

**West Side Elementary  
2021/2022  
Parent/Student Handbook**



**72 Braves Lane  
Rossville, Georgia 30741  
(706) 866-9211 / (706) 866-1002  
Fax (706) 861-6647**

**Principal: Mr. Robert Mountjoy  
Assistant Principal: Mrs. Lori Welborn**

**WSE ensures high levels of learning for all students.**

## Arrival

Students may start arriving at 7:00 a.m. each morning. Car riders should enter the door beside the cafeteria. As students arrive, they may go to the cafeteria for breakfast or morning room (gym). Students are dismissed from the morning room to their classrooms at 7:35 a.m. Class time begins at 7:50 a.m. and any students arriving after 8:00 a.m. must come to the office to be checked in as tardy.

Please consider your child riding the bus as a possible means of transportation. This would help alleviate traffic congestion. Parents who drive their children must use the designated DROP OFF/PICKUP AREA at the side of the building by the cafeteria where staff members will help the children safely out of the car.

**For safety reasons, please do NOT drop your child off in front of the school!**

## Attendance

Attendance is very important to a student's academic success. Should your child need to be absent from school, please notify the school office and they will notify the teacher.

### Absences

An excuse note from the parent/guardian is required for each absence. The note should contain the child's first and last name, teacher's name, date(s) of the absence, reason for absence, and the signature of the parent/guardian. If possible, a doctor's note is appreciated. It is the responsibility of the student and parent/guardian to see that missed work is made up.

**Students may be excused from school due to the following:**

1. Student illness
2. Serious illness in the immediate family
3. Death in the immediate family
4. Mandated by order of governmental agencies or by court order
5. Religious holidays

\*\* Dental or doctor visits are excused ONLY for appointment time. If it is necessary for the student to miss the entire day, we must receive a note from the doctor stating the reason.

**\*\*After the 5<sup>th</sup> absence, students may be required to bring a note from the doctor or Health Department in order for the absence to be excused. Students must turn in the note to the office within 3 days.**

**\*\*A POSSIBLE REFERRAL TO THE CATOOSA COUNTY ATTENDANCE REVIEW TEAM WILL OCCUR WHEN A STUDENT HAS FIVE UNEXCUSED ABSENCES, TEN ABSENCES THAT ARE EITHER UNEXCUSED OR THE NOTE IS WRITTEN BY A PARENT, OR A COMBINATION OF TEN UNEXCUSED TARDIES AND/OR EARLY DISMISSALS.**

## Birthdays

Birthday parties should be scheduled with the teacher to avoid disrupting instructional time. Parents may choose to send a birthday snack for the class to be enjoyed at the teacher's discretion. Snacks should be left in the office and not carried to class to avoid interrupting instruction.

## Break

Ice cream is available for \$1.00. Purchasing ice cream is considered a privilege and is earned by good conduct and completing assignments.

## Buses

Bus service is provided for all students in our school zone. If you are unaware of what bus your child will be riding, please call the Catoosa County Transportation Department at (706) 965-2913. Please send a note to the school if your child will be riding the bus for the first time. (Please refer to the Catoosa County Handbook for the Bus Discipline Policy.)

## Cafeteria (Breakfast and Lunch)

A hot, nutritious breakfast is served from 7:00 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. daily. We encourage all students to eat a nutritious breakfast every morning. Free and reduced programs apply to breakfast, also. A school menu is provided each month. If you decide to prepare a lunch for your child, it should be nutritious. **PLEASE do not send sweets, soft drinks, fast food, or junk food, as these items do not provide the necessary nutrients for effective learning.**

## Car Riders

Parents picking up students from car riders will need to place a sign provided by the school, in their car window. This ensures your child is picked up by the designated person as well as speed up the dismissal process. If you do not have your car rider sign, please come to the main office with photo ID to get a new sign.

## Change of transportation

**For safety reasons, we will not allow any transportation changes over the phone or by the student.** We will only accept transportation changes that are written and signed by the legal parent/guardian. You may send this in with your child in the morning or fax a change to the office at (706) 861-6647. We must receive all changes by 1:00 p.m. each afternoon.

**No changes in your child's permanent transportation will be made without a written note. Please remember this is for the safety of your child.**

## Dismissal

Dismissal begins at 2:40 p.m. every afternoon. For safety reasons, there are no student checkouts after 2:00 p.m. If you have a medical or other type of emergency after 2 pm, please see a school administrator.

