Our goal is to provide your child with the tools that allow them to be successful learners, to challenge them academically, grow them socially and emotionally, and guide them toward independent thinking and problem solving. Students are encouraged to display good character and to make good choices that will result in successful outcomes. We look forward to working closely with you as we provide challenging educational programs for our students. I encourage your active support and participation as we seek to provide a positive learning environment for all our students. We look forward to a great school year filled with enriching activities and learning experiences that will help your child display "Innovator Pride"!

Respectfully,
Tommy Elliott
Elliottt@scsk12.org.- Email
(901) 416-7431-office

WESS ADMIN and OFFICE STAFF

Principal.....Tommy Elliott

Dean of Students.....Tammy Stokes

School Counselor.....Lauren Hunt

PLC Coach.....Sarah Johnson

Instructional Facilitator.....Twana Goodrich

Interventionist…….....Coradine Stokes

Optional Coordinator.....Cheryl Lacy

Financial Secretary.....Rosalind Cohen

GOS-Secretary.....Dyvonne London

Building Engineer.....Michael Chambers



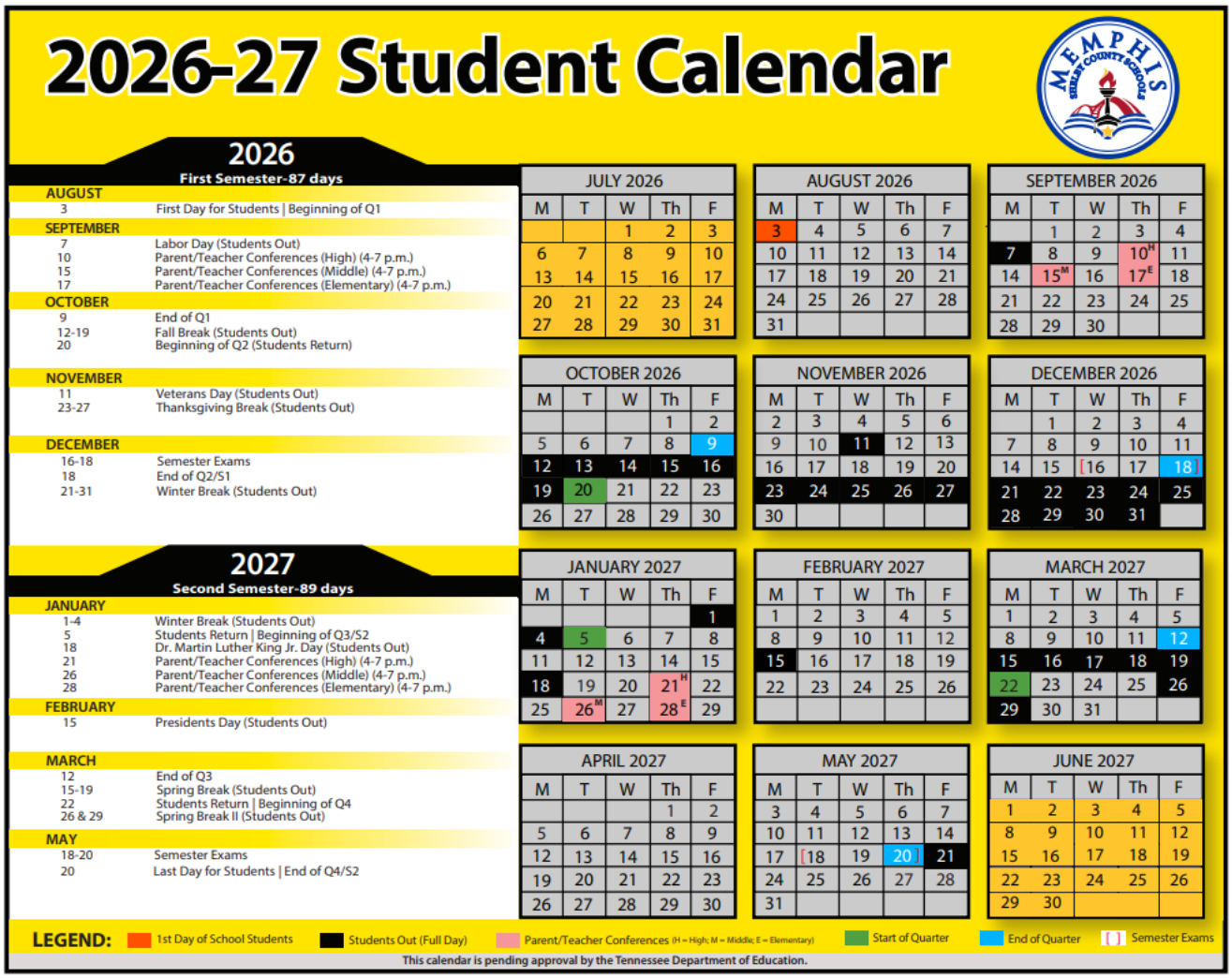
Mission

At Whitehaven Elementary STEM School our assignment is to Engage, Educate, & Empower, every student every day. Delivering a world-class education by promoting positive relationships, we strive to have our students, parents, teachers, and community members actively involved in our students' learning. We're ensuring college and career readiness for the next generation of innovators.

Vision

Whitehaven Elementary STEM School inspires to provide our students with innovative tools and modern features, taking creative learning to the next level. Promoting high standards for academic achievement, creativity, and cooperative learning through a unique and integrated learning experience in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math that will generate college and career-ready students.

2026-2027 School Calendar



General Information
School Policies

School Hours

Our doors at Whitehaven Elementary open at 9 AM, and students are expected to be seated in class at 9:15 AM.
Frequently, students are left at school well before 9:00 am. Car Riders may not be dropped off early. No adult supervision is provided at this time and students are not allowed to be left unsupervised. Please be aware that your child's safety is at risk each time a student is left unsupervised before school. We strongly urge parents to plan for timely transportation of their students. Please plan accordingly when sending walkers to school as well. Whitehaven Elementary offers before-school and after school programs to support arrival and dismissal needs. The YMCA's Before School program starts at 6:30 am and after care ends at 6:00 pm. Dismissal begins at 4:00 PM.

Attendance and Excuses (Policy 6014) Revised

The Shelby County Board of Education believes that regular attendance is a necessary requirement of all students and that an accurate record of their attendance must be properly documented in accordance with applicable state laws/guidance and District requirements. To that end, the District's student information management system shall be used to maintain and report student attendance. All students must attend school each day that school is officially in session and remain at school for the entire school day.
