



# **2007-08 High School Parent Handbook: Survival Guide for Parents**



919-929-2106

## **Parent Involvement Opportunities at School School Improvement Team (SIT)**

Each school in the district has a School Improvement Team (SIT). A minimum of five parents serve on each school's SIT. Parents are elected each spring to fill vacant seats for the upcoming academic year.

SITs are new to CHCCS in 2007-08. They are required by state law and replace the School Governance Committees (SGCs) that have been filling a site-based management role in the district since 1991.

The SIT develops, reviews and amends the School Improvement Plan; provides input into the end of each year's status report; approves the capital and operational budget requests; solicits input from and hears the concerns of constituents about school programs; reviews the results of all relevant state and district administered surveys; provides counsel to the Board of Education on issues and policies; participates in the selection process when there is a vacancy for the position of principal at the school; advocates for schools; serves in an advisory capacity to the principal; and requests local position exchanges.



## **Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)**

Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) also exist at every school. They operate under a broad purpose of securing educational advantages for children. Their activities vary from school to school, but generally include publishing parent newsletters about school events, conducting fundraisers, and holding regular events for families.



## **Public School Foundation (PSF)**

The Chapel Hill-Carrboro Public School Foundation (PSF) is a non-profit organization that seeks to be known as a catalyst for innovation and pathway for supporting quality education for students in the district. Annually, they conduct two high-profile fundraising events in which parents may participate: the Walk for Education in the fall and the Teachers First Breakfast in the spring. Parents in the district also serve on the Foundation's Board of Directors.

## **Introduction: High School Parent Handbook**

Welcome to a new year in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools! This handbook has been developed to provide useful information about our schools.

In this handbook, you can find information that promotes a safe environment, that supports you and your child, and that clearly communicates school routines and policies. It also provides guidance on ways to visit the schools; methods to contact school personnel using email, phone and notes; how to schedule conferences and make the most of them; and where and how to get help when you need it. We suggest you read it carefully and keep it so you can refer to it during the year. The handbook is also posted on the district website at [www.chccs.k12.nc.us](http://www.chccs.k12.nc.us); then click on the School's link and select your school.

Parents (including legal guardians and legal custodians) have a critical role in the education of their children and in our schools. Years of research and numerous studies reveal that the children of parents who are involved in their education do better in school and in life than the children of parents who are not involved, regardless of the socioeconomic status of the family. We encourage you to participate in school activities as they occur during the year and to support education in your home. On page 14, we have provided some recommended strategies that we hope you can use at home.

We value our school's diverse population and celebrate the varied contributions each student and parent offers. Parents are encouraged to learn about the educational program, the educational goals and objectives of the district and their own child's educational progress.

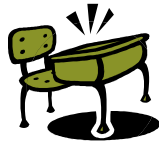
In the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools, we strive to make parents feel comfortable in making inquiries and will do our best to be responsive to your concerns. Regular contact between parents and school personnel, effective communication and teamwork are essential components of student success.

Communication is most effective when parents and teachers recognize that each has important information to share, will listen to the other carefully and acts in a courteous and respectful manner. It is our expectation that all members of our school community will model civility and good manners.

Please use this handbook as a guide. If you cannot find the information you need, please contact school staff members as indicated below. We look forward to joining you in working toward the optimal achievement of all students.

Jacqueline Boyd Ellis, Principal, Chapel Hill High School

Neil G. Pedersen, Superintendent, Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools



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## Daily Routine of the High School Day

The high school day begins at 8:45 a.m. and ends at 3:50 p.m. High schools students should arrive by 8:35 a.m. and are tardy if they are not in class at 8:45 a.m. Those taking early-bird classes will receive additional instructions about arrival procedures.

Students may begin arriving at the school no earlier than 8 a.m. Neither supervision nor safety can be guaranteed before that time.

Since classroom instruction begins at 8:45 a.m., it is important that all students arrive at school well enough in advance to get to the first class. Students who arrive after 8:45 a.m. are considered **tardy**, and will miss the beginning of their classes. School Board policy states that three unexcused tardies of 15 minutes or more will be treated as one unexcused absence under the state's Compulsory Attendance Law.

