

# Westwood Elementary School



## Parent-Student Handbook 2020-2021

Mrs. Michael Anne Jackson, Principal

August 2020

Dear Westwood Families and Students,

As we open our doors this August, much of what we have known about our routines and procedures has changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Westwood Elementary Faculty and Staff have shown immeasurable amounts of flexibility and willingness to adapt to our changes ahead. Please know that everything included in this document could change at any time. This document is shared to provide clarity regarding day to day operations at Westwood Elementary for opening school.

The following principles will guide all planning, decision making, and execution of plans to return to school for this academic year. These were taken directly from the TCSS Reopening Schools Plan.

1. **We will be transparent.** We will share what we know and what we don't know, and be clear about what we can control and what is outside of our control.
2. **We will be equitable.** We will base decisions on what is best for all students, families, and educators.
3. **We will listen.** We will bring together diverse stakeholders and experts to understand realities faced at each school and will work together to find creative solutions.
4. **We will put safety first.** We will use science, data, and public health guidance and leadership to inform the decisions we make. We will be decisive.
5. **We will move deliberately to make tough decisions.** We may make mistakes but will quickly adapt as variables change.

Westwood Elementary will remain committed to high levels of learning through a variety of models and to the health and safety of all students. We ask that you share your concerns directly with us should something arise. We are here to support you and your child as we navigate a new normal. Thank you for entrusting your children to our care!

Best,

*Michael Anne Jackson*

Mrs. Michael Anne Jackson  
Principal, Westwood Elementary  
[majackson@tcss.net](mailto:majackson@tcss.net) or (205) 342-2666

Please refer to the *TCSS Reopening Our Schools* for information also

### **Westwood Elementary School's Vision Statement**

The children at Westwood Elementary School will strive to reach their full potential and become successful members of society.

### **Westwood Elementary School's Mission Statement**

Westwood Elementary is committed to meeting the social, emotional, and academic needs of ALL students through an engaging environment. Therefore, we strive to equip students with the skills and strategies to become lifelong learners successfully contributing to society.

#### **School Address and Important Numbers:**

**Westwood Elementary School  
11629 Westwood School Road  
Coker, AL 35452**

**Office: (205) 342-2666**

**Fax: (205) 247-4197**

## **COVID-19 Westwood Elementary Specific Information**

### **Health Screening and Protocols**

#### **Home Screening of Students**

Home is the first, and most important, point on the screening continuum.

#### **Parents should:**

1. Screen and monitor their child for any signs of illness including fever, onset of cough, etc., and keep their child home if they have any symptoms of illness.
2. Keep their child at home if someone in the household is lab-confirmed to have COVID-19.
3. Take their child's temperature before leaving for school. Students with a temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or above should not attend school. Students should only attend school if they are fever-free without the aid of medication.

#### **Westwood Faculty and Staff Procedures:**

School staff will **visually** check for symptoms (which may include temperature checks) and/or confirm with families that students are COVID-19 symptom-free. All screening information will be kept confidential.

## Guidance if exposed for Students

If the student has been in contact with someone who has the virus, the parent should contact the individual's healthcare provider. Should additional measures be required, he/she will be contacted by the Department of Public Health to begin the contact tracing protocol.

### Parents/guardians, please do the following:

Quarantine your child in a specific room away from others in your home. Contact the following (in order of priority), let them know your child has been exposed to COVID19, and then follow their instructions.

1. Your healthcare provider
2. School Nurse and Principal, Michael Anne Jackson
3. Teacher

### SUSPECTED COVID-19

If a student becomes ill on campus/district, he/she will immediately report to the school/district nurse's isolation room to complete the case form. Once the student arrives at the isolation room, the nurse should immediately provide the individual with a mask.

The nurse must complete the Suspected COVID-19 Case Form, call the local health authority, and seek advice regarding transportation and location.

- The nurse and others caring for the suspected infected person should also wear a protective mask and gloves.
- The nurse will call the parent of the student who must be picked up within one hour.
- In addition to all other common surfaces recently touched by student, the isolation area and suspected employee's or student's work area/classroom will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

## Social Distancing

Social distancing is an effective way to prevent potential infection. Westwood Elementary will promote social distancing and try to minimize contact with others. However, maintaining physical distance from others will not always be practical or possible inside a school setting.

## Operations and Facilities

### Classrooms

- Student desks and tables will be positioned apart to allow for social distancing (to the greatest degree possible).
- Tables and desks will be arranged to avoid face-to-face interaction (to the greatest degree possible) among students.