Only the following reasons will be considered for excused absences:
1. Illness, injury, pregnancy, homebound circumstance, or hospitalization of student. The District may require a parent conference and/or physician verification to justify absences after the accumulation of ten (10) days of absence during a school year. Notes must be date specific and will be required for subsequent absences beyond ten (10) days.
2. Death or serious illness within the student's immediate family.

3. When the student is officially representing the school in a school sponsored activity or attendance at school-endorsed activities and verified college visits.
4. Special and recognized religious holidays regularly observed by persons of their faith. Any student who misses a class or day of school because of the observance of a day set aside as sacred by a recognized religious denomination of which the student is a member or adherent, where such religion calls for special observances of such day, shall have the absence from that school day or class excused and shall be entitled to make up any school work missed without the imposition of any penalty because of the absence.
5. A court order; a subpoena; and/or a legal court summons.
6. Extenuating circumstances over which the student has no control as approved by the principal.
7. If a student's parent, custodian or other person with legal custody or control of the student is a member of the United States Armed Forces, including a member of a state National Guard or a Reserve component called to federal active duty, the student's Principal shall give the student: a. An excused absence for one (1) day when the student's parent, custodian or other person with legal custody or control of the student is deployed; b. An additional excused absence for one (1) day when the student's parent, custodian or other person with legal custody or control of the student returns from deployment; and c. Excused absences for up to ten (10) days for visitation when the student's parent, custodian or other person with legal custody or control of the student is granted rest and recuperation leave and is stationed out of the country. d. Excused absences for up to ten (10) days cumulatively within the school year for visitation during the deployment cycle of the student's parent, custodian or other person with legal custody or control of the student. Total excused absences under this section (c) and (d) shall not exceed a total of ten (10) days within the school year. The student shall provide documentation to the school as proof of the deployment of the student's parent, custodian or other person with legal custody or control of the student.
Students receiving an excused absence under this section shall have the opportunity to make up schoolwork missed and shall not have their class grades adversely affected for lack of class attendance or class participation due to the excused absence. A written statement within two (2) school days of the student's return to school shall be required from the parent or guardian explaining the reason for each absence. If necessary, verification is required from an official source to justify absences. All absences other than those outlined above shall be considered unexcused. Parents may appeal unexcused