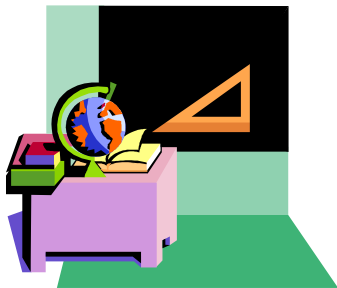
Arriving late to school or leaving early puts students at a disadvantage because they miss valuable classroom instruction. Teachers may not have time to repeat instructions for students who are late, and they will be held responsible for missed assignments.

## School Schedule

The bell schedule for Chapel Hill High is:

- 1 - 8:45 - 9:35
- 2 - 9:40 - 10:30
- 3 - 10:35 - 11:25
- 4 - 11:30 - 12:20
- Lunch - 12:20 - 1:05
- 5 - 1:10 - 2:00
- 6 - 2:05 - 2:55
- 7 - 3:00 - 3:50

**Tip: Parents need to be sure that they have sent updated telephone numbers and address changes to the school. If there is an emergency, this information is very important. School staff have the capability to telephone everyone in a class, school or even the entire district with important information; however, if your phone number is not current, you will miss the call.**



## Absences

All students are required to attend at least 83 percent of the school days in an academic year in order to graduate or to be promoted to the next grade. Exceptions can be made for excused absences and made up work.

If your child will be absent, please notify the school office by early morning of the day of the absence. If no call is received by the school, the office will contact the parent or guardian.

## Delayed Openings

The district has approved a plan for schools to operate on a Delayed Opening schedule seven Thursdays during the 2007-08 school year. School will open late, allowing teachers to use the time for collaborative planning or professional development. On these days, high schools will begin at 10:45 a.m., buses will run two hours later than their normal schedule and schools will open to students two hours later than usual. Schools will dismiss at their normally scheduled time.

**Delayed opening dates are: September 20; October 18; December 13; January 31; February 28; April 17; and May 15.**

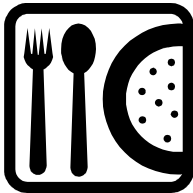
On the last day of school, Tuesday, June 10, schools will dismiss two hours early.

## School Meals

The lunch and breakfast program as well as all food served in the schools must conform with district nutrition standards that limit the amount of fat, sodium and sugar in foods available at school.

Forms to apply for the free and reduced lunch program are distributed at the beginning of the school year and are available in the school office throughout the year. Those students eligible for free lunch are automatically eligible for free breakfast. Be sure that students understand that they go directly from the bus to the cafeteria if they eat breakfast.

high school students use their student ID to purchase food in the cafeteria. Parents can pay in advance by going to the district website at: [www.chccs.k12.nc.us](http://www.chccs.k12.nc.us) and select Departments then Child Nutrition and click on visit the Child Nutrition website.



The meal prices for 2007-08 are:

- Breakfast: \$1.05
- Reduced Breakfast: \$ .30
- Adult Breakfast: \$1.50
- Secondary Lunch: \$2.65
- Reduced Lunch: \$ .40
- Adult Lunch: \$3.25

## High School Grading and Report Cards

### Grading Scale

**A: 93-100**

**B: 85-92**

**C: 77-84**

**D: 70-76**

**F: below 70**

High schools send report cards each nine weeks and progress reports at the mid-point of the nine-week interval. Many schools will send a telephone message to parents to expect the report card and progress report to come home with the student. Each time a report card or progress report comes home, it will contain contact information for arranging a conference.

## **Telephone Messages Used for Emergencies and Important Information**

The school system maintains a database of telephone numbers and email addresses of parents so that we can contact parents in the case of an emergency or with important information. Parents need to update their telephone numbers and email addresses any time they change with staff at the school.

In the case of an emergency throughout the district, the cancellation of school due to weather conditions or an emergency at an individual school, district leaders will send a message to up to six telephone numbers of the parents or guardians of each student. These numbers usually include the home telephone, work telephone, and cell number of one or both parents.

In the case of important information that is not an emergency, district or school leaders will send a telephone or email message **ONLY** to the designated home telephone numbers of the students. These messages may include information about the distribution of report cards, progress reports or school events or their cancellation.

At the beginning of each school year, all parents or guardians should complete or update a *Student Information Verification Form* and return it to the school's office.

### **Other Resources for School Closures**

Use the Internet to find out if school has been canceled. Check the alert on the district's homepage at [www.chccs.k12.nc.us](http://www.chccs.k12.nc.us). Another option is to call the district's emergency message at 967-8211, ext. 317. Additionally, local radio and television stations will broadcast information about the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools (not the Orange County Schools.)

