

# Witt Elementary School

## Parent/Student Handbook



### **Our Vision:**

Preparing students to be productive members of society by promoting achievement, scholarship, community, kindness, safety, responsibility, and respect.

### **Our Mission:**

At Witt Elementary, we believe a high quality education provides every student with the opportunity to become a productive citizen. We believe all students can learn and achieve at high levels. Our mission is to provide a supportive community where every student is encouraged to achieve their fullest potential. We are committed to fostering strong, respectful relationships among students, families, and staff. By embracing diversity and nurturing a collaborative spirit, we strive to provide a positive learning environment where every individual is recognized and empowered to achieve and succeed.



*Show Your*

# **TIGER PAWS**

**P**RACTICE KINDNESS

**A**CT SAFELY

**W**ORK RESPONSIBLY

**S**HOW RESPECT

Our School-wide expectations are PAWS. We ask students to show their Tiger PAWS at school and at home every single day. We are committed to educating our students on each of these principles and modeling them so that we can achieve our vision to prepare students to be productive members of society by promoting achievement, scholarship, community, kindness, safety, responsibility, and respect.

## INFORMATION ABOUT OUR SCHOOL PROCEDURES

### School Day

The school doors open at 7:10. Students will report to the cafeteria for breakfast. Teachers will pick students up from the gym at 7:45 to begin the school day.

Students who are car riders are dismissed at 2:50 pm. The late bus arrives to pick up students at approximately 3:30 pm. **All car riders must be picked up by 3:15 pm.**

### Parking

Parents or visitors who need to come into the school to conduct business should park in the parking lot in front of the school, and report to the main office to sign in and get a visitor's badge.

### Traffic

Please keep the bus lane open each morning when dropping your child off at school and each afternoon when picking up your child. We have a 15 mph speed zone on school property.

In the morning, we only utilize one lane for drop off as this keeps our students safe.

A staff member will assist in loading or unloading to ensure that your child is safe.

**Please stay in your car and make sure that your current hang tag is displayed to help speed the process while keeping our students safe.** If a hang tag for the current school year is not displayed, the driver will be asked to park in the parking lot and come inside to check identification and school pick-up lists.

**By Tennessee state law, the use of handheld cellular phones in our school zone (and on Tennessee roads) is prohibited, so please avoid using your phone while dropping off or picking up your child.**

It is important that we observe all speed limits, traffic signs, and that we are not passing other cars in the school zone unless directed to do so by a staff member directing traffic. Our top priority is staff and student safety. Please help us with this matter.

### Extended School Program

After school care is available if you cannot pick up your child by 3:30 pm. This program is well staffed and available until 6:00 pm. If you need information about this option, please contact (423) 586-7700 and ask to speak with the director of ESP.

### Attendance

1. Personal illness; parent/guardian signed note shall be accepted for **three (3)** days for each semester; after **three (3)** days a physician's statement shall be required. **Parent notes will be accepted thirty (30) days after the absence. After thirty (30) days the absence will be considered unexcused.**

**e. Five unexcused tardies/early dismissals will be considered an unexcused absence.**

### 3. Unexcused tardies/early dismissals (Grades 6-12)

Students who are tardy to first period shall receive two (2) warnings before penalties are assessed. Additional tardies for first period and all tardies/early dismissals for other periods shall be assessed as follows:

- a. Tardy #1 One (1) hour detention
- b. Tardy #2 Two (2) hour detention
- c. Tardy #3 Three (3) hour detention; parent contact required
- d. Tardy #4 One (1) day placement in ALP; parent contact required
- e. Tardy #5 Two (2) days placement in ALP; parent conference required
- f. Tardy #6 Student shall be subject to further ALP placements, office referrals, and/or juvenile court

**g. Five unexcused tardies/early dismissals will be considered an unexcused absence.**

Absences will be classified as either excused or unexcused as determined by the principal or designee in charge of attendance. When a student is absent, the parent/guardian shall contact the school. Upon returning to school, the student must present a note to the school for the dates absent.

Absences may be excused, but the student is responsible for any make-up work in subject matters covered during an absence. Make-up work is due in the amount of time a child has missed (if a child misses 3 days, he/she will have 3 days to make up the work once returning to school).