Students are called according to grade level. Car riders are dismissed from the gym.

This is a one-way drive and you must enter from the rear of the school (Sutton Ave.). Please remain in your car and a staff member will help the child enter the car. Students who do not ride a bus must be picked up by 3:00 p.m. Any student who is not picked up by 3:00 p.m. will be sent to the YMCA's after school program. The YMCA will bill parents/guardians a registration fee and for the time their child spends in the program.

Cars should NOT enter Sutton Ave. by the way of Mack Smith road due to traffic concerns.

## Donations

The school requests, but does not require, a \$25.00 donation. The teachers use this money to purchase needed classroom supplies such as copy paper, art supplies, etc. Some teachers may also request a contribution of classroom supplies such as paper towels, Kleenex, soap, etc. NO child will be denied participation for failure to contribute.

### Dress code

Please refer to the Catoosa County Handbook for details.

### Early dismissal

West Side understands that early dismissals are sometimes unavoidable due to emergency situations, illness, and dental/doctor appointments. Dismissals will be marked unexcused until we receive a note from a doctor stating the child was seen and are only excused for time needed for appointment. Please try to send a note notifying the teacher in advance whenever possible. There will be no checkouts after 2:00 p.m. Please remember for safety reasons, your child may not be checked out by anyone who is not on his/her check-out list which is kept in the office. The office staff will ask for photo identification from anyone who comes to check out a child.

### Field Trips

Field Trips are encouraged as an extension or enhancement of classroom lessons. The State Board of Education considers payment for field trip expenses a voluntary contribution. No student will be denied participation for non-payment. However, if sufficient contributions are not received, field trips may be cancelled. Any student who attends with the class must return to school with the class. All students must return a field trip permission slip to the school signed by their legal parent/guardian to participate.

### Fire and Tornado Drills or Alerts

Fire and Tornado drills are practiced regularly to ensure the safety of each child. Evacuation maps are posted at the exit of each classroom. We work closely with the local fire department and they often assist us with practice drills that encourage children to THINK and not panic in emergency situations.

### Fundraisers

Fundraisers are conducted during the year for the purpose of purchasing needed instructional supplies and equipment by the school. We do not encourage door-to-door sales by our students.

### Homework

Most teachers assign homework daily. Please provide a quiet place for your child to do his or her homework without television or noise. Be sure to check with your child's teacher and the Thursday folder for grades and assignments.

### Illness or Injuries

If a student becomes injured or ill at school, the parent or emergency contact will be notified. Only the people indicated on the child's enrollment form will be allowed to check the child out from school.

### Inclement Weather

In case of bad weather please **DO NOT** call the school when you think school might not be in session or that we may be dismissing students early. Instead please listen to the news media, as it we will announce closings as soon as possible. We will also send out text alerts using the primary cell phone number you provide for your student's records. If you change cell phone numbers, please send a written note to the office, so that we can update your child's file in the computer.

Please make sure you fill out and return your child's Emergency Dismissal form with the most current information. We will follow your written instructions on that form in the event of an early dismissal.

## **Leader in Me**

West Side Elementary is a Leader in Me school. We believe our part of our mission is to develop leaders one child at a time. The Leader in Me program is based on the works of Dr. Stephen Covey and the Seven Habits of Highly Effective People. You can read more about Leader in Me at [www.leaderinme.org](http://www.leaderinme.org)

## **Local School Governance Team (LSGT)**

The LSGT is comprised of the principal, teachers, parents, and business partners. All members of the Governance Team must:

- Maintain a school wide perspective on issues
- Regularly participate in council meetings
- Participate in information and training programs
- Act as a link between the school council and the community
- Encourage the participation of parents and others within the school community
- Work to improve student achievement and performance

## **Lost and Found**

All clothing materials that are found will be placed in the clothing bin in the gym. All other items will be in the office. All unclaimed articles are available for daily examination and will be displayed from time to time. Articles not claimed will be given to charity. To ensure lost items are returned please write your child's name on items such as lunchboxes, backpacks and jackets.

## **Media Center**

The Media Center is one of the best places to get information. Students are encouraged to use the Media Center at every opportunity. Proper care must be given to all materials. All items removed from the Center must be checked out. Materials checked out will be marked as to the date they are to be returned. All rules concerning the Media Center must be observed. Students who lose media center books will be charged the replacement cost for the items so that all of our students can enjoy our media center materials.

