

PUE Student-Parent Handbook 2023-2024



Update 5/9/23

Topics

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Disclaimer: While this handbook attempts to cover major and common issues that may arise at PUE, it cannot possibly contain all rules and policies that students, parents, and staff must adhere to on a daily basis. We also reserve the right to make occasional updates based on events that take place within the school or community.

School Information

Pleasant Union Elementary School
1900 Pleasant Union Church Road
Raleigh NC 27614

Important Contacts

Main Office Hours: 8:00am-4:30pm	919-870-4230 - Phone 919-589-6650 - Fax
Principal	Bryan Tunstall ctunstall@wcpss.net
Assistant Principal	Jasmine McNeill jmcneill2@wcpss.net
WCPSS Transportation	919-805-3030
Cafeteria Manager	Juanita Wilkerson jwilkerson3@wcpss.net
Data Manager	Joyce Baginski jbaginski@wcpss.net
Before/After School Care Coordinator	Debbie DeStefano ddestefano@wcpss.net

CAFETERIA MEALS

- School breakfast is \$1.50 and lunch is \$3.25 per student
- Families may set up a lunch account.
- Breakfast is served from 8:45 AM – 9:15 AM.
- Lunch times vary by grade.
- Snacks are allowed during instructional time.
- We do not microwave student lunches.
- We ask that you do not send your child with soda or energy drinks.

LOST & FOUND

Please label your child's personal belongings. This will help teachers and staff members locate lost items. Do not allow your child to bring extra money, valuable items, toys, trading cards, devices, or sports equipment to school unless prior written approval has been communicated directly from a child's teacher. We will not assume responsibility for the security of such items.

The lost and found closet is located in the school atrium. If your child has lost an item, please encourage them to check this closet. Clothing and other items not claimed by the end of each academic quarter will be donated to charity.

TEACHER NEWSLETTERS & SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Families are encouraged to read our Weekly Newsletter, which will be shared every Friday via email and text. The newsletter provides information about student learning, special events, and classroom and/or school-wide projects underway.

Additional details about meetings and activities involving the Pleasant Union PTA are also provided in it.

Teachers will send home weekly newsletters in addition to the PUE one, which contain information specific to your child's class.

If you are not receiving these messages, please contact the main office to be added.

SCHOOL MESSENGER

WCPSS schools and the district use the SchoolMessenger notification service to send important information to families through phone calls, email, and text messages. View [FAQ](#).

[2023-2024 School Calendar](#)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Attendance:

How do I inform the school if my child is going to be absent?

Please contact your students' teacher that your child is going to be absent or is home due to illness. When the student returns to school please send a written note explaining the absence within two days. If your child is absent for three or more days, please send a doctor's note to return.

How do I get an absence approved for educational leave?

These forms are available online or from our front office and must be submitted two weeks prior to the absence.

Communication with Teachers:

What is the procedure for visiting my child's classroom?

Unless parents are registered volunteers and have been invited by the teacher, they are not permitted to visit the classroom during instructional time.

How can I get in touch with my child's teacher?

Send a note in with your child or email the teacher. Typically teachers will respond within one business day. Teachers will share their preferred form of communication with you.

Arrival and Dismissal:

Can I walk my child to class?

No, to maintain the safety and security of the building, we request all families follow regular arrival procedures. We will allow parents to walk students to their classroom on the first day of school.

At the end of the day can I pick up my child in the classroom?

No, please follow our dismissal guidelines so that we ensure the safest departure from school for all children.

Transportation:

What is the procedure for changing the way my child will go home?

Please write a note to the teacher and send it to school with your child. For unavoidable last-minute changes please call the front office by 12:30 PM.

What if my child misses the bus or van at the end of the school day?

The Front Office will contact the parent concerning transportation home. It is important that contact information is complete and current.

Can my child go home with a friend on the bus?

No. WCPSS Transportation policy requires that students who ride the bus must ride the bus they are assigned to and may only exit the bus at their assigned stop.

What if my child doesn't get off the bus?