Absences may be excused for a limited number of times for:

1. Personal illness. A parent/guardian note shall be accepted for five days each semester. After five days, a physician's statement shall be required.
2. Death in the immediate family; not to exceed three days.
3. Illness of parent/guardian requiring temporary help; a physician's statement is required.
4. Recognized religious holidays.
5. Court summons; only time actually in court shall be excused.
6. Doctor or dentist appointment; medical statement required.
7. Military
8. Injury
9. Hospitalization
10. Homebound
11. Subpoena
12. Court Order

13. School sponsored activities
14. School endorsed activities
15. Extenuating circumstances determined on a case-by-case basis by the school principal.

Absences for any reason other than those listed shall be unexcused. An accumulation of unexcused absences will result in a letter or call from the attendance coach and could result in an attendance contract or parental Sessions Court appearance.

### **Tardies/Early Dismissals**

School begins promptly at 8:00 am each day, but students go to class at 7:50 to prepare for the day. *Excessive tardies or early dismissals will accumulate into days absent* and can also be referred for Attendance Review. When a student is tardy five times, an unexcused absence is entered.

Tardies/Early Dismissals may be excused for:

1. Late Bus
2. Illness with Doctor's Note
3. Death in Family
4. Religious Holiday
5. Medical/Dental Appointment.

Tardies or early dismissals for any other reason will be unexcused.

### **Sign In/Sign Out**

An adult must come inside and sign in all students arriving at school after 7:55 AM at the office. If a student is picked up prior to 2:50 PM, the child must be signed out at the office. The person picking the child up must have proof of identification, and be designated on the Emergency Contact card.

### **Sickness of a Child**

Children who exhibit signs of illness such as vomiting, diarrhea, or fever should not attend school.

### **Sickness of a Child at School**

If your child becomes ill at school or has an accident or injury, school personnel will contact parents to pick up the child. Every attempt will be made to reach the parent, guardian, or emergency contact if a child becomes ill at school. We ask that you keep phone numbers current with the office so we can reach someone in case of emergency.

### **Visitors/Volunteers**

For the safety of our staff and students, **all visitors must enter through the front doors and check in at the office.** Parents may not go directly to a classroom as this can interrupt instruction. Parents are not allowed on the school playground, unless there is a specified event and permission has been granted. If you need to speak with your child's teacher, you may make an appointment during the teacher's planning time. We will not interrupt instruction for a phone call. All visitors are expected to comply with the Visitor Code of Conduct that is posted at each entrance to our school.

## SCHOOL and DISTRICT RULES

At Witt Elementary, we use PAWS to guide our behavior:

**Practice Kindness**

**Act Safely**

**Work Responsibly**

**Show Respect.**

Hamblen County School Board Policies can be found here:

<https://tsba.net/hamblen-county-board-of-education-policy-manual/#board-operations>

### LEVEL ONE

*Students who choose not to follow expectations during the school day will be addressed using the Assertive Discipline Plan for their grade level.*

*Teachers will use the following **LEVEL ONE** consequences which are teacher administered and non-cumulative outside of one school day.*

1<sup>st</sup> Consequence - Verbal Warning

2<sup>nd</sup> Consequence - Time Out/Alternative Setting/Loss of Privilege

3<sup>rd</sup> Consequence - Extended Time Out/Alternative Setting/Loss of activity or privilege/Parent Contacted

4<sup>th</sup> Consequence - Parent Contact

(Note, phone call, Class DoJo/Remind message)

5<sup>th</sup> Consequence - Referral to Principal

6<sup>th</sup> Severe Clause - Some behaviors such as fighting, use of profanity, inappropriate comments or gestures (profane), threats, etc. will result in an immediate referral to the Principal.

To encourage students to follow the classroom rules, teachers reinforce appropriate behavior with praise; “good news” notes home, positive phone calls, special privileges, and other rewards. Students will be given opportunities to self-correct behavior, and given guidance to make wise choices.

### LEVEL TWO

*Referrals to the Principal (Office Referrals )are **LEVEL TWO** and any consequences are cumulative. Any visit to the office that results in a written referral will be assigned one of the following steps and consequences. Any student receiving an office referral will not be allowed to attend the next grade-level field trip.*

Step One - Warning

Step Two - 1 Day Alternative Learning Placement

Step Three - Up to 3 Days Alternative Learning Placement, Guidance Referral

Step Four - 1 Day Out of School Suspension, Guidance Referral

Step Five - Up to 2 Days Out of School Suspension or comparable placement, Guidance Referral

Step Six - 3 Days Out of School Suspension or comparable placement, Orientation at Transition Academy, Guidance Referral

Step Seven - Transition Academy Team Meeting to determine amount

of time of placement.