## **Medicine**

In order to cooperate and meet the needs of our students, our school nurse will assist the child in taking medication if the parent follows these guidelines:

1. Parents are responsible for bringing all medication to the nurse's office
2. Prescription or over-the counter medication must be maintained in the original container. This container should contain the name of the patient, physician, pharmacy, name of medication, and dosage to be administered.
3. Parents must complete a medical authorization for the medication to be administered. This form can be obtained from the office.

## **Parent Conferences**

As a parent/guardian, you can request a conference with your child's teacher(s) at any time during the school year to discuss academic progress and ask any questions you may have about your child's academic achievement. Please contact your child's teacher by email or calling the school at 706.866.9211 to request a conference.

## **Parent and School Organization**

The PTO is a local unit organized by parents, teachers, and friends in the community. The organization strives to bring a closer relationship the home and school. As a parent or grandparent of a West Side student you are cordially invited to become an active member of the West Side PTO by paying the \$5 donation. Your donation gives you an active vote for the annual PTO Board elections and important PTO matters. Your support is vital for the success of the PTO program. Notices are sent out before each meeting. PTO also invites all parents, grandparents, and community members to volunteer for PTO events. We appreciate our PTO and all they do to help our students become leaders!

## **Promotion and State Mandated Testing**

All students in third grade must pass the ELA portion of the state mandated test in order to be promoted to the fourth grade. Students in the fifth grade must pass the ELA and Math portions of the state mandated test in order to be promoted to the sixth grade.

## **Parents**

Due to state law only the custodial parent(s) and or legal guardians are allowed to sign report cards, field trip forms, registration forms, and change of transportation forms.

## **Parties**

At the beginning of the school year, each class selects a homeroom parent. The purpose of this position is to assist with parties and other festive occasions. The homeroom parent's role is to contact the other parents in the class to help organize the parties for the students. The times for these parties vary according to the teacher's schedule.

## **Phone Calls**

Teachers and students are not called from the classroom to the phone unless an emergency exists. No student is to use the phone unless an emergency exists and he/she has permission from the teacher or office staff. Forgotten assignments, forgotten notes, etc are not considered an emergency. Phone calls for change of transportation cannot be confirmed and therefore are NOT accepted over the phone. Information concerning students will not be given over the phone including, but not limited to, attendance, address, phone numbers, etc.

## **Pictures**

Individual fall and spring pictures are made for your convenience. Class (group) pictures are made in the spring. Please send your payment for pictures or the picture package back to school within one week of receiving them.

## **Rules**

Students at West Side are required to abide by all rules stated in the Catoosa County Student Handbook. Additionally, students are required to obey school rules. Please see your child's teacher for a copy of current school rules. School rules are intended to ensure a positive and safe learning environment for all students.

## School Partners - Partnership 2000

Thank you to our school partners for sharing their time and resources to help all of our students achieve! If you are interested in becoming a school partner, please contact a school administrator at 706.866.9211. Some of our partners are:

- ✓ *Catoosa County Library*
- ✓ *West Side Baptist Church*
- ✓ *First Volunteer Bank*
- ✓ *Metro Boiler Tube*
- ✓ *Boynton United Methodist Church*
- ✓ *New Heights Baptist Church*
- ✓ *Walmart*
- ✓ *Chattanooga/Chickamauga National Park*
- ✓ *6<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Museum*
- ✓ *The McCallie School*
- ✓ *Top Martial Arts*
- ✓ *True Life Chiropractic*
- ✓ *EMRC*
- ✓ *Kiwanis Club of Fort Oglethorpe*
- ✓ *MedSTAT*
- ✓ *Tower Community Bank*
- ✓ *Modern Woodsmen*
- ✓ *Emerson Russell*
- ✓ *Triple A Painting*
- ✓ *Village Print Shoppe*
- ✓ *Willard Law Firm*
- ✓ *Ringgold Telephone Company*
- ✓ *Venue Church*
- ✓ *Coca Cola*
- ✓ *Catoosa County Sheriff's Dept*

## Student withdrawal

When it is necessary for a student to withdraw from West Side, the parent or legal guardian should be notify the office (Andrea Russell) and the teacher as soon as possible. All student records will be forwarded to the next school in which the student is enrolled.