While scary, it is best not to panic. The typical reason children don't get off the bus in elementary schools is that they fall asleep. If that is the case, the driver will finish the route and then make a second attempt to drop-off. Please contact the school in the event they missed the bus entirely.

In the event that your child does not get off the bus, and it is after office hours, please call WCPSS transportation line (919-805-3030). Follow the automated system until you get an operator who will assist you in locating the bus.

Miscellaneous Questions

Can I have lunch with my child?

Yes. You will be asked to sign-in at the front office and eat with your child at a designated table in the atrium. Additional children are not permitted to join you at this time.

Can I take homework, projects, lunches, money and other 'forgotten' items to my child's classroom?

Please drop any items off at the front office and we will be happy to deliver them. Please make sure that all items are labeled with the teacher's name for delivery.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

SCHOOL HOURS & ARRIVAL DETAILS

- School doors open at 8:45 AM.
- Students may not be dropped off at school before 8:45 AM unless they are enrolled in our Before School Care program.
- It is best for students to arrive at school before 9:10 AM so they can be seated before the bell rings.
- Students should be in their classrooms by 9:15 AM. Students who arrive after 9:15 AM are tardy.
- After 9:15 AM families should bring their child to the front door to check in and receive an admittance slip.

MORNING CARPOOL PROCEDURE

- The carpool line starts at the CARPOOL LINE FORMS HERE sign. You will be directed to move into the front circle to begin drop off at 8:45 AM.
- As you approach the cones please have your child ready to exit the car in a timely manner.
- For the safety of all children, please do not drop any child off in the parking lot.
- Do not drop children off in the bus or visitor lot under any circumstances.
- For safety, students must exit the car on the passenger side only.
- Please do not use cell phones in the carpool lane while actively driving for the safety of our students.

DISMISSAL & EARLY CHECK-OUT

- Any transportation changes must be requested in writing by a parent or legal guardian. Please send these notes in with your child in the morning or email the teacher directly the night before.
- Please do not email the teacher during the school day to request a transportation change; if there is a substitute or the teacher doesn't see the email until after school, something may be missed.
- Only pre-approved emergency contacts may pick up a child in lieu of a parent/guardian.

- Students must be in school until 11:30 to be counted as present on early release days.
- If checking a student out early, students must be checked out by 3:15 PM to not interfere with afternoon dismissal.
- For the safety of all our students, our office staff may ask to see an ID before releasing a child to anyone.

CARPOOL PICK-UP

- Please have your carpool number on display in your car. Please ensure the number is not faded and displayed in a way that can be seen by staff.
- Students are dismissed as their carpool numbers are called.
- The carpool line will form at the CARPOOL LINE FORMS HERE sign. You will be directed to move into the front circle to begin pick up.
- Do not merge into one line until you reach the circle.
- For safety, students must enter the car on the passenger side only.
- Please pull forward to the numbered cone that is vacant. Students are directed to the cone that corresponds to car order.
- Please pull forward to the empty spaces at the top of the carpool loop to buckle your child into their carseat.

EARLY ARRIVALS & AFTER SCHOOL CARE

- Early arrival care and after school care is provided for students at Pleasant Union ES by a school run program. The program's hours are 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM. Information and applications are available by contacting the Coordinator, Debbie DeStefano, at ddestefano@wcpss.net or (919)870-4230, extension 20432.
- Students who are not signed up to participate in the early arrival program may not be on campus before 8:45 AM.

TARDIES

School doors open at 8:45 AM. Students who arrive after 9:15 AM are tardy and must receive a class admittance slip before going to their classroom. Do not drop students off if they are tardy, a parent must escort their child to the door. Students are considered absent if they arrive at school after 12:30 PM or are not on campus for at least 3 hours and 15 minutes.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

We will always send your child home on his or her regular bus unless we receive written instructions from you to the contrary. Any transportation changes must be requested in writing by a parent or legal guardian. Please submit these written notes directly to your child's teacher in the morning. Please do not email the teacher during the school day to request a transportation change. Your email may not be opened until after dismissal or the teacher may be absent that day.

We are unable to accommodate requests for children to ride the bus home with other children. Students cannot ride on buses other than the one to which they are assigned. If a child is going to another student's home after school, please have the other student's carpool number and make sure written permission from both families is provided to the school.