absences to their child's school principal (or designee). The appeal must be: (1) in writing and include documentation necessary to support the appeal; (2) submitted within five (5) school days of the parent's receipt of the first official attendance letter generated by the District that is referenced in policy 6016 Truancy; and (3) based on one or more of the allowable reasons for excused absences outlined in this policy. Within five (5) school days of receipt of the request for appeal, the Principal (or designee) shall review the appeal, meet with the parents to allow them an opportunity to be heard, and render a decision regarding the appeal. The decision of the principal (or designee) that is compliant with applicable law and District policy is final. (This appeal process for determining unexcused absences is ancillary to a truancy decision rendered by a juvenile court judge as described in TCA 49-6-3010.) Questions regarding school-level decisions may be directed to the District department responsible for academic school operations.

Make-up Work

Students should make every effort and be afforded the opportunity to make up work missed due to excused and unexcused absences. In the event of an excused absence, students are expected to make up work missed within a reasonable time (e.g., at least one or more days of makeup for each day of excused absence). In the event of an unexcused absence 2 (including short-term suspensions), one day of makeup time shall be allowed for each day of unexcused absence, unless otherwise extended by the school or extended based on law or policy. Students and/or their parents should work with the teacher for assistance in making up work (e.g., obtaining make-up work/assignments, participating in available tutoring/requesting tutoring, etc.).

To read Policy 6014 in its entirety, please visit:

https://go.boarddocs.com/tn/scsk12/Board.nsf/files/CQJR6J688848/$file/6014%20Attendance%20and%20Excuses.pdf

Tardies/Early Dismissal/Late pickup

Students miss valuable instructional time when they are late to school or check out early, and it violates the school district's attendance policy. Doctor's notes are required for tardies or dismissals to be counted as excused.

Students will be considered tardy at 9:15 am. All students who are tardy MUST be checked in by a parent in the entrance hallway. Excessive late check-ins and/or early

check-outs (five (5) or more per semester) will result in a parent conference with administrators.

ABSENCES/TARDIES/EARLY DISMISSALS AFFECT TRANSFERS

Students with excessive unexcused absences and/or tardies are subject to lose their General Choice Transfer to Whitehaven Elementary at the end of the semester.

Truancy (Policy 6016)

Unauthorized absence from school is considered truancy and will be treated as such.
Truancy In accordance with T.C.A. § 49-6-3007 the Superintendent shall inform the parent, guardian, or other person having control of a student that any student with five (5) days of unexcused absences during the school year is subject to the district's progressive truancy interventions and that continued unexcused absences may result in a referral to juvenile court. The five (5) days of unexcused absences need not be five (5) consecutive days of unexcused absences. Except as otherwise provided by law, 1 a child may be truant under the law who is less than six (6) years of age, provided that a child may be withdrawn six (6) weeks of initial enrollment without penalty.
To read Policy 6016 in its entirety, please visit:
https://go.boarddocs.com/tn/scsk12/Board.nsf/files/BUUU5V7A6FDA/$file/6016%20Truancy%20.pdf

Dismissal Procedures

Walkers

Walkers will be escorted out the side door at 4:05. They will be escorted down the sidewalk where they will be met by the crossing guard. The crossing guard will then escort students across the street to be picked up by parents. Parents should be across the street by 4:00 to retrieve their child. If no one is there to pick up their child by 4:10, the crossing guard will escort them back across the street to Whitehaven. All parents will then have to come inside to pick up their student.

Car Riders

ALL STUDENTS MUST BE RETRIEVED BY PARENTS THROUGH THE CAR RIDER LINE. Parents are not permitted to park and walk up to retrieve their child. It is essential that dismissal procedures are followed as our goal is to maintain a safe environment for our students.

To avoid confusion and keep your child safe, if you must change your child's transportation for the day, please send a note to your child's teacher, or send a message on Class Dojo. We are unable to make changes over the telephone. If your child does not bring a note to school, the child will go home his/her usual way.

Transportation Services (Policy 6050)

In order to maintain conditions suitable for learning, no person shall enter onto a school bus except students assigned to that bus and authorized school/District personnel, unless otherwise provided by law, Board policy, and/or contract.