- Employees are expected to disinfect their own personal workspace (teacher desk, phone, etc.) throughout the day, giving special attention to commonly touched surfaces.
- All classrooms will be sanitized daily with sanitizing sprayers.
- Teachers will be provided sanitizer to use to wipe down surfaces throughout the day.

### **Facility Cleaning**

All guidelines outlined in the TCSS –Reopening Our Schools document will be followed. Please refer to the document for specific information.

### **Masks**

Currently, there is a state-wide mandate to wear face masks when you are within 6 ft. of a person from another household. Students in second grade and above as well as employees will be required to follow the mask order guidelines from the ADPH. Masks will be provided by the school system, but you are welcome to wear your own.

### **Transportation**

All guidelines outlined in the TCSS –Reopening Our Schools document will be followed. Please refer to the document for specific information.

### **Cafeteria**

Westwood Elementary will reduce the number of seating at lunchroom tables by  $\frac{1}{2}$ . When scheduled to eat in the lunchroom, each student will sit in a zig-zag pattern, avoiding face to face contact. A rotational schedule will be utilized allowing certain grade levels to eat together twice a week in the lunchroom. Friday's will be on a rotational schedule. When classes are not scheduled to eat in the lunchroom, teachers will either eat in their classroom or at an outdoor seating area. Teachers will use their best judgement with the weather and outdoor seating choices. Your child's teacher will communicate more details regarding the classroom lunch schedule. Unfortunately, visitors will not be allowed to join students for lunch regardless of indoor or outdoor eating.

The cafeteria will be properly cleaned and sanitized before each class arrives and dismisses. Hand sanitizer will also be available as needed.

Cafeteria lunch options will follow the TCSS guidelines for the lunch serving line and beverage choices. If your child will be bringing their own lunch, they must be able to open, close, and eat all items independently. Teachers and staff will not be able to assist students as they have in the past. We encourage families to begin practice opening items at home.

Students will continue eating breakfast in the cafeteria following the same seating patterns as lunch.

## Physical Education

Westwood Elementary is fortunate enough to have a large gym for recreational activities. Our gym has been measured and can successfully hold over 150 individuals while maintaining social distancing guidelines. This will allow for our students to participate in non-contact, social-distanced physical activities. Westwood PE classes will utilize both indoor and outdoor activities. Weather will be a large factor in daily decisions.

## Water Fountains

Westwood Elementary water fountains will not be operational. We encourage you to send your child with a water bottle prefilled with water only. Westwood Elementary plans to have water for sale daily at the cost of \$1/bottle.

## School Visitors

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a limited number of visitors will be allowed in the school building and by appointment only. To enter the building, all visitors will be required to answer the employee screening questions, have their temperature taken, and wear a mask. **At least during the first semester, there will be no lunch or classroom visitors.** Parent meetings will be held virtually, as feasible.

## Classroom Celebrations

At this time, since visitors are not allowed in the building, Westwood will not take outside food items for classroom birthday celebrations. We do not want to add any additional items to classroom agendas during the pandemic. Our teachers and counselor will ensure your child's birthday is recognized at school. We will continue to monitor. Holiday celebrations will be monitored and communicated via the classroom teacher.

## Gatherings

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and out of an abundance of caution, Westwood Elementary will not have in person gatherings at least during the first semester. We will have opportunities for you to connect digitally. We are all still learning and adjusting to new ways of operating. Please be patient as we navigate this new normal. We hope to offer virtual parent workshops as well as student showcases.

All other procedures and modifications due to COVID-19 are included in the following sections. Please read carefully as many of the ways of doing things in the past have changed. Thank you and please contact us if there is any confusion.

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## Attendance

All students are expected to attend school each day. Students must be checked in prior to 11:15 a.m. to be considered present. If a student checks out prior to 11:30 a.m. the student will be

counted absent. If a student is absent, the student must bring a written excuse from home within 2 days following the absence signed by the student's parent/guardian. After a total of 10 absences in a school year, the parent/guardian of the student will be required to provide medical or legal documentation for absences to be excused. For more information, please see the Tuscaloosa County School System Parent-Student Information Guide.

Absences due to COVID-19 will not be counted against students. The policies for absenteeism due to quarantining and COVID-19 illness are still under review. Information will continue to be shared.

### **Tardies/Check-ins:**

The school day begins at 7:50 a.m. All students are expected to be in their classrooms ready to begin a new school day by 8:00 a.m. All students arriving after 8:00 a.m. must be escorted to the buzzer/camera system located at the front door of the school. Once the front office staff verifies that the student is checking in, and the student enters the building, the individual bringing the child to school may leave. The student must immediately report to the office so that he/she may receive a pass to class. Parents/guardians should communicate with the school via email or phone call to indicate the reason for being tardy to school. Adult visitors will not be able to come inside the building for check ins.

