



Warren T. Jackson Elementary School Student Handbook 2013-2014

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB)

Jackson is an International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Program (PYP) World School. IB PYP is a methodology rather than a curriculum. It is based on thematic teaching that focuses on central ideas and essential questions. It is inquiry based, in that students learn to ask and answer questions that have worldwide relevance. It impacts the total school program and permeates everything we do. Our Program of Inquiry is posted outside the main office and describes briefly the units that will be taught at each grade level. We encourage your interest and involvement. (Information on IB is available in the front foyer of the building.)

SCHOOL DAY

The school day for students is from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

MAIN CAMPUS ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

Buses unload students in the front of the building, while carpools may unload either in front or on the side. The side door on the main campus will be open from 7:30 until 8:00 only. Students who arrive after 8:00 a.m. are considered tardy and should enter the school by the front door only, sign in at the reception desk and then take their tardy slip directly to their classroom teacher. Please do not bring students to school before 7:30 a.m. as there is no supervision available that early. Please do not drop students at the 5th grade building as those doors are not open to the parking lot. Dismissal begins at 2:30 on the main campus. Carpoolers are dismissed on the side of the building, beginning at 2:30, where they wait in carpool number groups. Please wait in the carpool line and remain in your car. We will do our best to move the line along efficiently. Students not picked up by 2:50 will be brought back inside the building and parents will have to come in to get them.

PRIMARY CAMPUS ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

Buses unload students at the side of the building, while carpools unload at the front. Students who arrive after 8:00 a.m. are considered tardy and should enter the school by the front door, sign in at the reception desk and then take their tardy slip directly to their classroom teacher. Please do not bring students to school before 7:30 a.m. as there is no supervision available that early. Dismissal begins at 2:15 at the Primary campus. Carpoolers are dismissed to the front of the building, beginning at 2:30, where they wait in carpool number groups. Please wait in the carpool line and remain in your car. We will do our best to move the line along efficiently. Students not picked up by 2:50 will be brought back inside the building and parents will have to come in to get them.

For the safety of all students, please do not double park in the pick-up line or park anywhere that requires your child to cross in front of lanes of traffic. Please be alert and DO NOT use cell phones while loading and unloading children. We also ask that you respect our NO IDLING policy and turn your car off when not moving to reduce emissions detrimental to us all.

If you come into the building to pick up your child, please wait in the front hallway outside the office. DO NOT go into classroom areas to wait for your child.

It is important that all students receive a full day's instruction. Please do not pick up children before 2:30, as homework is often being assigned and explained at the end of the school day. No students will be dismissed within 15 minutes of dismissal at either campus. If you must pick your child up early, it will have to be before 2:00 to avoid the confusion at the end of the school day. Please stop first at the welcome desk and complete a sign out slip for your child. Bring that slip to the office and your child will be called over the intercom to come to the office. For safety reasons, you may be asked to show identification. Please be sure anyone other than a guardian who may pick up your child from school is listed on the registration forms.

Please do not call the school to change the way your child goes home. We cannot guarantee these messages, particularly those that arrive at the end of the day. We need changes in writing at the beginning of the day, directly to the classroom teacher.

ATTENDANCE

All children are expected to be in attendance each day unless illness or family emergencies occur. Children should not come to school feeling ill or with serious colds or other contagious conditions. A written excuse must be brought with the child upon his return. Students are expected to make up any classwork or homework missed during the absence. If students are absent for family vacations, please be aware that these are considered unexcused absences and teachers are not required to provide make-up work. Missed work will reflect on your child's grades. Our attendance plan calls for social worker referrals after 7 absences. Please support these efforts by eliminating all non- illness absences.

VISITING IN THE BUILDING

To help safeguard the safety of all students and staff, all outside doors to Jackson are kept locked. Staff members have key cards to allow entry and the front door has a bell and identification camera to allow staff to "buzz" people into the building. All visitors are required to sign in and wear a nametag while in the building. THE FRONT DOOR OF THE ADDITION WILL BE KEPT LOCKED AT ALL TIMES. All visitors will enter through the front door of the main building both at the main campus and at Jackson Primary. If you would like to observe in a classroom or conference with a teacher, please make an appointment in advance. We ask that you do not interrupt classes to speak with the teacher or to bring items forgotten at home. If you bring something to school for your child, please leave the item at the welcome desk and a note will be sent to your child's teacher so the item can be recovered at a time that does not interrupt instruction.