Parents of students are responsible for their child's supervision until the child boards the bus in the morning and after the child leaves the bus at the end of the school day. Once a student boards the bus - and only at that time - does he or she become the responsibility of the school system. Such responsibility shall end when the student is delivered to the regular bus stop at the close of the school day.

Due to the fact that a bus is an extension of the classroom, the Board shall require students to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior. Students are under the supervision of the bus driver while on his/her bus, and all reasonable directions given by the bus driver shall be followed. The principal of the student transported shall be informed by the bus driver of any serious discipline problem and may be called upon to assist if necessary.

Except as provided by law, a student may be denied the privilege of riding the bus if the principal/department responsible for student transportation determines that the student's behavior is such as to cause disruption on the bus, or if a student disobeys local rules and regulations pertaining to student transportation. Required suspension of ridership privileges are in addition to appropriate disciplinary measures that may be taken by the principal according to the Student Code of Conduct. Suspension of

ridership privileges may be the only disciplinary action taken when deemed appropriate for the level of the offense. In the event a suspension from school is issued for a bus conduct offense, the ridership privilege suspension is to begin the student's first day back to school. The suspension of a student from riding the school bus shall follow the same procedures as for any other school suspension, except when state and/or federal provisions apply for students receiving special education services. In such cases, the District shall comply with applicable state and/or federal laws/regulations.

Breakfast/Lunch

Every student automatically qualifies for free breakfast and lunch daily at Whitehaven Elementary STEM School. Breakfast is from 9:00-9:20. Please see the child's individual class schedule for their lunch times.

Visitors (Policy 7011)

Except on occasions such as school programs, athletic events, open house and similar events at which the general public is invited, all persons with the exception of school district personnel and students entering the school buildings or schools grounds at which they are enrolled are prohibited from entering any school building or school grounds unless they have first reported to the school office and been granted permission to enter the school building or school grounds by the school principal or his/her designee. The principal or his/her designee has the authority to exclude from the school premises any persons disrupting the educational programs in the classroom or in the school, disturbing the staff or students on the premises, or on the premises for the purpose of committing an illegal act.

To read Policy 7011 in its entirety, please visit:

https://go.boarddocs.com/tn/scsk12/Board.nsf/files/BJ9VBT7FFE48/$file/7011%20Visitors%20to%20Schools%20and%20District%2 0

Your child's instructional time and safety are priorities at Whitehaven Elementary STEM School. If you need to speak with your child's teacher, we request that you schedule an appointment. For the protection of all students, ALL visitors must report to the office and sign in upon entering the building. A forgotten item (such as a lunch box) should be brought to the office, and the child will be called to pick it up.

School-wide Discipline Plan

Relationships- Building and maintaining positive relationships within our schools and departments are essential. Strong relationships foster trust, collaboration, and a supportive environment where everyone can thrive.

Rigor- Upholding rigorous standards and expectations will ensure that our teaching and learning environments are intellectually stimulating and demanding. We will empower our students and each other to achieve their full potential by setting high expectations.

Relevance- Making learning relevant and meaningful is key to engaging students and inspiring lifelong learners. Connecting curriculum and activities to real-life contexts and personal interests enhances motivation and deepens understanding.

Results- Ultimately, our efforts must yield measurable outcomes and tangible results. Whether it's academic achievements, organizational success, or personal growth, we are committed to evaluating our progress and refining our approaches to ensure continuous improvement.



Cultivating High Expectations for Student Success

Well-Behaved
Engaged
Safe
Successful

Cultivating,
High,
Expectations for
Student
Success!

Student Dress Code (Policy 6021)

The standards for Memphis Shelby County Schools dress reflect “common sense” and a concern for each student's comfort, safety, cleanliness, and sense of modesty. There is a

strong relationship between neat, appropriate attire and a positive learning environment. Apparel or appearance which tends to draw attention to an individual rather than to a learning situation must be avoided. To that end, Memphis Shelby County Schools establishes a basic dress code to ensure appropriate and modest dress.
To read this policy in its entirety, please visit
https://go.boarddocs.com/tn/scsk12/Board.nsf/files/BSEVCT802322/$file/6021%20Student%20Dress%20CodeAdministrative%20Rules%20and%20Reg%20Rev%208-12-2020.pdf

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Whitehaven's Uniform Policy

Approved Shirts:
Polos in Gold, Royal Blue, White, or Pink
Whitehaven Elementary t-shirts are allowed

Allowed Bottoms:
Pants, skirts/skorts, and shorts (to knees) in solid colors: Khaki, Navy or Black

Allowed Jackets/Sweaters/Sweatshirts:
Solid Whitehaven Elementary STEM School colors (Navy Blue, Black, White, or Gray) Jackets and outerwear should be in solid colors with no logos. (Students are allowed to wear denim jackets.) Heavy coats cannot be worn during times other than arrival, recess, and dismissal.