### **Check-outs:**

The only people allowed to check-out students are those listed on the check-out list. You may be asked to present a picture ID. This procedure is to ensure the safety of your child. If you have any questions about who is identified to check-out your child, we'll be happy to help. There will be no check-outs after 2:00 due to the start of school dismissal. Anyone that comes in after 2:00 will have to wait until the 1<sup>st</sup> bell to pick up a student.

### **COVID-19 Procedures for Checking Out:**

Please come to front of the school. Office staff will meet you at the front door to get the required information and signature for checking a student out from school. Individuals should remain at the front door until identity is verified, student has been signed out, and the student exits the building with the adult. The check-out process may take longer than normal so please allow for additional time.

## **Discipline**

Our main focus at WES is promoting student safety, developing self-discipline and appropriate social skills, and creating an environment for learning. We have high expectations for our student's behavior, and we will do all we can to help them meet the expectations. Please read the *Code of Conduct for Students* section in your *TCSS Parent-Student Handbook*. Please note we will have in school intervention for students who continue to disobey school rules.

Parents/Guardians will be responsible for transportation pick up involving any students who receive detention. Students will need to be picked up by 4:00 p.m. Extended day is not an option for students serving detention.

## School Bus Conduct

The TCSS Board recognizes that the school bus is an extension of the classroom and requires students to conduct themselves in a responsible manner on the bus. The Board further recognizes that riding a school bus is a privilege that will be revoked if appropriate conduct by the students is not observed.

## Enrollment

Enrollment is now completed online. Please go to [www.tcss.net](http://www.tcss.net). On the homepage, please go to the "Online Student Registration" section and click the online registration link. Other registration documents will need to be hand delivered to the school. Those items include:

- 2 proofs of residence (one bill statement and one lease/mortgage agreement)
- immunization record
- birth certificate
- social security card

We encourage you to complete the lunch application, pay for current dues, and to join PTO as well.

## Extended Day Information

The Extended Day Program will begin **Monday, August 24, 2020**. The Extended Day Program is an extension of the regular school day designed to offer tutorial program, homework assistance, and enrichment programs for students and to meet after-school childcare needs of working parents. Extended Day Programs in all Tuscaloosa County elementary and participating middle schools operate from the time school is out (around 3 p.m.) until 5:45 p.m. five days a week through the school year, excluding holidays, teacher in-service or half days. Please know the Extended Day program will follow the same procedures as the school. Closures will be determined by the school's status and/or recommendations from health officials.

## Extended Day Tuition and Fees

There is a \$12.00 registration fee per child for either the afternoon/morning program. Tuition for the program is as follows:

\$35.00 per week for one child



\$60.00 per week for two children in the same family  
\$75.00 per week for three children in the same family  
\$90.00 per week for four children in the same family  
\$15.00 per week for each additional child in the same family, exceeding four  
(No daily discounts are to be given. Discounts are only for students attending weekly.)

Tuition payments will be due every Friday for the coming week. Fees can also be paid in advance on a monthly basis. Program participants will not be allowed to carry an outstanding balance. Weekly tuition is not reduced based on frequency of attendance.

Afternoon daily tuition is \$8.00 and the morning program tuition is \$2.00 per child, payable in advance of day of stay. While this service is designed for families with children in need of everyday after-school supervision, occasional or infrequent stays are welcomed.

There will be a \$10.00 late charge for every 5-minute period that any child is not picked up by 5:45 p.m. at the close of the program. The late charge is due on the date that the late pick up occurs.

Ms. Melissa Hannah is our Extended Day Director. She will be glad to answer any of your questions. Please call the school at 342-2666 for assistance. The office will be able to provide you with the Extended Day Program Registration form.

## **Fees**

Different fees may be requested throughout the school year. These fees are usually collected in the classroom. Please place fees in a labeled envelope/bag with the student's name and reason for the fee. Following this routine will help us to make sure the fee gets to the appropriate location. Lunchroom and extended day fees, along with any other fees, can be sent directly to the classroom, and we will get it to the correct place. Please make sure your checks are separate for each of the following items: lunch, extended day, and fees. The funds are receipted into different accounts. Also, please note we do not have change in the office. Please pay exact as you are able.

Return checks for Tuscaloosa County School System are handled through Nexcheck. When any person has a second returned check with our school, it is our procedure to place them on a "cash only" status. You will receive a letter notifying you that we have received a second returned check and you will only be able to pay with cash, money order, or cashier's check for the remainder of the current school year. This rule applies to all monies related to school expenses: yearbooks, field trips, t-shirts, fundraisers, school pictures, etc.