### **Visits to Schools**

Parents of enrolled students are welcome to observe and learn about the educational programs in their child's classroom. While parents are welcome, the paramount concern of the school is to provide a safe, orderly and inviting learning environment in which disruptions to instructional time are minimized. Unexpected visitors disrupt the class by distracting teachers and students from their work.

All school or classroom visitors must report immediately to the administrative office at the school for permission to be at the school.

Parents are welcome to visit classrooms, and arrangements should be made in advance with the teacher. If a parent arrives without having made arrangements and wishes to observe his or her child's classroom, the receptionist will contact the teacher to see if it is a convenient time. If not, the teacher will contact the parent to establish an observation time.

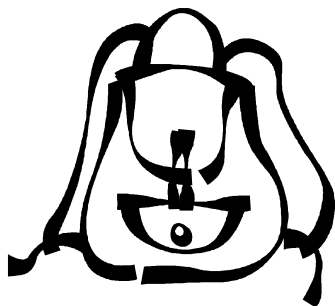
Parents who do not have children in the school but may be interested in enrolling their children should first contact the school's main office. Schools schedule specific times to conduct tours of their schools for prospective parents.

Any staff member who sees an individual in a school who has not received permission must either direct the individual to the administrative office or notify the principal. Any individual who disrupts the educational environment may be requested to leave.

## **Please remember**

All visitors are required to sign in and out at the front office. Parents should state the reason for their visit, their destination, and wear the visitor identification while in the school. *Even if a parent is well-known to school staff, he/she must follow this procedure. This policy is part of the district's Safe Schools Plan.*

Classroom visitations or observations should be scheduled with the teacher at least 48 hours in advance. Parents must follow professional standards concerning confidentiality of individual student information obtained while observing. Visitors should refrain from participating in the class activity unless invited to do so by the teacher.



Arrival and dismissal times are not appropriate times for parent/teacher conferences. The school system considers the time immediately before and after school to be teacher planning and preparation time. *Please contact your child's teacher to schedule a conference at a more appropriate time.*

Parents who drop by the school to leave items for their child need to bring the items to the office for distribution to the student.

Parents who arrive early to pick up their child must sign-in at the front desk and wait for the receptionist to call their child's teacher.

A parent who has an urgent situation should contact the school receptionist and be directed to the appropriate staff person.

Please be respectful of the increased demands and heavy workload of teachers. They must cover a large amount of curriculum in a short period of time. Instructional times/classes should not be interrupted.

## **Communicating with the Schools by Email, Telephones and Notes**

The schools welcome communication from parents. Depending upon your need, you may choose to communicate via email, phone, note or conference. Staff members will make every effort to respond to you within two (2) school days. Please follow the guidelines set out below.

Here is a simple guide for the use of each communication channel:

- (Brief) Email or note: If the same issues come up twice; then,
- (10 min.) Phone call: If further discussion is required; then,
- (20 min.) Face-to-face conference with your child's teacher or with an administrator

### **Email**

Email works well when asking questions or making simple requests for information. Each school staff member has an email account. The address is the first initial of the first name plus the last name, followed by: @chccs.k12.nc.us. For example, Jane Doe would be [jdoe@chccs.k12.nc.us](mailto:jdoe@chccs.k12.nc.us).

Suggestions when emailing your student's teacher, principal or any school staff:

- Please remember that email is not confidential.
- Be concise.
- Make a simple request for information.
- If the concern is lengthy or involved, please request a conference instead of using email.
- The need to repeat emails over an extended period of time is a signal that the parent or teacher should request a conference.

## Notes

Notes are required when your child is absent from school for any reason. Be sure to include the child's full name, date and reason for absence.

Parents may use notes to address simple requests or concerns. Please remember that notes are not always delivered to the school. If you do not receive a response and need one, please follow up with a phone call.

## Phones

### Teacher Phones

Each teacher can be contacted by telephone. Parents and others should not expect classroom telephones to be answered during the instructional day when staff is teaching. At the beginning of the year, staff members will provide their phone numbers, or parents can call the main office and be connected to the teacher's extension.

### Emergencies

If an emergency arises, call the main office for assistance.

### Student Phones

The School Board's **Wireless Communication Devices Policy Code 4312** states that students shall not use, display, transmit or have in the "on" position on school property any wireless communication device, including but not necessarily limited to, cellular telephones, paging devices, two-way radios, cameras or similar devices until after the conclusion of the school day. This policy does not apply to the use of a wireless communication device that is permanently mounted in a vehicle or stored in a locked compartment of a vehicle.

