



**Growing leaders, thinkers, and problem solvers that positively impact others.**

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Website: <https://www.ucps.k12.nc.us/poplin>

## **Student Handbook 2025-2026**

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### **Home of the Patriots!**

**Mission:** At Poplin, we provide a safe and engaging environment. Students strive to reach their full potential as critical thinkers, leaders, skilled collaborators, respectful communicators, and responsible problem solvers within their communities.

#AlwaysForward #EVERYOpportunity

**We accelerate student learning by portraying the characteristics of a UCPS Graduate.**

**A Resilient Problem-Solver** – Embraces a growth mindset to solve meaningful problems in a supportive environment.

**Patriots persevere and never give up!**

**An Innovative Leader** – Inspires others to work toward a common goal in creative ways.

**Patriots accomplish goals and LEAD by example!**

**A Key Contributor** – Actively participates in collaborative opportunities in the classroom, school, and community.

**Patriots do their part to create a strong school culture!**

**An Effective Communicator** – Confidently utilizes their skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking to share ideas.

**Patriots speak up and participate!**

**A Skilled Collaborator** – Works respectfully and flexibly as a team member celebrating achievements.

**Patriots support others!**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

**ACCEPTING FORGOTTEN ITEMS:** Due to safety protocols and in an attempt to protect our instructional time, our school will NOT accept forgotten items. The exception will be Chromebooks, lunches, prescription glasses, and medication. Water bottles are NOT an exception, students have access to water throughout the day.

### AFTER-SCHOOL CARE PROGRAM:

The UCPS After School Care Program is available for Poplin Elementary students. The program operates daily from 2:00 PM until 6:00 PM. The gym entrance is the destination for after-school care pick-up. If you have questions about the program operated at our school, please contact the Program Coordinator at 704-296-0326. Additional information is also available on the UCPS website: Departments: Afterschool

**ATTENDANCE:** **Send in a Handwritten Note OR [Student Absence Form](#)** Every parent or guardian of a child enrolled in Union County Public Schools is responsible for making sure the child attends school continuously during the time school is in session.

Class attendance, as well as reporting to school on time, is essential to high student achievement. With this in mind, all students are expected to attend each day school is in session for the entire school day.

Furthermore, students are expected to report to school on time and not be signed out early unless extenuating circumstances exist. **FOLLOWING**

**ANY ABSENCE(S) OR TARDY(IES), A STUDENT IS REQUIRED TO PRESENT WRITTEN DOCUMENTATION FROM THE PARENT/GUARDIAN/CUSTODIAN STATING THE REASON FOR THE ABSENCE OR TARDY.** Written

documentation must be presented after the student returns to school; otherwise, the absence(s) or tardy(ies) will be recorded as UNexcused.

Parent notes will only be accepted within the same 9 week grading period. Absences due to extended illnesses may also require a statement from a physician. For the purposes of this Policy, extended illnesses are those which result in absences in excess of five (5) consecutive school days or in excess of five (5) cumulative days within a single semester. After 5 days, parent notes will not be accepted within the same semester. A semester is from August 25 to January 15 (Semester 1) and January 16 to June 5 (Semester 2). Upon review of documentation, the absence or tardy will be coded lawful or unlawful based on the criteria posted on the UCPS website under Attendance Policy.

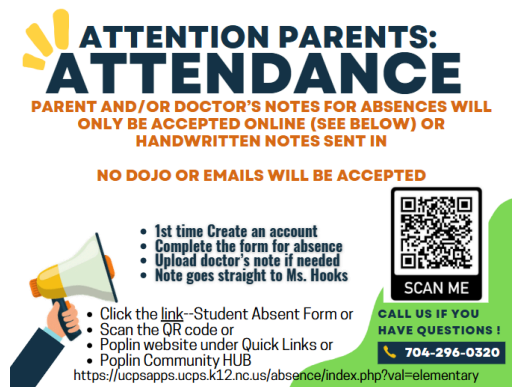
Upon returning from an absence, students will be given two days to make up the work missed for each day absent. When arrangements are not made to make up work, or if the make-up work is not completed on time, the student will not receive credit. Students on OSS are expected to complete class work as assigned by the school. ISS and OSS work not turned in will result in a zero for the assignment. Students in grades K-5 who are absent 20 days (lawful, unlawful, or OSS) can be retained.

### EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY:

UCPS' attendance policy states that when it is demonstrated that the purpose of the absence is to take advantage of a **valid** educational opportunity, it can be considered a lawful absence. Please complete the "Educational Opportunity Request Form" and submit it to the principal at least 10 days before the trip. The principal must approve the absence before the trip to be considered excused. No more than 5 absences for the school year will be approved. The form can be requested from the school's main office. **Sports events, Cruises and trips to Walt Disney World will not be regarded as educational opportunities.**

### PROCEDURES FOR EXCESSIVE ABSENCES AND ATTENDANCE VIOLATIONS:

1. **Three unexcused absences:** When a student has accumulated three unexcused absences, the principal or designee shall notify the parent/guardian/custodian of the absences.
2. **Six unexcused absences:** When a student has accumulated six unexcused absences, the principal or designee shall notify the parent/guardian/custodian by mail that the student has accumulated this number of absences. The designee shall work with the student and their parent/guardian/custodian to analyze the absences' causes and develop a plan to eliminate the attendance problem.
3. **Ten unexcused absences:** When a student has accumulated ten unexcused absences for any reason, the principal or designee shall have a conference with the student and their parent/guardian/custodian to discuss the accumulated absences, ensure that the proper notices have been received, and determine if the parent has worked in good faith to implement the plan developed pursuant E. 2. above. Should the principal determine that there has not been a good-faith effort on the student and parent/guardian/custodian to comply with the attendance requirements, s/he shall notify the district attorney and the director of the department of social services. A parent or student may be subject to criminal charges or a juvenile petition for failing to meet these expectations.



**ATTENTION PARENTS: ATTENDANCE**  
PARENT AND/OR DOCTOR'S NOTES FOR ABSENCES WILL ONLY BE ACCEPTED ONLINE (SEE BELOW) OR HANDWRITTEN NOTES SENT IN

**NO DOJO OR EMAILS WILL BE ACCEPTED**

- 1st time Create an account
- Complete the form for absence
- Upload doctor's note if needed
- Note goes straight to Ms. Hooks

• Click the link--Student Absent Form or  
• Scan the QR code or  
• Poplin website under Quick Links or  
• Poplin Community HUB  
<https://ucpsapps.ucps.k12.nc.us/absence/index.php?val=elementary>

SCAN ME

CALL US IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS!  
704-296-0320

### TARDY & EARLY SIGN-OUT POLICIES:

The school building opens at 7:00 AM for student arrival. Students report directly to their classrooms. All students, bus and car riders alike, are expected to be in their seats and ready for the morning announcements by 7:25 AM. Students who arrive at 7:30 AM or after are marked tardy. Parents/guardians are responsible for walking their child into the main office to sign-in late students. Once signed in, students will be issued a tardy pass and sent to class.

Students who sign out before the 2:00 PM dismissal time are also marked tardy. Late arrivals and early sign-outs are coded as the same in our tracking system as tardies. **No sign-outs are allowed after 1:30 PM.** Students who sign out before 11:00 AM will be marked absent for the school day.

**BIRTHDAYS:** Birthday treats may be brought to school to share with classmates during lunch. This should be pre-arranged with your child's teacher. In light of students' various food allergies, only commercially prepared prepackaged items with clearly-labeled ingredients are allowed. **Balloons and flowers should not be sent or brought to school.**



**CAFETERIA:** Poplin Elementary School's commitment to Healthy and Active Children extends to our Child Nutrition Services. Please make payments online through your child's lunch account or complete an application for Free/Reduced Meals with the provided link. Breakfast is served each morning from 7:00-7:20 AM. **Food delivery for students is not allowed.**

- Students may also elect to bring a packed lunch from home. **Please note that sodas and other carbonated beverages are not permitted when sending in a lunch from home.**
- "Extras," defined as chips, cookies, ice cream, additional milk cartons, etc., are also available for purchase. Please discuss permission to buy these "extra" snacks with your child. You may also request a "BLOCK" on your child's account, so extra items cannot be purchased.
- Parents are permitted to have lunch with their child (M-Th). Please follow the schedule below. Students may have **two visitors** due to seating limitations... this also include approved volunteers who are covering the lunch period for your child's teacher. The maximum number of volunteers for an individual class is **TWO**. Lunch with your child is open on Monday through Thursday ONLY. **Due to seating limitations, ALL visitors eat on the patio with their student. Please plan your visit accordingly with respect to the weather.**

**CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT: UCPS:** <https://www.ucps.k12.nc.us/site/Default.aspx?PageID=226>

The UCPS Board of Education believes that self-discipline is critical to a positive school climate. Poplin Elementary School will follow the discipline procedures and policies set forth by the Union County Public Schools BOE. In addition, the teachers will share further classroom and school rules to support student learning. Poplin implements the HOUSE System, where everyone works together to develop characteristics of a Portrait of a Graduate and represent "STAR" Patriots. S- Safe T- Trustworthy A- Accountable R- Respectful are our school rules and are taught through 'Poplin's STAR Essentials'.

### COMMUNICATION:

Parent/Teacher Communication is through *Class Dojo*. Teachers will send out information at the beginning of the year on how to sign up. *Class Dojo* is an easy way to communicate through an app. There is no cost for the app. We also have a Community HUB where you will find newsletters and updates about Poplin.



## **DRESS CODE:**

The education of students is our highest priority; thus, students' clothing should not be a distraction in the learning environment and should be appropriate for all school activities (daily physical activity included). Students should dress appropriately for school every day. Any clothing that causes a distraction in the learning environment will not be allowed. Logos on clothing may not promote alcohol, tobacco, drugs, inappropriate language, or offensive/suggestive messages. No undergarments should be visible. Parents should label children's clothing with names for easy identification. Parents may be called to bring a change of clothes if the dress code is not followed.

### *Tops*

No students will be allowed to wear tank tops, halter tops, tube tops, or crop tops. Students may not wear transparent tops without adequate undergarments. No tops cut low in the front, back, or side will be allowed. No skin should show between the bottom of the blouse and the top of the pants or skirt when arms are extended above the head. Proper undergarments must be worn with all clothing with no substitutes or exceptions.

### *Bottoms*

Students will be allowed to wear shorts of modest length and appropriate material. Shorts should be no shorter than a four-inch inseam. School officials determined that dresses and skirts should be of modest length (no shorter than a four-inch inseam). Straps on dresses/tops should be no thinner than two inches. Off-the-shoulder tops or dresses are not allowed. Sagging will not be permitted. Pants should be worn at waist level, and loose pants must be worn with a belt. Shorts/skirts must be visible when wearing an untucked shirt. Shirts should not conceal the worn shorts/skirts.

### *Shoes*

All shoes must be safe and appropriate for daily physical activity. No shoes with cleats are allowed. No more than a one (1) inch heel or platform should be worn. No shoes are permitted with wheels.

### *Other Items*

Pajamas, houseshoes, or other nightwear may not be worn to school. No students may wear dark glasses while inside the school building. No students may wear hats, headbands, sweatbands, bandannas, or head coverings during a regular school day. No students will be allowed to wear clothing or jewelry that displays suggestive slang, advertising (alcohol, drugs), or inappropriate language.

### *Consequences*

Students will be sent to the office, and one of the following actions will take place:

1. The student will be given a t-shirt loaner garment to be worn over inappropriate clothing.
  2. Remove the inappropriate item.
  3. Parents will be called to bring appropriate clothing or shoes to school if there is a need to do so.
  4. If a student continues to violate the dress code, they will be removed from class, and the parent will be called to a conference with the administration. Parents will also be asked to bring a change of clothes.
- School administrators have the final say in all dress code issues.

## **FIELD TRIPS:**

The number and need for chaperones will be determined by the nature of the trip and the destination. Only parents who are approved UCPS Volunteers are allowed to chaperone field trips. Chaperones are required to ride the bus with the group to the destination and back to the school. Chaperones will be randomly selected if there are more chaperones interested in attending a trip or if the trip is larger than the number needed. Siblings who are not Poplin Elementary School students or who are in another grade level are not allowed to attend. The grade level will communicate chaperone responsibilities and other field trip details before the trip. Poplin Elementary is not responsible for any personal items lost or damaged while on a field trip.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER:**

Inclement weather can cause school delays or closures. The UCPS faculty, staff, students, and parents can find weather information and the impact on UCPS schools on all UCPS social media platforms. Please be sure to complete an inclement weather transportation form with your child's teacher at the beginning of the school year.