## **Field Trips**

There will be no off campus instructional field trips during the first semester. This will be re-evaluated by the TCSS throughout the school year. We hope to offer virtual field trips for our students throughout the first semester.

## Lunchroom Information

Breakfast and lunch are served beginning the first day of school. Free and reduced meals will be available for qualifying students in accordance with the policy adopted by the Board of Education. Cashiers will utilize computers to maintain lunch accounts. This will enable them to accept payment by the day, week, month, or term/semester. Lunch money can also be added to lunchroom accounts through [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com). Please understand that all lunches are to be paid for prior to eating. We will not charge lunches. If you are sending lunch money, please make sure to send any money labeled with the child's name and what the money is for in an envelope.

Breakfast begins each morning at 7:30 a.m. Students who are eating breakfast should report directly to the cafeteria in the mornings.

Elementary School Breakfasts for Students	\$1.50
Reduced Price Breakfasts	\$0.30
Visiting Adult Breakfasts	\$2.00
Elementary School Lunches for Students	\$2.65
Reduced Price Lunches	\$0.40
Visiting Adult Lunches	\$4.25

Please be mindful that lunches brought from home should be ready to eat. Due to safety rules, WES faculty and staff are not allowed to heat lunches. **Please do not bring fast food or soft drinks into the lunchroom.** This is a violation of the TCSS Wellness policy. The TCSS Wellness policy, which is based on state and federal guidelines, prohibits food from outside sources on campus.

### Snacks:

Students bringing snack items from home should include healthy options. Please refrain from sending candy items for snack. Remember, soft drinks are not allowed. We encourage water bottles with water and healthy options for snacking. Should you have any questions, please ask.

All food served to students must be made in a commercial kitchen. Homemade items are not allowed to be given to other students. A list of ingredients must be on the container. This rule is meant to avoid any reactions for students who have allergies and to stay in accordance with necessary state and federal guidelines.

## **Nurse Information**

It is our priority to keep all of our students healthy and in school. Our school nurse is Ms. Kayce Marlowe. The Tuscaloosa County School system requires all students have a Health Assessment Record form on file in the school health office. If you have not filled out this form, please contact the school nurse. Specific health information can be found in the TCSS Parent-Student Information Guide. A few important reminders include: children should not be sent to school until they have been fever free for at least 24 hours without taking a fever reducing medication, children should not be sent to school if they have vomited in the last 24 hours, and in order to administer medication at school a completed School Medication Prescriber/Parent Authorization form is required. For further information, please see the school health information in the TCSS information guide or visit <http://www.tcss.net/Page/9445>. All students must be up to date on their immunizations to attend school. A current record of immunizations must be on file to attend school.

## **Parent Teacher Organization**

At Westwood Elementary, we are privileged to have such a dedicated Parent Teacher Organization. We have several opportunities for you to get involved and volunteer your time. We encourage each and every family to join PTO. The joining fee is \$10 per family or \$5 per person. For all other information, you can email PTO at [westwoodPto1@yahoo.com](mailto:westwoodPto1@yahoo.com) or send a message via Westwood Elementary PTO page.

## **Physical Education**

Students should wear socks, tennis shoes, and appropriate clothes to participate in physical activities. Please remember to send a written note if your child cannot participate in P.E. due to illness or injury. After 3 days, a note from a physician will be required to sit out from P.E. Please note if a parent wants to check their child out while the student is at P.E. they must still enter the front office and follow check out procedures. The office will call the student while the parent is signing them out. This ensures the safety of your child.

## **School Schedule**

The school day at Westwood Elementary begins at 7:50 a.m. All students are expected to be in their classrooms and ready to begin each school day by 7:50 a.m. Students will be counted tardy after 8:00 a.m. If students arrive after 8:00 a.m., students must be signed in by an adult at the front office doors. All other doors will be locked. Our school doors open at 7:30 a.m. Students arriving prior to 7:30 a.m. will need to enroll in the early morning program. Dismissal will begin at 2:43 p.m. with bus riders and car riders following at 2:45 p.m.

## Arrival

Arrival begins at 7:30 a.m. We encourage all parents dropping off in the morning to use our car rider line at the back of the school. In the morning, let your child out at the back door at the top of the circular drive (4<sup>th</sup> grade hall). This will allow for faster drop off times and is also safer than parking and walking students to the door. **Due to COVID-19, no parents/visitors will be allowed to enter the building. This will apply to the first day of school.**

Should you need to arrive to school before 7:30 a.m. please sign up for the extended morning program. You will need to complete the extended day packet and bring them to the cafeteria through the courtyard and sign the student in. Extended morning begins at 6:30 a.m. and drop off for the early morning program should be complete by 7:15 a.m. to not interfere with regular drop off for buses and cars.