Leggings may not be worn as pants. They may be worn under a dress, jumper, or skirt only and must be solid black, navy, gray, or white.

All boys' shirts must be tucked in. All belts must be fitted.

Shoes can have heels no higher than 1 inch. Athletic shoes and boots are permitted. Sandals must have straps on the heel.

Violation of the dress code will result in parents being called to bring the appropriate clothing to school and consequences ranging from parent conferences, detention, or suspension.

Cell Phone/Communication devices (Policy 6024)

The increase in use of cell phones and personal communication devices by students during the school day has become far more than a distraction in the school environment. These devices are being used by students as a means of cheating on tests, taking

inappropriate pictures and video of students and staff for sharing and posting across the internet, threatening and/or bullying other students, and engaging in an excessive amount of social interaction during instructional time. Therefore, all students are banned from possessing any type of phone or personal communication device that is turned on or in visible/audible use at any time during the regular school day. For the purpose of this policy, possession means being found in any article of clothing, purse, book bag, carry bag, or in any location on school property other than the approved storage location as written and approved by school officials. Students who wish to carry a cell phone with them to and from school must keep the device turned off and stored (e.g., kept in the student's assigned locker, automobile, or other school approved location at all times during the entire school day), unless otherwise determined by the principal. District security officials may, if they have reasonable suspicion to do so, search any cell phone brought onto any SCBE property, which includes but is not limited to parking areas. For the purposes of this policy the school day includes the entire day from the school start time or bell that indicates the start of the school day until the final dismissal time of the school day. The school is not responsible for any loss or theft of the device while on school property. A student found in unauthorized possession of any type of cell phone or communication device during the school day shall have the device taken from him or her and kept by the school Principal or designee until the parent is notified. The parent may pick up the device at the time and location designated by the principal at the close of the next school day following the day that the parent received notification or earlier at the principal's discretion. Thereafter, the parent may pick up the device by appointment. Any subsequent violation shall result in the device being taken from the student and retained until the close of the next school day following the day that the parent received notification or earlier at the principal's discretion. Thereafter, the parent may pick up the device by appointment. Moreover, for such subsequent violation of this policy, the student shall receive additional consequences in accordance with the district-wide discipline policy. The District does not take responsibility for confiscated items and will not compensate the owner for any lost, stolen, or damaged confiscated items while in the custody of the District.

To view Policy 6024 in its entirety, please visit:

https://go.boarddocs.com/tn/scsk12/Board.nsf/files/AYUQ5N67A723/$file/6024%20Cell%20Phones%20and%20Personal%20Communication%20

Homework

Expect your child to have homework every night, except on weekends and special occasions. Students must take home all the materials necessary to complete their homework before leaving the building.

Accidents and Illness

If a student is injured or becomes ill at school, we will make him/her comfortable and call you immediately. If you are unable to be reached, we will attempt to contact the emergency number(s) listed on the registration form. Be sure to update any changes in phone number with your child's teacher or the front office as the year progresses. Please remember, we cannot keep seriously ill students at school.

Birthdays

NO FOOD MAY BE BROUGHT TO SCHOOL FOR BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS. However, parents can come to school to bring their child lunch.

Chronic Illness

The office needs to know of chronic illnesses such as asthma, diabetes, allergies, etc. We need specific written instructions on file should an emergency arise.

Administering Medicine to Students

It is the policy of MSCS that all children's medication be administered by a parent at home. Under exceptional circumstances medication may be administered by school personnel under the appropriate administrative regulations. If under exceptional circumstances, a child is required to receive medication during school hours, and the parents cannot be at school to administer the medication, only the school nurse or the principal's designee will administer the medication in compliance with the regulations that follow. Please contact our GOS in the main office for more information.

Textbook/Library Books, Etc.

Students are responsible for all textbooks, devices, and library books issued during the school year. Parents must pay for all lost or damaged books. Payments must be received before report cards or replacement books can be issued.