The same behaviors that are appropriate in the classroom are appropriate at the school bus stop and on the school bus. Riding a school bus is a privilege that may be revoked if rules are not obeyed. Bus drivers will NOT release a Kindergarten or 1st grade student at a bus stop unless a responsible person is present at the stop for that child.

For a variety of reasons beyond our control, bus schedules may vary. When we are aware of a bus issue, we will send notifications through the Remind App which will send you text messages or push notifications. Please contact the Front Desk if you would like to be added to the Remind list. There are times we may not be aware of the problem. The [Here Comes Bus app](#) can help you stay informed about your child's bus arrival times.

In the event that your child does not get off the bus, and it is after office hours, please call WCPSS transportation line (919-805-3030). Follow the automated system until you get an operator who will assist you in locating the bus.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

UNEXCUSED & EXCUSED ABSENCES

If your child is absent, please send a note to school when they return. Students may receive an excused absence for the following reasons: illness or injury; quarantine; death in the immediate family; medical or dental appointments; court when a student is under subpoena; religious observances; and participation in a valid educational opportunity.

If we do not receive a note explaining that the absence was for one of the reasons listed, we must record the absence as unexcused. To be considered present at school, students must be in attendance at least one-half of the student school day (3 hours and 15 minutes). Every school day is important, so we hope you will schedule your family vacations during your track outs. Teachers will provide students with their make-up work when they return to school.

Excused absences still count as absences.

Attendance at school is essential for student learning. Parents will receive written notification for any child who has been absent from school for 6+ days. Any child that accumulates 25 absences may be considered for retention.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

DELAY OR CLOSING OF SCHOOL/INCLEMENT WEATHER

Information on closing or delay of school due to inclement weather is available at <http://www.wcpss.net/>, on local television, and on the radio. Make-up days are determined by district officials. The early arrival/after school program will follow the delay or closing schedule as well. When there is a delayed opening, please do not bring your child to school at the normal 8:45 AM arrival time. The decision to delay school due to severe weather is for the safety of staff as well as students, and no one will be at school to supervise your child or to open the building for them.

POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

CHANGE OF ADDRESS, NAME, OR PHONE NUMBER/EMERGENCY CONTACT

Please notify the Front Office and your child's teacher any time your home address, phone number, or email address changes. This is very important so we can reach you in case of an emergency. Please provide us with the best phone number to reach you between 8 AM – 4:30 PM each weekday.

TOYS/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Personal items (e.g., toys, trading cards, stuffed animals, fidgets) need to be kept at home, unless your child's teacher allows these items in their classroom for rewards, special occasions, etc. The only electronic device that should be brought to school is the district-issued Chromebooks. If a child brings a cellphone to school, they do so at their own risk. The expectation is that it will remain turned off throughout the day.

We highly recommend that parents not text students during the middle of the school day. If you need to get a message to your student, please contact the front office.

We highly discourage the use of smart watches for students. These only serve as a distraction for students during the day. Like cellphones, if a student is misusing it during the day, they will be asked to turn it off and place it in their bookbag.

Students are prohibited from recording other students and staff while on campus.

TECHNOLOGY

All students are issued a WCPSS Chromebook. They will keep this device as long as they are enrolled at a WCPSS school. Students in grades Second through Fifth will take their devices home each night. Kindergarten and first grade students will leave their devices at school.

Please be sure the device is charged at home and your student brings it back to school each day.

If you experience any issues with your child's device, visit the Guide to Technology for Parents and Students. You can also contact the Help Desk at 919-664-5700 or submit a help ticket online.

Students are expected to follow all PUE behavior expectations and relevant board policies when using technology and interacting online.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

- Only commercially prepared foods are allowed for birthday celebrations.
- No flowers or balloons should be sent to school. If they are, they will be kept in the office until the end of the day.

VOLUNTEERS

All volunteers working with children must be cleared through the WCPSS volunteer registration process, which can be completed online. **WCPSS will be using a new system this year. It is not running yet, but we will send a link as soon as it is available.**

All volunteers have a valid ID to sign in and receive a visitor badge that must be worn while in the building. You must make prior arrangements to volunteer in the classroom with the teacher.