## Dismissal

The students riding school buses will load in the back of the school when the bell rings at 2:43. Car riders will be dismissed and loaded into their cars immediately following bus dismissal at 2:45 p.m. in the back of the building. By following the direction of the Safety Patrol, four cars can be loaded at a time. Please stop at a marked cone so your child can be loaded safely. We ask that you please post a sign with your child's name(s) so we can read it from a distance. You will not be allowed to enter the building to pick up your child. This will ensure all traffic continues to flow smoothly and safely. Students that have not been picked up by 3:00 p.m. will need to be picked up from extended day.

## Friendly Reminders

- Vehicles are not allowed to pass any other car during arrival or dismissal
- Please enter and exit vehicles on the passenger side
- When exiting the car and dismissal lines, please continue forward. Do not turn around or reverse for any reason.
- Please display car tags in front window until all children are loaded. Their names are called at various points throughout the process.

## Teacher Conferences

Our teachers are dedicated to maintaining clear and concise communication between students and parents. We encourage parent-teacher conferences to improve and maintain communication among parents, teachers, and students. If at any time, you would like to schedule a virtual conference please notify the teacher in writing or call the school at 342-2666 to make an appointment. They will be glad to set up a virtual appointment time. If you are

requesting a conference with our administrator, please call to request a conference time. Everyone will work diligently to communicate and follow up within 24 hours. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding in advance.

### **Transportation Changes**

If you need to change your child's method of transportation throughout the school day or prior to, those changes **must be in writing**. Changes must be received in the office no later than 2:00. These written changes can be faxed to (205) 247-4197. We cannot promise emailed messages will be honored due to time constraints and faculty absences. No student will be allowed to ride home with another student in a car or on a bus unless both students have a written note by the parent/guardian. Students will not be allowed to call home regarding transportation changes. We will not accept transportation changes over the phone either. For other information, please call transportation at 342-2636.

**2020-2021 School Calendar – Tuscaloosa County School System**

**May 11, 2020 Revision**

AUGUST 2020				
M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

JANUARY 2021				
M	T	W	T	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

2020	
Aug 12	Institute
Aug 13-14	Professional Development (system)
Aug 17	Professional Development (local)
Aug 18-19	Teacher Work Days
Aug 20	First Day Students
Sept 7	Labor Day
Nov 11	Veterans' Day
Nov 23-27	Thanksgiving Holidays
Dec 21 – Jan 4	Winter Holidays

SEPTEMBER 2020				
M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

FEBRUARY 2021				
M	T	W	T	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26

2021	
Jan 4	Professional Development (local)
Jan 5	First Day Students
Jan 18	MLK, Jr. Birthday
Mar 15 – 19	Spring Break
May 27	Half Day for Students
May 28	Half Day for Students/Last Day for Students
June 1	Prof Dev & Teacher Work Day
Jun 2	Last Day for Teachers/Staff
May 31	Memorial Day
Fri., July 3	Fourth of July Holiday (Observed)

OCTOBER 2020				
M	T	W	T	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

MARCH 2021				
M	T	W	T	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

Attendance/Work Days		
Month	Students	Faculty/Staff
Aug	8	14
Sep	21	21
Oct	22	22
Nov	15	15
Dec	14	14
Jan	18	19
Feb	20	20
Mar	18	18
Apr	22	22
May	20	20
June	0	2
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>187</b>

NOVEMBER 2020				
M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

APRIL 2021				
M	T	W	T	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

Grade Reporting Periods			
Nine Week Periods	Total Days	Progress Report	Report Card
Aug 20 – Oct 15	40	Sep 18	Oct 22
Oct 16 – Dec 18	40	Nov 13	Jan 7
Jan 5 – Mar 12	48	Feb 5	Mar 26
Mar 22 – May 28	50	Apr 23	May 28

DECEMBER 2020				
M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

MAY 2021				
M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

Legend	
	Student Attendance Day
	Students Out; Fac/Staff Dev
	Holiday - No School
	Start of semester
	Early Release

JUNE 2021				
M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11

**Westwood Elementary School  
Student - Parent Handbook Contract  
2020-2021**

I have read and understood the content included in this handbook. I also understand that due to the pandemic this information is fluid and may change instantly. By my signing this contract, I agree to the rules and procedures included.

-----  
Parent/Guardian Signature

-----  
Date

-----  
Student Signature

-----  
Date

-----  
Student's Teacher/Grade

-----  
Date

Please complete and return to your child's teacher.