TEXTBOOKS

Students will be issued textbooks at the beginning of the school year. They remain the property of the Atlanta Public Schools and must be kept in good condition and returned at the end of the school year. Lost or damaged textbooks must be replaced at the parent's expense.

SCHOOL DRESS CODE

Please use good judgment in choosing school clothes. Students' clothing should be neat and clean, as well as conform to general standards of good taste. Short shorts and halter-tops and/or spaghetti strap tops are not appropriate for school. We recommend dressing in layers as we often have temperature variations within the buildings. Shoes should allow for free movement and not hamper safety. We recommend closed toe shoes that stay on the child's feet. Flip-flops or shoes with high platforms or heels are not safe for school wear. Accidents often occur that are directly attributable to inappropriate school shoes.

MEDICINE AT SCHOOL

Written orders from a medical doctor must be on file for all medicines, including over the counter medicines, to be given at school. The required form is included in this handbook and should be signed by your doctor and returned to the school office. All medicines will be kept in the office in original containers (no baggies, please) and will be administered by the school nurse or secretary. Students are expected to come to the office when medicine doses are due.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

In any kind of emergency, every effort will be made to reach a parent or guardian. Clinic cards must be on file in the office and updated as necessary, since those numbers will be used to contact parents or others listed. If no one can be reached, emergency medical care will be provided through 911. Be sure to notify us if your child has a medical condition that requires special care.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE

School insurance is available to all students. Early in the school year, forms are sent home with each child offering accident insurance through a carrier approved for group rates by the Atlanta Board of Education. Purchase is optional.

EMERGENCY PLANS

The school has an emergency plan to deal with a variety of crises. Students will be advised of emergency procedures and drills will be conducted.

CAFETERIA

Breakfast and lunch are served daily. Students may bring lunch from home, however, glass containers or canned sodas are not permitted in the cafeteria. Parents are welcome to eat lunch with their students. Daily fees: \$2.00 for lunch (including milk), \$0.75 for breakfast, \$3.00 for adult meals. Fees may be paid daily, weekly, or monthly, in cash, or through School Payment Solutions. Personal checks are not accepted. Please do not bring or send fast food (McDonalds, etc.) to the cafeteria. State law prohibits competing food sources in public schools during lunch times.

Students will be expected to speak in conversational voices, audible to their immediate table only. Cafeteria rules prohibit yelling or loud talking, running, or disrespectful behavior. Repeat violations may result in disciplinary action.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation questions or requests should be handled directly with the APS transportation department at 404-802- 5500. Our assistant principal, Dr. Patrice Austin, can facilitate transportation issues, as can the bus parent listed in the directory.

SCHOOL STORE

Our school store provides school supplies for student convenience. We carry pencils, erasers, folders, spiral notebooks, and other fun items enjoyed by students. Prices will be about the same as retail prices. by the school secretary and/or principal. It is open for business most mornings from 7:30 to 8:00.

HOMEWORK

The Atlanta Board of Education has established guidelines to be followed for homework at each grade level. Homework is important for continuous learning and parents can best help by providing a quiet, well-equipped place for study, and by monitoring the time and effort put into the homework activities. Direct parent involvement in homework should diminish as students move up in years. Grade K-2 can expect 15-30 minutes per night, while grades 3-5 should expect 30-60 minutes each night. In some instances there may be more or occasionally less. Even if there is no written assignment given, students are expected to include in the homework time at least 15 minutes of recreational reading each night. Reading for pleasure is encouraged for all students.

CONFERENCES WITH TEACHERS

Teachers will schedule regular conferences with parents in the fall and in the spring to review the progress of their students. These conferences can be positive experiences for both parent and teacher and provide opportunities to share information about the student to help ensure success. It is also advisable for parents and teachers to confer if there are problems in social, academic, or emotional areas. A conference soon after recognition of the problem is crucial. Please call the office, or e-mail the teacher to schedule an appointment. Please do not try to conference with the teacher without an appointment. It is not fair to ask teachers for quick answers without adequate time to prepare, to refer to records, or to neglect the class to talk with you during instructional time.

