

## WELCOME

The administration and staff would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to Whittier Educational Campus. The information in this handbook has been compiled to help your child succeed at Whittier. The entire staff is here to assist you with your child's education. Come and share in our vision of excellence in education.



## MISSION STATEMENT

Whittier Elementary School is committed to educating young people. Our mission is to provide comprehensive success-oriented learning activities for the young people in our school.

The educational opportunities that this school provides are designed to develop the student's potential in the areas of academic ability, cultural appreciation, physical well-being, social development, and community contribution.

## INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

The instructional program at Whittier includes the following:

- Classroom instruction – Headstart through grade 7
- English Language Learners (English as a Second Language)
- Special Education
- Student Support Services
- A 120 minute daily literacy block
- A 90 minute daily numeracy block which includes the incorporation of the Everyday Math program
- A reading resource program for all students grades 1 through 6
- Music for all students Pre-Kindergarten through 7
- Art for all students Pre-Kindergarten through 7
- Health and Physical Education for all students Pre-Kindergarten through 7
- A schoolwide initiative addressing writing improvement
- Interactive Technology Instructional Program.

- Before and after-school tutoring

## STUDENT ACTIVITIES

School sponsored activities are an integral part of a student's education. This school district encourages student participation and will provide funds necessary when practical and feasible. It will be the responsibility of the administration to authorize all activities and see that adequate supervision is provided. Any student that is elected or chooses to participate in extra-curricular activities must follow our Values Code, follow the student conduct policy, and meet eligibility requirements to continue in these programs and activities.

## SPECIAL SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Whittier offers the following special school programs and activities:

- Student Government
- School Safety Patrol
- Whittier Choir
- Girls Club
- Gentlemen's Club
- Boys and Girls Basketball Team



- Chess Club
- Chess Team
- Peer Mediation
- Peer Tutoring
- Whittier Extended Day Program
- "Values First" Program

## SCHOOL VISITORS

We welcome and encourage parents to visit the school and their children's classroom. Any individual visiting the school for any reason must first report to the school office and receive a visitor's pass. If it should be necessary to speak with a student or teacher directly, the office personnel will make the necessary

arrangements. Teacher or room visitations may be arranged either by directly contacting the teacher or requesting an appointment through the principal's office. High school students and friends of students are not allowed visitation privileges except under special circumstances. It is extremely important that classroom activities are not interrupted. If a student must leave during the school day, parents must check him/her out in the office. The student will be summoned to the office via the intercom.

### CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled during the school year. (Please see the 2008-2009 School Calendar in your handbook.) Notices will be sent home informing parents of the dates and times of these conferences. (Please check with your child every day regarding school notices.) The staff is



available to meet with parents to discuss student progress at any time during the school year if prior arrangements have been made. Please call the school office to schedule an appointment.

### SCHOOL HOURS

Parent and student cooperation is requested in observing the daily school schedule.



- The school day begins at 8:45 A.M. and ends at 3:15 P.M.
- The building opens at 8:15 A.M. for breakfast students.
- All other students are encouraged to arrive at school at 8:40 A.M. **They**

***will not be allowed in school building before this time.***

- Students are considered tardy after 8:45 A.M.

### ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to be in school except in cases of emergency, illness, or school-approved absence. Unexcused absences will be considered as truancies and will be dealt with according to the district's truancy policy.

The Whittier staff supports the philosophy that the instructional program is a vital part of formal education. We further believe that it is necessary to require that students attend school a maximum number of days. Students are required to maintain a level of attendance which enables them to meet their responsibilities as learners. Students and their parents/guardians hold the main responsibility for school attendance and for following the attendance policy. We ask for the cooperation of both students and parents in these matters so that the student can receive the best education possible.

In the event of absence or illness:

- Parents should call the school on the first day the student misses or send a note to the teacher stating the reason for absence.
- A doctor's statement may be required for extended illness.
- An official, signed note should be brought if the student can not go outside for recess or participate in physical education.
- Make-up work is required when applicable.
- Parents are encouraged to make dental and medical appointments after school hours.

- Extracurricular lessons, (piano, tennis, etc.) must be scheduled for after school hours.