Field Trips/School Functions

Students attending any field trips sponsored by the school must submit a signed permission slip before participating in the activity. We cannot accept permission over the phone. For local field trips, you must give a 72-hour notice for a full refund. For out-of-town trips, we must have 4 weeks prior notice for you to receive ½ of your refund back. Since it is necessary to have buses ordered and tickets purchased in advance, we cannot provide a 100% refund. field trip money. Permission slips and money must be turned in by the stated deadline. Participation is contingent upon the students' behavior and their attendance at school. Chronically absent students will not be allowed to participate.

Emergency School Closings:

Please make advance arrangements in case of early dismissal due to the weather. If school is closed due to bad weather, the Superintendent of Schools will notify the local TV and radio station that will broadcast the information. People who are not on the student information form will not be allowed to check out your children.

ACADEMICS

Academic Achievement

At Whitehaven Elementary STEM, our mission is to engage, educate, and empower every student every day.

Curricula

Whitehaven Elementary STEM School follows the district approved curriculum for all content areas. The district's curriculum is designed to stimulate creativity and to develop critical thinking skills. Opportunities are offered for individual projects and hands on engagement.

Report Cards

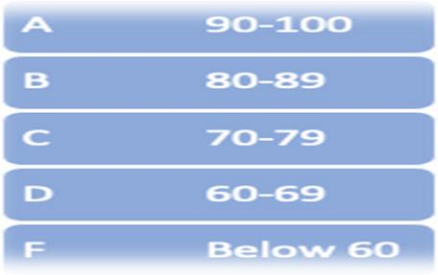
Report Cards will be sent home according to the district's schedule. Please see the calendar at the beginning of the handbook.

Grading Policy

Memphis-Shelby County Schools (MSCS) has adopted a new 10-point grading scale for students starting this fall.

The new grading scale, aligned with recent changes in Tennessee state law, went into effect at the beginning of the 2022-23 school year.

Grading Scale for 1-5



Kindergarten

Kindergarten academic progress will be measured as mastery(M) or non-mastery (NM).

Kindergarten conduct and social skills will be measured as satisfactory(S) or (non-satisfactory). Only students in First through Fifth grades are eligible for Honor Roll recognition.

Honor Roll and Student Recognition

Principal's Honor Roll (Grades 1-5)
All A's and E's (including Music, Art, Physical Education, and Conduct)

Faculty Honor Roll (Grades 1-5)
At least 2 A's and nothing lower than a B as well as E's in Music, Art, Physical Education and Conduct

Citizenship (Grades K-5)
All E's in Conduct
If a student earns any of the above awards in quarters 1-3 and is on track to meet these criteria in quarter 4 prior to End of Year Programs, a certificate will be presented to the student for this achievement at the end of the school year.

Perfect Attendance (Grades K-5)

Perfect Attendance is awarded to students at the End of Year Programs if a student has zero absences, tardies, or early departures throughout the year.

Progress Reports

Progress Reports will be sent home every 4 ½ weeks in a nine-week period. Notices should be signed by the parent or guardian and returned to the classroom teacher.

Guidance Counseling Program

Our guidance counselor is available Whitehaven Elementary STEM to provide individual and small group counseling and student support. The counselor also conducts parent, teacher, and student conferences for referred students.

Parent Conferences

Conferences are encouraged and welcomed by the faculty. Please send a note or reach out on Class Dojo to schedule a conference. The teacher will call or message you to schedule the appointment. Two specific times have been designated by MSCS as parent-teacher conference dates. Parents are required to meet with their child's teacher on only one of these dates. Teachers will designate the conference date and allow parents to schedule a convenient time.

Class Parties

Two organized classroom parties are scheduled per academic year: holiday(prior to winter break), and end of year. In addition, we will be incorporating Fun Fridays bi-weekly into school day. This will occur on the 2nd and 4th Friday of each month. STEM Clubs will be held bi- weekly on the 1st and 3rd Friday after school.

Special Events

We welcome and encourage parents to attend all special events that will be held throughout the school year. Please check your monthly calendar that will be sent home for dates and times.

PTO

Whitehaven Elementary STEM values its Parent-Teacher Organization. Membership is $10.00. Meetings are held monthly. Money received from membership fees and fundraisers are used to benefit the school in general. More information concerning PTO will be sent home with your child.





for your partnership!

WESS Administration and Staff