## Supplemental Programs at West Side

1. CHAMPS -5<sup>th</sup> grade
2. Horizon classes (gifted)
3. Speech, Occupational, Physical therapy classes
4. Special Education classes
5. 4-H program 5<sup>th</sup> grade
6. Leader in Me program
7. Early Intervention Program K -5<sup>th</sup>
8. YMCA after school program
9. School counselor
10. Music
11. Physical Education
12. Pre-K program
13. Braves Club Tutoring
14. Technology Club
15. GA Hope counseling

## Tardiness

All students should be in their classes before 8:00 a.m. each morning. Students who arrive to school after 8:00 need to check in at the office for a tardy slip. Any child who rides a bus to school will not be considered tardy. If a child is tardy to due to a doctor/dentist appointment, we must receive a note from the physician before we can mark the tardy excused.

## Textbooks/IPADS/Chromebooks/Library Books

Textbooks, IPADS, Chromebooks, and library books are expensive. Students are responsible for the care of the items assigned to them. Loss of or damage to these items will result in full payment to the school system.

## Thursday Folders

A class newsletter will be sent home with students every Thursday as a means of communication between the school and parents. This letter will contain upcoming events, a calendar of activities, and general information. A school newsletter will be sent home once per month. This letter will be sent home in the Thursday folder. The folder will also contain important papers for you to read as well as papers from your child's teacher. Please look over these papers, sign the folder, and return to the teacher on Friday.

## Title One

### Components of Title I

West Side Elementary Schools a school wide Title I school. The purpose of Title I is to make sure that all students have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards as measured by state academic assessments.

### Three specific elements of Title I:

1. **Free and Reduced Lunch Forms** - Our status as a Title I school is determined by the percentage of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch. Since at least 40% of our students qualify, we are a Title I school wide school. Please help us by filling out these forms each year your child is in school so that we can receive Title I funding from the federal Department of Education to provide additional resources for all of our students.
2. **Compact** - The compact is an agreement that explains the roles and responsibilities of each person for helping students learn: the student, the parent, the teacher, and the school administrator. Each person listed on the compact should carefully read his/her responsibilities, make a promise to fulfill the responsibilities by signing the compact, and then uphold his/her commitment to help each child learn.
3. **Parent Involvement** - We welcome your involvement at West Side, both within the classroom and with extracurricular efforts like clubs and PTO.  
Thank you for your continued support of West Side and we look forward to working with you to help your child achieve academic excellence! If you have any questions or suggestions about how we can make West Side Elementary a better school where students achieve academic excellence, please feel free to contact the principal at 706-866-9211 or [rmountjoy@catoosa.k12.ga.us](mailto:rmountjoy@catoosa.k12.ga.us)

### Title I Parent Compacts

You will receive a copy of the current West Side Elementary Title I Parent Compact in your child's folder. You can also find this compact online at our West Side Parent Notifications webpage. This compact is an agreement between some of the people who are responsible for helping your child achieve academic success.

### Title I School Wide Plan

The West Side Title I School Wide Plan is a document designed to address identified areas of need and to provide progressive steps to work toward improvement. The Leadership Team reviews and updates the Title I School Wide Plan periodically. As a parent, you are always welcome to offer written input toward the Title I School Wide Plan. A copy of the plan is available for examination in the front office and the Media Center.



## Title I Parent Right to Know Notification

In compliance with the requirements of No Child Left Behind statute the Catoosa County School District informs parents that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student's teacher(s). The following information may be requested:

- 1.) Whether the teacher has met the Georgia Professional Standards Commission requirements for certification for the grade level and subject area in which the teacher provides instruction;
- 2.) Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or other provisional status through which Georgia qualifications or certification criteria have been waived;
- 3.) The college major and any graduate certification or degree held by the teacher;
- 4.) Whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications

All our teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators are considered to be highly qualified by the state of Georgia. Being Highly Qualified means they have the specific certification required for their position. If any parent is interested in knowing the credentials of any of our teachers or administrators, contact an administrator. We would be happy to provide that information for you. We also will be happy to provide you with a copy of our School Improvement Plan and discuss any questions you might have concerning this document.

### Visitors

All visitors must report the office. After 8:00 am, all exterior doors will be locked for safety. To enter after 8:00 am, please press the buzzer next to the front doors and show a photo ID.

### Volunteers

West Side has a very active volunteer program. If you would be interested in participation in this extremely helpful program please contact (Heather Bradford) 706-866-9211 for more information.

**Thank you for your support!**