Students shall be personally and solely responsible for the security of their cell phones. However, any device possessed or used in violation of this policy may be immediately confiscated by school personnel. Absent compelling and unusual circumstances, wireless communication devices that are confiscated by the schools will only be returned to the student's parent or guardian. The Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools shall not assume responsibility for theft, loss, or damage of a cell phone or any other personal wireless communication device.



Students who violate the above restrictions shall be deemed to have created a disruption to the instructional environment and will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, generally up to and including short-term suspension.

Please visit the district's website at [www.chccs.k12.nc.us](http://www.chccs.k12.nc.us) and select School Board then School Board Policies to review a complete copy of Policy 4312.

## Parent-Teacher Conferences

A conference provides for two-way communication. By exchanging information, parents and teachers can set the stage for a great school year. Parents with concerns can ask for a conference with a specific teacher at any time during the year. Parents should expect to spend 15 minutes at a high school conference.

If the student is doing well, conferences at the high school level are not required. Email contact between teachers and parents can be an effective communication tool. Parents should remember that high school teachers may have a student load of as many as 150 students. To learn more about your student's academic progress, ask the teacher for additional, detailed grade information.

### How to Schedule a High School Parent – Teacher Conference

Parents can contact an individual teacher directly for a conference, preferably by email or phone. If parents have difficulty scheduling a parent conference or wish to meet with multiple teachers, they should contact the Guidance Office.

Two days each year are reserved for evening conferences, one in the fall (November 8, 2007) and one in the spring (February 7, 2008). As these dates approach, please call the school at 929-2106, ext. 2000 to schedule an evening conference. Students are encouraged to participate in high school conferences.

**Please note:** If a parent arrives and wants to talk to a teacher but does not have a scheduled conference, the receptionist will check to see if the teacher is available. If not, the teacher will contact the parent to establish a conference time. The receptionist will not give a parent a visitor pass to go to meet with a teacher while the teacher is working with students – whether this is during the school day or after school.

### Suggestions for a Successful Conference

#### Talk with Your Child

Before you attend the conference, spend a few minutes talking with your child. Tell him or her that you need help preparing for the conference. You might begin with these steps:

- Ask what he or she would like you to talk about with the teacher.
- Ask what he or she thinks the teacher will say.
- Ask about the things he or she likes and doesn't like, problems and successes.
- Let him or her know that after the conference you will discuss what the teacher said.

#### Think About Questions You'd Like to Ask

Prepare some questions in advance. Here are some suggestions:

What will be covered in this grade or subject this year?

What are your expectations for homework? Has my child missed any assignments?

Has my child been absent, other than the times I contacted the school about?

What can I do at home to help my child be more successful in school?



**Tip:** A parent can bring examples of student work to illustrate a question or concern.

### **What Should the Teacher Know?**

As a parent, you know your child better than anyone else does. Here is some information that you might want to share with your child's teacher:

- favorite subjects;
- outside interests and hobbies;
- medical or health needs; and
- other concerns that could affect your child's performance.

### **At the Conference**

Keep an open mind. Remember that both you and the teacher want to help your child succeed. Your goal is to work for cooperation between you and the teacher. Even if the teacher says something you disagree with, try to listen to what he or she has to say. Other suggestions include:

- Ask to see your child's work. There's no better way to see how your child is progressing.
- Ask the teacher to explain anything you don't understand. Every profession has its own jargon which can be hard to understand. If you don't understand what's being said, ask.
- Sum up what you think has been said. This re-cap will make sure you both agree on any decisions you have made about your child. If necessary, ask to meet again.

### **After the Conference**

Follow up. Stay in touch with the teacher. If you think of a question you didn't ask, write a note or call. Talk with your child. Stress the positive things the teacher said, and talk about suggestions for improvement. Plan with your child how to carry out these suggestions.

### **Tips for Parents on Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parents should notify the school or teacher several days in advance if they need a translator for the conference.

Parents or teachers may request a third party to join the conference, such as a family member, translator, administrator, advocate or special services staff person. It is helpful to inform conference participants in advance.

Conferences for exceptional children are not the same as IEP (Individual Education Plan) meetings.

If any participant feels that a conference is threatening, an administrator will be asked to join the conference. If an administrator is not available, the parent or teacher will terminate the conference and ask that an administrator contact the parent for a follow-up conference at a later date.