Please do not leave notes, handouts, or other papers for teachers on their desks. All written communication for teachers should be given to the office staff to be put in teacher's mailboxes.

PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)

Your membership is vital to the proper functioning of the PTA. Please join during our membership drive at the beginning of the school year and involve yourself in the many activities planned.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be issued 4 times during the school year and will contain academic and conduct grades, as well as a record of attendance. You must sign the report card slip and return it with your child as soon as possible after receiving it.

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

The media specialists and teachers plan together for instructional classes in the media center. Classes are scheduled as instruction requires. Teachers may send small groups of students or individual students at any time. Children have ample opportunities to check out books, do research, or simply browse through the collection. Parents are also encouraged to use the media center. Media Center hours are 7:30 a.m. through 3:00 p.m. (3:30 on Wednesdays).

GENERAL STUDENT CONDUCT

Most Jackson students conduct themselves in a manner that makes us all proud of our school. However, it is sometimes necessary to contact parents if a child misbehaves repeatedly or a serious issue arises. Your cooperation is instrumental in resolving problems early and providing children with models for conflict resolution. We will emphasize good manners, respect for adults, respect for self and others, and productive use of time for all students. It is expected that a Jackson student:

- Is respectful of the rights, property, and space of others
- Is kind and helpful to teachers and to other students
- Is truthful and honest at all times
- Is friendly to all other students, especially new students
- Is NEVER involved in fighting or hurting others
- Uses language that is not offensive to anyone
- Walks, never runs, inside the building
- Starts his or her work promptly and works diligently to completion
- Keeps the classroom, hallways, and cafeteria neat, clean, and orderly
- TAKES FULL ADVANTAGE OF THE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE AT JACKSON

While the developmental level of students is always considered in assessing behavior, the following behaviors will not be tolerated: 1) fighting, 2) use of profane or disrespectful language, 3) vandalism or destruction of school property, 4) illegal use of drugs, 5) weapons on campus, or 6) threats of any kind, whether physical or verbal. The first three offenses can result in school suspension; the last three may involve intervention by school detectives, with suspension the minimum punishment. Please be sure to discuss behavior expectations with your child.

JAGUAR PAUSE

The Jaguar Pause, our PTA newsletter, is e-mailed to our families every other Friday. It is also available online at wtjackson.org. Paper copies will be available for pick up on both campuses. Information to be included should be submitted to the Jaguar Pause email address: jaguarpause@yahoo.com.

LOST AND FOUND

We encourage students to assume responsibility for their personal belongings, textbooks, and other school property. We do, however, provide an area for lost and found items. Please be sure the student's name and telephone number are written on all personal belongings, especially sweaters, coats, and jackets. Unclaimed items will be donated to a local charity at the end of each month.

MONEY AT SCHOOL

Children should not bring any more money to school than is required for lunch, and/or breakfast, or school store purchases. It is better for meals to be paid for in advance, minimizing the risk of lost money. Buying or selling among children at school is not permitted.

CELL PHONES / ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

Please do not send students to school with I-Pods or other expensive electronics. They are often lost or misplaced and the school will not be responsible for them. Cell phones may not be used during school hours and may be confiscated if they interfere with instruction. It is important the students remain focused on instruction during the school day.

SCHOOL PARTIES

There are four school parties during the year: Halloween, Winter Holidays, Valentine's Day, and End-of-the-Year. Please complete the Volunteer signup sheet in your child's Back to School Folder which are distributed at Celebration of Learning or contact your room parent if you wish to help plan these parties. Please be advised that no swimming or off-campus parties may be held during school hours.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Individual student's birthdays may be recognized at school by providing simple refreshments at the end of the school day or at a time approved by the teacher. Healthy snacks are encouraged. Students and parents are asked not to distribute invitations to private birthday parties unless all students in the class are invited. Please coordinate any classroom birthday activities with the teacher in advance.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are regularly scheduled throughout the school year. There is no school funding for field trips, so you will be asked to contribute to those expenses. Please know, however, that no one will be denied participation in any educational activity due to lack of funds. Parental permission will be required for any and all off-campus activities.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Our curriculum is developed from the Common Core Standards adopted by the state of Georgia and can be accessed on the internet at <http://www.glc.k12.ga.us>, or <http://www.aps.kids.org>, or <http://www.doe.k12.ga.us>. It includes instruction in reading/language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, health and safety, music, art, and physical education. At Jackson, we include foreign language and computer instruction for all students as part of the regular instructional day. The Georgia Performance Standards are integrated into our IB Program of Inquiry and taught through thematic units. Our staff provides developmentally appropriate instruction that is inquiry based and focuses on the