## HEALTH REQUIREMENTS



Students must be in compliance with D.C. Law 6-66, The Student Health Care Act 1 985. According to this law: “No child shall be admitted to a public or private school who has not been immunized from poliomyelitis, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, measles, and rubella as evidence by the certificate of a licensed physician, or a public health department, acknowledging the same.”

## DRESS CODE

Whittier has a uniform dress policy for all students. It is expected that uniforms be worn each day. Uniforms must be neat and clean.

The uniform for girls consists of:

- plaid skirts, jumpers, shorts
- yellow blouses
- burgundy sweater, crossbow, and tights

The uniform for boys consists of:

- gray pants or shorts
- yellow dress shirt/burgundy tie
- white golf shirt
- yellow golf shirt
- burgundy sweater
- black belt/burgundy socks



## NEWSLETTERS

The staff at J. G. Whittier Educational Campus makes every effort to keep parents informed about activities, events, and programs. A monthly newsletter is distributed which contains a current calendar of events for the month. Look for the school newsletter during the first week of the month.



## TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are furnished free by the school district. They will not be distributed until the parent signs a book slip and returns it to the child's teacher. If any book is lost or damaged beyond reasonable use, parents or guardians will be charged the replacement cost. Report cards will not be issued until the replacement cost has been made.

## FIELD TRIPS



When a field trip is to be taken, your child will bring home a permission form giving the destination, date, and time of the trip. If a cost is necessary, it will be indicated on the form. This form **must be returned with the parent/guardian signature** before your child will be allowed to go on the trip.

## HOMEWORK POLICY

The educational philosophy of Whittier states “..the first obligation

is to teach the fundamentals of reading, writing, speaking, and mathematics and their application in all subject areas.” These fundamentals often need to be reinforced with additional practice which the students will complete outside of the classroom. Homework is a follow-up to class work. It is a vital part of the learning process. Students must assume responsibility for their class work and homework, just as they will assume job responsibility in the future.

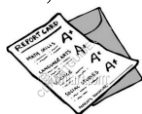


The learning process is a joint effort. Homework and/or individual study units will be discussed fully in the classroom, so that parents are not required to give instruction. Teachers will provide instruction. *Please refer to our “Homework Tips for Parents” which appears later in your handbook.*

All students are required to read 25 books to complete the DCPS reading requirement. If a student does not read the required number of books, it will be reflected in his/her reading evaluation.

### REPORTING PUPIL PROGRESS

In an effort to keep parents informed about student progress, the following



measures are used:

- Class work brought home that has been corrected and/or evaluated.
- Intermittent notes, phone calls, and requested conferences.

- A progress report which is sent home by the fifth week of each quarter, (advisory).
- A report card issued at the end of every nine weeks, (advisory). The report card must be signed by the parent and returned immediately.
- A Parent-Teacher Conference Day, scheduled for the following dates this school year: October 3, 2008, December 8, 2008, February 27, 2009, and May 15, 2009.



### COUNSELING PROGRAM

The counseling program at Whittier is designed to help all children as they grow and develop. All teachers, students, and parents have access to counseling services at the school. Parents may call the counselor to schedule an appointment to address concerns. Typical concerns include forming and maintaining friendships, school work habits, family concerns, sibling relationships, and behavior improvement. In addition to private conferences with children, parents, and teachers, the counselor conducts groups for children which focus on a particular concern. Typical topics may include friendship, understanding our feelings, families, home alone, exploring careers, drug education, and peer mediation.

### STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

*Special Education Services* – Whittier is committed to a program of responsible inclusion for students with special needs. Special education teachers work with classroom teachers and special needs students within the regular classroom

and/or in “pull-aside” settings when appropriate.

**ELL (English Language Learners)** – Students who have been identified with limited English proficiency may be recommended for English Language Learners services. The ELL teacher works with these students in a “pull-aside” setting.



**Student Support Team** – The Student Support Team meets with the parent and teacher of a child who has an identified learning or behavior concern. Academic and behavioral strategies are provided and implemented prior to recommendation for special support services.