An individual conference at the high school level is a time to request a grade change for your child. If you have a question about a grade, contact the teacher by phone or email.



## Steps to Resolve Concerns

Board policy sets out a hierarchy of contact. Concerns should be addressed first to the staff member involved and then followed in this order, if needed:

1. Teacher
2. School principal or principal's designee
3. Superintendent or superintendent's designee
4. Board of Education

School personnel will ensure prompt and equitable resolution of complaints. Complaints should be resolved within 30 days of their origin and no later than 60 days. When there are extenuating circumstances which prevent a resolution within this time frame, the parties may mutually agree to an extension of time. In circumstances where danger to persons or property is involved, school personnel should immediately respond to the complaint.

## Volunteering At School

Parents are important for the success of the school and contribute their time, expertise and energy in many ways. The Volunteers and Partners office at Lincoln Center provides a range of opportunities to assist students and teachers. Training is required for certain roles. If you would like to learn more about volunteering opportunities, call 967-8211, ext. 281.

To provide a productive school climate conducive to teaching and learning, please follow these guidelines:

- Please do not plan to conference with the teacher about your child when you are scheduled to volunteer in the class.
- Many parents help by volunteering in the classrooms. We appreciate your help, but we ask that you not bring other children with you. Siblings can be a distraction to the parent, the students, and the teacher.
- Parents often chaperone classes on field trips. While school staff are grateful for your assistance, field trips are limited to members of the class and volunteers. You may not bring siblings on these trips.
- Proctors for state tests are badly needed and greatly appreciated. Do keep in mind that parents cannot serve as proctors for state tests for the same course in which their children are enrolled.

**Please note: As a parent volunteer, the rule of confidentiality must be respected. It is unethical and inappropriate to discuss the performance or behavior of students in the classroom.**



**Tip: If you participate in school events, please make sure that you and your child follow the school rules. (Please check the handbook if you are not sure what the rules are.) It is awkward for all concerned when staff members must intervene and speak to a student when his/her parents are present.**

## **Bus Rules: Behavior and Procedures**

Students should follow these procedures when riding any district school bus:

- Students must remain seated until the bus reaches the student's destination.
- Students are prohibited from fighting; loud talking; using vulgarity; pushing; spitting; throwing objects off the bus; horseplay; hanging out the windows; eating; drinking; chewing gum; or any other disruptive behavior.
- Students are expected to follow directions given by drivers and /or monitors.
- Students are not to damage or deface school property. Parents may be held responsible.
- Upon dismissal from the classroom, students are expected to report to their assigned buses in an orderly manner.
- Pets should not be allowed to accompany students to bus stops without being supervised and leashed.
- Students must be at their assigned bus stops at least five minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time.
- Students are to remain a safe distance from the road while waiting for the bus.
- Bus drivers have the authority to assign seats for any reason.
- Students may not enter an empty bus parked on school grounds without the permission of the principal.
- Students should report unsafe behavior to the driver or the principal.



## **Disciplinary Procedures for Bus Riders**

Riding a school bus is a privilege. The safety and well-being of the students and the bus driver are of utmost importance. It is the responsibility of the principal to act upon discipline referrals submitted by bus drivers. In cases of severe offenses, the principal, in consultation with the superintendent, may take direct action without following the regular sequence of consequences below.

1. On first offense, parents will be notified by phone, if possible, and in writing. Additional disciplinary action consistent with school policy may be applied.
2. If there is a second infraction, parents will again be notified. The student will also be removed from the bus for one week (five consecutive school days). Additional disciplinary action consistent with school policy may be applied.
3. Should a third infraction occur, parents will again be notified and the student will be removed from the bus for two weeks (ten consecutive school days). Additional disciplinary action consistent with school policy may be applied.
4. In the event of a fourth infraction, parents will be notified by phone or by a visit from the family specialist. The student will be removed from the bus for the remainder of the school year and disciplinary action consistent with school policy may be applied.

Suspension from the bus means suspension from all buses, morning and afternoon, for the term of the suspension. However, the student may be allowed bus privileges on the afternoon the suspension occurs, unless other arrangements are made between the parent and the principal. The only adults authorized to ride a school bus are the drivers, monitors and school personnel.

## **Learning Problems or Other Challenges:**

### **First Steps for Parents**

Parents who have concerns about their child's academic achievement, behavior, health or social competence should discuss their concerns with the classroom teacher first. Teachers and parents working together often establish informal adjustments, such as changing the location of the student's desk or altering the format of homework assignments.