### **LOST & FOUND:**

Parents should label all coats, jackets, sweaters, book bags, lunch boxes, and wallets with the child's name for easy identification. If articles are found on the school campus, they will be taken to the lost and found storage area. The lost and found collection will be periodically cleaned out, with the remaining items being donated to a charitable organization.

### **MEDIA CENTER:**

#### *Checkout Policies:*

- Students can check out books and materials throughout the school day as their schedule permits. Classes visit the Media Center once a week on their assigned day in the Related Arts rotation.
- Students are encouraged to check out only the number of books they can keep track of at one time. There is a 2-3 book maximum.
- Students may keep library books for up to ten (10) school days and are welcome to exchange books sooner. Students can renew their books for a longer period of time if needed. Students need to tell the Media Coordinator if they want to keep a book longer.

#### *Overdue, Lost, or Damaged Books*

- Students with overdue materials are asked to return or renew the items before making additional checkouts.
- Books that are more than eight (8) weeks overdue are considered lost. Parents are responsible for replacement costs. Replacement copies for lost books should not be sent in as these books do not meet the standards necessary for library circulation.
- Fines may be imposed for defacing books or purposefully damaging barcodes, labels, or call numbers.

### **MEDICATIONS:**

Poplin Elementary School will adhere to UCPS Board of Education Policy 4-6: Administration of Medications which can be accessed at the UCPS website under School Health.

Please note: Students must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school without using fever reducing medication. Please contact the school nurse regarding any other guidelines for communicable diseases.

### **FOOD ALLERGENS**

UCPS/Poplin recognizes the increasing frequency and intensity of allergic reactions to foods by certain students and the impact these reactions may have on all children in the educational environment. UCPS/ Poplin makes reasonable efforts to promote and protect the health of children in school by providing food choices that are safe as well as nutritious. Poplin will provide environments that reduce the risk of ingestion or contact with foods that trigger allergic reactions for students with known life-threatening food allergies. (UCPS Board Policy 4-19) The district-wide requirement is that procedures shall be in place at school to address food allergy issues in the classrooms and gym; food services/cafeteria; for instructional projects; crafts; outdoor activity areas; school buses; and field trips during school activities.

### **PARENT-TEACHER Organization (PTO):**

You are encouraged to become an active Poplin Elementary School PTO member. Your membership and involvement will help provide the support and assistance the school needs to provide the best educational experiences for your child. Details regarding PTO-sponsored activities and dates for the PTO general meetings can be found on the PTO website and in newsletters sent home with students. You can access the PTO website through the Poplin Elementary School website.



### **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES:**

Parent-Teacher conferences are important. They provide an opportunity to discuss your child's present level of performance, progress, strengths, areas of growth, and more. A partnership between parents and teachers helps foster a positive working relationship that will benefit your child throughout the year. At the end of the first grading period, required parent conferences are held for all students. An additional parent conference is required for kindergarten families at the end of the first semester. To help establish that beneficial partnership, you are encouraged to set up conferences whenever concerns or issues concerning your child and their progress arise. Please contact your child's teacher to schedule a conference anytime throughout the school year.

### **REPORT CARDS:**

Report Cards are issued at the end of each grading period to share your child's academic progress. Parents should review the Report Card with their child, then sign and return the envelope to the teacher. Infinite Campus allows parents of students in grades 3-5 to monitor their child's academic performance regularly. Grades and running averages in each subject are available 24/7. Report cards will be sent home every nine weeks for the upcoming school year.

### **HONOR ROLL CRITERIA:**

#### **A HONOR ROLL**

1. Students must have all "A's" in Reading, Math, Science/Health, and Social Studies. They must have a "3" or "4" in Written Composition. There can be no "N's" in any subcategories.
2. Students must have an "S" in the following areas: Art, Music, Physical Education, Computer Technology, and STEAM.
3. Students must have an "S" in all areas of Citizenship, Behavior, and Work Habits.