whole child, thereby maximizing learning and achievement. Our students consistently rank among the best in the state and our instructional program builds on that high quality base.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR INSTRUCTION

Students have opportunities to participate in a wide variety of extra-curricular activities, including:

Band: Instruction on brass, woodwind, and percussion instruments is available to intermediate students. Parents are expected to provide the instrument, book, and accessories.

Chorus: Membership in chorus is open to all 4th and 5th grade students, with selection by audition. Its purpose is to provide an additional musical experience for the musically gifted or interested student. Performances in and out of school are scheduled throughout the school year.

Orchestra: Instruction on orchestral string instruments is available to students beginning in the 3rd grade. Group lessons are scheduled during the school day, twice weekly. Parents must provide the instrument, book, and accessories needed.

Cultural Arts and after-school programs are special extensions of the regular school curriculum. Details will be made available at the Celebration of Learning or sent home with students.

SPECIAL CLASSES AND SERVICES

Many students have special needs that cannot be met in the regular classroom. We provide a wide spectrum of services to address those needs. They include:

Gifted: Students who have been formally identified as gifted are eligible for our Challenge program. Challenge classes meet daily and serve to provide a differentiated curriculum that focuses on problem solving, analytical reasoning, and advanced academic instruction. Students qualify for Challenge under multiple criteria that include ability (IQ), achievement, motivation, and creativity.

Remedial: The Early Intervention Program (EIP) serves students in the areas of reading and mathematics. Students qualify for EIP based on individualized assessment levels that are below grade level expectations.

Autism: We have self-contained classes for students diagnosed with autism. These classes have specialized teachers and curricula.

Hearing Impaired: Primary aged students with diagnosed hearing impairments are served in a special class located at the Primary campus.

Speech: Students with specified speech and/or language needs are served through special speech classes with a certified Speech Language Pathologist.

Interrelated: An interrelated teacher in a resource class serves students with specific learning disabilities and/or behavior disorders. In order to receive services, a student must have been referred, completed psychological testing, and been through the eligibility and placement process.

Autism, Hearing Impaired, Speech and Interrelated services are all part of the Program for Exceptional Children (PEC) and are contingent upon formalized evaluations and staffing that require informed consent of parents. Student services in those programs are dictated by individual education plans (IEP's).

STUDENT SUPPORT

To help meet the needs of all of our students, tutor/mentoring opportunities are provided by our faculty and staff to students who may need additional help with classroom work. When students' needs go beyond this type of tutoring, they are often referred to our Student Support Team (SST), which is comprised of the student's classroom teacher and various other certified staff members. Along with the parent, the SST meets to develop individualized strategies to positively impact student achievement and/or behavior. If more help is needed and/or problems are more severe, the SST can request an individual evaluation through the Program for Exceptional Children. Questions about the SST program may be directed to your classroom teacher.

TEACHER REQUEST POLICY

It is the policy of Warren T. Jackson that classroom assignments for grades 1 – 5 are best made by the teachers and the principal. Kindergarten assignments are random, with information provided by the parent considered. Establishing a class roster entails many variables, such as gender, age, race/ethnicity, ability levels, teaching/ learning styles, peer dynamics, etc. It is our goal to make each class reflect a demographically diverse array of students. At all grade levels, the teachers, supporting faculty, and the principal distribute students so that every class is as comparable as possible. This is a process that is quite involved and we look at each child very carefully in his/her needs. We have found that when parents begin to request certain teachers, it becomes extremely difficult to establish equity. We thank you in advance for not requesting particular teachers and trusting the faculty to make sound educational placements for your child.