SEVERE BEHAVIOR CLAUSE: Levels may be assigned at the principal's discretion based on the severity of the student offense using HCBOE policy.

**Bullying/Intimidation/CyberBullying (School Board Policy 6.304)**

At Witt Elementary School, students shall be provided a safe learning environment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student to bully, intimidate, or create a hostile educational environment for another student.

Harassment, bullying, and intimidation occurs if the act takes place on school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided equipment for transportation, or at any official school bus stop and if the act either physically harms a student, damages his/her property, or knowingly places the student in reasonable fear of harm to self or property, causes emotional distress to a student or students, or creates a hostile educational environment.

**Transportation Policy (Board Policy 6.308)**

Bus service is considered an extension of the classroom and the Hamblen County School Board expects students to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with the established standards for classroom behavior. Students are expected to remain quiet and seated, facing the front of the bus, keeping hands and feet to self, and refrain from eating or drinking, throwing objects, and/or participating in any activity that distracts the driver while operating the bus.

Students are under the supervision and control of the bus driver while on his bus and all reasonable directions given by him/her are to be followed. Bus Referrals for inappropriate behavior will result in the following consequences:

First Offense—Warning

Second Offense—Suspension from the bus for five (5) days.

Third Offense—Suspension from the bus for fifteen (15) days.

Fourth Offense—Suspension from the bus for thirty (30) days.

Fifth Offense—Suspension from the bus for one year. (180 school days.)

***Fighting on the bus shall result in the following penalties:***

First Offense—Suspension from the bus for thirty (30) days.

Second Offense—Suspension from the bus for one year. (180 School Days).

***Use of Tobacco in any form, including electronic cigarettes, on school buses shall result in the following penalties:***

First Offense—Suspension from the bus for five (5) days.

Second Offense—Suspension from the bus for thirty (30) days.

Third Offense—Suspension from the bus for one year. (180 School Days.)

### **Electronic Devices**

Students **MAY NOT** possess pagers, cell phones (including those with no active service plan), electronic games, Smart Watches, or similar electronic communications equipment in Grades K-5. HCBOE policy defines a personal communication device to include, but not be limited to, wearable technology such as eyeglasses, rings, or watches that have the capability to record, live stream, or interact with wireless technology; cell phones, laptops, tablets, earbuds, and MP3 players.

Whether on school buses or on school property, students are not permitted to use recording devices (photograph, audio, or video) without administrative approval. A student in violation of this policy is subject to the grade-level discipline outlined below.

**K-5 students may not possess personal communication devices during school bus transportation to and from school.**

**First Offense: Warning/Student may pick up device at the end of the day.**

**Second Offense: One day of In school suspension. Student may pick up the device at the end of the day.**

**Third Offense: A level on the assertive discipline plan, orientation to alternative school, and 3 day ISS placement. Device shall be released to parent.**

**Fourth Offense: Placement in alternative school for 45 days. Parent may pick up the device at school.**

### **Dress Code**

Board Policy 6.310

#### **ALL APPAREL**

Clothing that exposes underwear or body parts in an indecent manner that disrupts the learning environment shall not be permitted.

Clothing must be neat.

No holes, rips, or tears shall be allowed.

Clothing shall fit properly and shall not be unreasonably tight or unreasonably baggy.

Students shall wear appropriate undergarments, and undergarments shall not be visible.

#### **PANTS (including slacks, jeans, leggings, etc.)**

Pants shall be hemmed and worn at the waist.

Leggings will be worn with a top that is the length of mid-thigh.



### SKIRTS, DRESSES

Skirts and dresses shall be a minimum length of mid-thigh.

### SHORTS

Shorts shall be a minimum length of mid-thigh and shall be worn at the waist.

### SHIRTS, BLOUSES

Tank tops, spaghetti strap, and halter tops shall **not** be permitted.

### SHOES

Students will wear appropriately fitting shoes.

Flip-flops shall not be permitted.

Tennis shoes are recommended on days when attending physical education.

### HATS

No headwear of any type shall be worn inside the buildings with the exception of headwear for religious or medical reasons as approved by the school administration.