#### **A-B HONOR ROLL**

1. Students must have "A's" or "B's" in Reading, Math, Science/Health, and Social Studies. They must have a "3" or "4" in Written Composition. There can be no "N's" in any subcategories.
2. Students must have an "S" in the following areas: Art, Music, Physical Education, Computer Technology, and STEAM.
3. Students must have an "S" in all areas of Citizenship, Behavior, and Work Habits.

### **SCHOOL SAFETY:**

Safety is of the utmost importance at Poplin Elementary School. Our Safe Schools Plan defines emergency procedures and everyday routines to ensure the safety of all students and staff. The safety procedures in place at our school are routinely evaluated. Staff members have been trained in a variety of safety-related procedures. We regularly conduct various drills throughout the school year to be prepared for incidents such as fire, tornado, or lockdowns, among others.

Safety precautions in place at our school include, but are not limited to, the following:

- All visitors must ring the bell at the front of the school. Visitors will be asked their reason for entering, their name, and the student's name. They will then be granted access to enter through the front door of the school building. Visitors must sign in to the front office with a valid ID.
- Security doors are installed in the front lobby to prevent open access to the building.
- All visitors, staff, substitutes, and volunteers must wear identification badges while on school grounds.
- Video surveillance cameras record 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We reserve the right to utilize video recordings to aid in student discipline issues and unlawful incidents.
- All doors leading to the outside are closed and locked all day.
- All classroom doors are closed and locked throughout the day.
- The outside playground is fenced in and locked.
- A School Resource Officer (SRO) has been assigned to each elementary school.
- Our School Resource Officer will conduct safety assemblies with students twice a year.

Students have an opportunity to report anonymously any concerns that they feel need to be addressed.

**See Something, Say Something:** Anonymous Tip Line <https://www.ucps.k12.nc.us/Page/6930>

### SCHOOL HOURS:

The student day is 7 ½ hours long, 7:30 AM–2:00 PM. Poplin Elementary School observes the following schedule:

- 7:00 AM Building opens to students; students report directly to classrooms; students may also eat breakfast
- 7:25 AM Students are expected to be in their seats and prepared for instruction
- 7:30 AM Tardy Bell
- 2:00 PM Dismissal

PLEASE NOTE: Student drop-off before 7:00 AM is strictly forbidden. Supervision by school staff is not available before 7:00 AM. **If your child arrives at school at 7:30 AM or after, a parent MUST walk the child into the front office and sign them in. This includes the parking lot. Arrive early to be in the building when the bell rings. DO NOT drop off in the parking lot for students to run inside. This is dangerous and not safe.**

### SITE-BASED MANAGEMENT TEAM:

The SBMT meets monthly to discuss and make decisions for Poplin Elementary School. Both staff and parent representatives are elected to this team. Parent elections are held by the general PTO membership at their first meeting of the school year. Meetings are open to anyone who would like to attend. Check the school website for dates, times, and locations of meetings.

**SMART Watches and Phones:** Please assist our staff with this growing concern. Students are **NOT** permitted to have phones out during school or on the bus. This is a violation of school policy. Students may wear a SMARTwatch as long as they are not using it to record, text, make phone calls, play games, or other uses deemed inappropriate. **DO NOT text your child during the school day.** Phones and SMARTwatches will be confiscated and returned to the parent only. Inappropriate use may result in disciplinary action, including Out of School Suspension.

### TECHNOLOGY (School Issued):

At the start of the 2025–2026 school year, UCPS will reinstate a technology fee. Families will be responsible for paying a **\$30 annual technology user fee per student in grades 3 – 12**. This fee includes accidental insurance coverage and will ensure that students have the most robust technology available to enhance individualized learning and resources for any necessary repairs. The technology fee will be waived for students who qualify for free lunch. It is the student's responsibility to bring Chromebooks to school, charged, every day. Students are also responsible for taking care of their Chromebook. Chromebook repairs need to be addressed with the Media Coordinator. The student will be charged for any damages or loss of the Chromebook or charger before a new device is issued.


### TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION:

**Morning Arrival:** Staff supervision of students begins at 7:00 AM—the beginning of the staff workday. Student drop-off before 7:00 AM is strictly forbidden unless prior arrangements have been made with your child's teacher. See "SCHOOL HOURS" for additional arrival information.

**Safety:** To maintain the safety of students, Poplin Elementary School strongly discourages, does not sanction, and does not plan for unsupervised student walkers. We believe that it is in the best interest of students and their safety to avoid this risk.

**Changes to Transportation:** To change a child's mode of transportation, please send a written note to your child's teacher on the day of the change. Transportation changes over the telephone will not be accepted unless you can fax or scan identification. All changes must be in writing and made by 11:00 AM. We ask that you limit changes to your child's daily transportation routine to the extent possible. Students will not be approved to ride a bus other than the bus they are assigned to due to limited space on buses. This includes playdates, sleepovers, etc.

**Bus Transportation:** Students must have AM and PM bus ridership before riding the bus, and for a transportation change. Contact the data manager, Ms. Emily Hooks, to obtain ridership during the school year. Keep in mind there is a 3-5 day waiting period for ridership approval.

Get the Edulog App to see where your child's bus is on the route. Scan the QR code above. 

# Edulog Parent Portal

UP-TO-THE-MINUTE BUS ROUTE INFO



DOWNLOAD

**Bus Conduct:** Riding a school bus is a privilege and not a right. UCPS Transportation Services endeavors to provide safe and on-time transportation for all students. Students must partner with bus drivers to ensure a safe and comfortable ride while on the bus and at the bus stop. The information presented herein is consistent with the UCPS Code of Conduct. When violations of the UCPS Code of Student Conduct occur while students are utilizing UCPS Transportation Services, disciplinary actions will be consistently applied.

## **Morning Car Rider Procedures:**

1. Cooperate with school staff members who are on duty, assisting with car riders and watch for their signals.
2. Drive as far as possible toward the end of the sidewalk in front of the school before stopping to drop off your child. Put your car in the PARK position before allowing your child to exit the car.
3. If you are not in the car-rider line by 7:20 AM, we cannot guarantee that your child will make it to class on time. Although the tardy bell rings at 7:30, students are expected to be in their seats and ready for learning by 7:25 AM. Please make every effort to have your child to school on time.
4. Do not park and let your student out. For safety, we need all car riders to stay in line to drop off your student.
5. All students need to be dropped off before the 7:30 bell. Staff come inside, and parents need to park and come into the building to sign their student in. Even if you are in the parking lot, you need to park and come in to sign your student in. **DO NOT drop off and let students run to the door. This is dangerous and not safe.**

## **Afternoon Car Rider Dismissal Procedures:**

1. Cooperate with school staff members who are on duty, assisting with car riders and watch for their signals.
2. Please wait in your car for your child in the car rider line. Staff members supervise students exiting the building and entering their cars. Staff members will not put students in the front seat of any car; backseat only.
3. You may not park your car and walk up to get your child. All parents must wait in the car rider line unless they have walked from one of our neighborhoods.
4. The teacher must have a written note if your child will depart from school in the afternoon, which is different from what is indicated on their information sheet.
5. **Early sign-outs are not allowed between 1:30 PM and 2:00 PM.**
6. Please be prompt in picking up your child. If you know that you will be late, notify the school office so that we can inform your child and the supervising staff members. If any student is consistently late being picked up, the parents will be contacted by the school administration.

**Walkers:** Parents are invited to walk their children to and from school. If you walk with your child, you must walk all the way to the front doors to drop off your child. If you walk your child home from school, sign your child out in the book outside of the front doors. Use the bike racks to park bikes at school during the school day.

**UCPS HANDBOOKS:** The 2025-2026 Elementary/Middle/High School Handbook is available on the UCPS website by clicking the Parent & Community Tab. You must review this entire handbook yourself and with your child to familiarize yourself with UCPS Board Policies. There is also information about the Americans with Disabilities Act, Asbestos Awareness, Personal Checks, Connect-Ed Messages, Exceptional Children's Services, Guidelines for Extra and Co-Curricular Activities, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Housing Emergencies, "Healthy Schools and Healthy Youth," Integrated Pest Management, No Child Left Behind and Title IX.