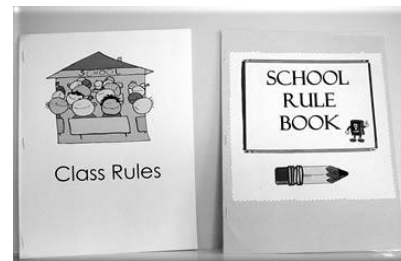
### **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

We invite all parents to become actively involved in their child’s education. We are always in need of volunteers. We have an active Parent Center and coordinator to assist parents. Becoming involved in the PTA provides an opportunity to contribute suggestions for the improvement of the overall school program. You will receive a notice of the time and date of PTA meetings through our Parent Newsletter or announcement fliers.

### **“VALUES FIRST”**

Whittier is in the 9<sup>th</sup> year of its implementation of a character education program called “Values First”. This program helps us to reinforce positive behavior and to reward students for making good choices.

## **STUDENT CONDUCT AND RULES**

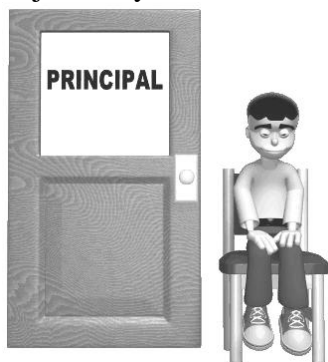


J. G. Whittier Educational Campus conducts an instructional program for the benefit of the students attending the school. Students are expected to be diligent in carrying out their school responsibilities. Failure to be diligent in study or adhering to school rules means that a student is guilty of misconduct. Students will be given every opportunity to achieve scholastic success, but those who persist in creating behavioral problems either inside or outside of the classroom will be subject to disciplinary action. It is the overall plan of Whittier School to deal with student misbehavior in a consistent and fair manner. Maintaining a proper educational setting combined with the concern for each student’s safety and welfare also enter into each disciplinary action.

## **RULES AND CONSEQUENCES FOR STUDENTS**

### **Rules:**

- Follow directions the first time given.
- Honor the Values Code.
- Keep hands, feet, and all objects to yourself.



### **Consequences:**

- Warning – Class behavior management plan with all documented steps
- Referral to counselor with anecdotal notes/records
- Parent conference
- Referral to principal

## **WEAPONS**

No student shall knowingly, intentionally, or recklessly come on the school premises with a firearm, explosive weapon or device, knife, or any other dangerous or illegal instrument. No student shall interfere with normal activities, occupancy or use

of any building or portion of the campus by exhibiting, using, or threatening to exhibit a defined weapon. This includes all “look-alike” items that could be construed to be a weapon. Any student violating this school board policy is subject to immediate suspension and possible expulsion. Local police authorities will be alerted.

## **CHEMICAL ABUSE**

Whittier School is a Drug Free Zone.

Students shall not possess or use tobacco, alcohol, drugs, (including look-alike drugs), or have drug paraphernalia on school property. Use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs is defined as being under the influence as evidenced by the actions, odor or other symptoms regardless of the quantity consumed. Any student found in violation of the chemical abuse guidelines will face immediate suspension and, when applicable, be remanded to the proper authorities. Violators will be required to undergo counseling.

## **FIGHTING**

Fighting within the school setting assumes a variety of forms, (wrestling, horseplay, physical attacks, rough play, etc.) These types of behaviors will be viewed as serious, and each incident will be dealt within the setting in which it occurs with the disciplinary action matching the severity of the incident.

## **PROPERTY DAMAGE**

Students are not to deface, mark or otherwise damage or destroy any type of school property. The students and parents will be held financially responsible for any damage to school property. Students are also expected to

respect the property of other students and adults.

**DISRESPECT**

Students are to show proper respect toward school personnel. Arguing, back talking, and rudeness will not be tolerated.

**PROFANITY**

Vulgar remarks and foul language have no place in the school setting. The act of using obscene language by students in a verbal or written form in pictures or caricatures in or on school property will not be allowed.

**DEFIANCE**

The failure to carry out a reasonable request by a staff member is considered defiance. Whittier School expects students to respond in a positive manner when requested by adults and school staff.

**DISRUPTION OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS**

Students who consistently disrupt class to the point that instruction can not take place will be removed from the classroom setting.

**SCHOOL TELEPHONE USAGE**

School telephones are business phones. Students may use the office phones for emergency purposes. Only urgent messages will be delivered to students from parents during class instruction.