Hair bows, headbands, and barrettes shall be permitted, provided they do not cause a substantial disruption to the learning environment.

### HAIR

Hair shall be worn in a manner that does not disrupt the educational process and does not call attention to the individual. Hair should be of a natural hair color.

### JEWELRY

Facial jewelry shall be limited to the ear with the exception of religious exemptions approved by the school administration. Hair color should be a natural color and the color and style should not create a distraction to others trying to learn.

### SYMBOLISM

The Board prohibits the display of any symbol on school property or any object (such as a backpack, locker, clothing, etc.) which directly or by innuendo disrespects or is perceived to disrespect a student's race, color, gender, national origin, or disability.

The principal has the right to take appropriate actions to correct any student whose clothing appearance, while not specifically covered by this policy, is considered by said principal to be out of compliance with the Board's stated goal or causes a substantial disruption to the learning environment.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **Immunizations**

Board Policy 6.402

No student entering school, including those entering Kindergarten or First Grade, those from out of state, and those from non-public schools shall be permitted to enroll or attend without proof of immunization, as determined by the Commissioner of Public Health. This documentation must be listed on the Tennessee Certificate of Immunization and must be signed by the medical provider. It is the responsibility of the

parents or guardians to have their children immunized and to provide such proof to the principal of the school that the student is to attend.

Exceptions, in the absence of an epidemic or immediate threat, shall be granted to any child whose parent or guardian who provides a completed Tennessee Certificate of Immunization that lists the refusal to give immunizations based on religious tenets or practices; or due to medical conditions that the provider has excused the child from those immunizations.

### **School Closings**

Messages are sent from our Central Office by email, text, and a recorded phone call in the case of any school closings due to weather, illness, or other reasons. You can modify your information through your child's parent portal account. You can also tune in to our local radio station, WCRK (105.7 FM), WJDT (106.5), or WMTN (93.3 FM) in case of bad weather. The Citizen Tribune also offers a text notification. Please inform your child what to do in the case of an early dismissal. We will send home a form for you to fill out in case of an unannounced early dismissal. We will follow this information. The buses will run if we are dismissed early. **Also, please maintain a current working telephone number on file with the office in case we need to contact you concerning an early dismissal.**

### **Changes to Pick-up Method**

If your child's pick-up method requires a change, please send a note signed by the legal parent/guardian the morning of the change. This is for the safety of your child. We cannot easily verify people calling in. If there is an emergency, you may call the office, but we will seek various ways to verify your identity.

### **Breakfast**

Breakfast for ALL students continues to be served free of charge as long as students take the required items.

### **Lunch**

At this time, lunch is free for all students. Your child must know his/her ID number and enter this number into the computer each day as they receive their meal.

Parents, or parent approved guests, may eat with their student one time per month. At this time, the cost for an adult meal is \$5.00 (must be cash in the exact amount).

### **Grading**

Report cards are sent home every nine weeks with a mid-term progress report being sent home every four and half weeks. As always, you can check on student progress using ParentPortal.

The basic grading system for Kindergarten is a skills **checklist**.

The basic grading system for  
First Grade is:

**E = Excellent**  
**S = Satisfactory**  
**N = Needs Improvement**  
**U = Unsatisfactory**

In Grades 2-5 the district-wide  
grading scale is used:

**A = 90-100**  
**B = 80-89**  
**C = 70-79**  
**D = 60-69**

## **F = Below 60**

At all grade levels, **S** (Satisfactory) and **U** (Unsatisfactory) are used for Physical Education, Art, Music, and Conduct grades.

Elementary grades for the year are determined by averaging the four Nine-Week grades.

### **PTO and Parent Involvement**

Our PTO plays a vital role in the overall success of our students and our school. The possibilities for and level of participation are varied. Your child will benefit from your enthusiasm and involvement with the school. If you have not joined our PTO in the past, we invite you to do so. Your assistance is vital to the success of our school.

### **Shareable Food for Classrooms and School**

Due to Health and Safety regulations, we do ask that any refreshment items shared for special activities be commercially prepared and packaged.

Thank you for taking the time to read our school handbook. It is our belief that parents are our partners in educating our students. We appreciate your support and we ask that you please reinforce our Tiger PAWS at home as well. Our top priority is to keep our students safe and to provide them with the best education possible. By following Tiger PAWS, we can accomplish this goal.

Witt Faculty and Staff