RELEASE OF INFORMATION

Any parent or guardian who does not wish for their student's information to be released (student's name, grade, dates of attendance, etc.), please notify the

Front Office in writing within 20 school days of the receipt of this notice. The same is required for children being photographed for newsletters, yearbooks, and school publications.

Due to confidentiality, we are only able to release information to legal guardians or custodians unless we have a release of information signed and on file.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

We teach students school appropriate behaviors and motivate students to demonstrate good character. Most behaviors are handled within a teacher's classroom through redirection and conferencing with the student. Repeated behaviors or severe behaviors may be referred to the administration and/or may require additional consequences that include, but are not limited to, silent lunch, removal from class for a cool down, completing assignments in another room, or parental contact.

STUDENT DUE PROCESS

For more information on WCPSS Student Due Process and related policies on student behavior, please visit the [Student Due Process](#) page.

HEALTH AND STUDENT SAFETY

CUSTODY/VISITATION AGREEMENTS

Judges' orders regarding custody and visitation are kept on file in the school office so that staff are aware of who is authorized to pick up a child. Please make sure that the school receives an official copy of the judge's ruling as we cannot honor a parent/guardian's interpretation of a court order. Any changes in court orders should be given to the office as soon as possible.

We respectfully ask that the school be considered a place of learning, not a mediation site. Please handle all custody related issues off-campus.

TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOLS

Wake County Public School System policy is that all school system property is smoke-free. This includes smokeless tobacco devices.

LOCKDOWN DRILLS

Pleasant Union ES follows all WCPSS lockdown protocols and practices these protocols twice per year. All staff know where to take the children if outside in case of a lockdown. The principal will communicate with parents following a drill.

FIRE DRILLS/TORNADO DRILLS

Fire drills are conducted each month during the school year. Evacuation routes are posted in each classroom. Tornado drills are also practiced during the year. In the event of severe weather warnings we require all students and staff members to take shelter on the floor of our school until conditions improve.

SCHOOL NURSE

Pleasant Union has a school nurse assigned from the Wake County Health Department who is on campus a limited amount of time during the week. The school nurse provides vision and hearing screening for students referred by teachers after a school wide screening is done by a staff member. The school nurse also assists families of students who may require an individual health plan due to medical conditions or severe allergies.

FOOD SAFETY

Due to food allergies and dietary restrictions, families should not send food related items for the classroom unless they notify the teacher.

MEDICINE

Students requiring medications during the school day must have their parents submit a signed Physician Order for Medication (Form 1702) from a doctor to the front office.

- This includes medications such as cough drops, pain medicine, sunscreen, and poison ivy creams.
- The medication must remain in the original container with the original pharmacy label. These forms are available in the front office.
- All medications must be brought to school by an adult and signed in at the front office. Students may not transport medications.

PARENT RESOURCES

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)

Pleasant Union parents are encouraged to join the PTA. The PTA provides a great deal of support to the school and its students. While the primary purpose is advocacy, the PTA also organizes many of the “extras” that make school fun such as cultural arts assemblies, the science fair, spirit wear, family nights, book fairs, and visits by guest speakers. Fundraising efforts are solely led by the PTA. PTA volunteers must complete the WCPSS volunteer registration process.

REPORT CARD

After each quarter ends you will receive a report card from your child’s teacher. The dates that report cards are sent are set by WCPSS and vary by track.

GRADING

Standards based grading uses levels 1 to 4 indicate whether your child met expectations set by the state's Standard Course of Study.

Teachers' assessments include observations and evidence collected throughout the grading period to determine a student's levels of proficiency.

The descriptors for each level below are aligned to the expectations of the state Standard Course of Study in all content areas.

- Level 4: Student consistently demonstrates an in-depth understanding and is able to apply or extend the standard.
- Level 3: Student consistently demonstrates an understanding of the standard.
- Level 2: Student is approaching an understanding of the standard.
- Level 1: Student does not yet demonstrate an understanding of the standard.