### **Student Support Team**

If the child needs further assistance, parents should contact the school's Student Support Team (SST) chair. Every school in the district has an SST. Its membership is diverse and may include these staff members: the classroom teacher, counselor, family specialist, school psychologist, reading specialist, nurse and administrator. The team serves as the initial "portal of entry" to consider an array of accommodations, interventions and services within the district.

The SST process helps teachers to develop interventions that assist the student. Specific areas of concern are identified; information is gathered through observation, interview, review of school records and informal assessment. The SST develops new strategies to address the concerns. Classroom teachers implement these strategies for several weeks. The SST then reconvenes to assess the student's progress. A teacher may implement a behavior contract for a child who has had difficulty maintaining appropriate classroom behavior and completing classroom assignments.

If the interventions are not successful, however, the SST may refer the student to the 504 Committee or the Exceptional Children (EC) Team.

### **504 Accommodations**

The 504 Committee, composed of parents, teachers, the counselor, other individuals working with the student, and possibly the student, determines whether or not the student is eligible for an accommodation plan under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Section 504 is a broad Civil Rights Law protecting the rights of children and adults with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance.

A student may have a disability that does not affect his or her ability to learn, yet requires accommodations from the school to participate in the learning environment. The disability can be mild to severe, temporary or lifelong, obvious or hidden.

The 504 Committee determines if a student is eligible under Section 504. If so, a written 504 Accommodation Plan is developed. It describes the accommodations that are required for the student because of his or her disability. The 504 Plan is reviewed at least annually to determine continued eligibility and to revise the accommodations as needed. 504 Plans do not include any direct instruction, but rather necessary accommodations (such as the use of an elevator after breaking a leg) that the student needs to access the learning environment.



## Exceptional Children Program Placement

Sometimes the student may require special education and related services because of a significant disability that adversely affects his or her ability to learn. Students qualify for services through procedures outlined in federal and state law.

The first step in the process is referral to the Exceptional Children (EC) Team. The EC Team is composed of the student's teachers, the school psychologist, the exceptional children program facilitator, other school personnel and the parent. The EC Team reviews all information and decides if a multi-disciplinary evaluation is warranted to determine if the student has a disability. The parent is asked to give written permission for the evaluation. The evaluation of the child may include academic achievement, behavior, adaptive skills, cognitive ability, speech, language and other aspects of the student's functioning.

The EC Team then reviews all evaluation results. The team determines whether or not the student meets the eligibility criteria and has the need for special education in North Carolina. If the student is eligible for and needs specialized instruction, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is developed.

The IEP is a written document that acts as the road map for the student's special education and related services. The IEP states the goals and objectives that the student will work on for a one-year period. It also describes accommodations for the student in the classroom, testing accommodations and the amount and location of special education and related services. A new IEP is written every year. At least every three years, the student is re-evaluated to determine continued eligibility for special education.

The exceptional children's process is defined by state and federal law. Every parent or guardian whose child is referred for special education will receive a copy of the handbook of Parents Rights. Additional information is on the district website at [www.chccs.k12.nc.us](http://www.chccs.k12.nc.us) or on the state education website at [www.dpi.state.nc.us/](http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/).

*The Procedures Governing Programs and Services for Children with Disabilities* outlines the legal requirements in North Carolina for referral, evaluation, identification and placement of students in special education.



### Contact Information

- **Student Support Team Chair:** If a teacher or parent has a concern about a student, the student should be referred to the Student Support Team. Its goal is to determine interventions that will help the student be more successful in school. For assistance, please call Justin Barthollomew at 929-2106 ext. 1115.
- **504 Facilitator:** The 504 Facilitator coordinates the 504 process. 504 enables a student with a physical or mental disability to have a written plan of accommodations. For assistance, please call Jill O'Kane 929-2106 ext. 1138.
- **EC Program Facilitator:** The EC Program Facilitator helps parents understand their rights and the procedures involved in the special education process. For assistance, please call Sandra McAdoo at 929-2106 ext. 1149.

## Special Programs

### **AVID Expands Students' Visions of Themselves**

AVID, or Advancement Via Individual Determination, is a sixth grade through high school program to prepare students in the academic middle for four-year college eligibility. AVID students are enrolled in a school's most challenging courses, such as Advanced Placement.

The students attend an academic elective class called AVID and taught within the school day by a trained AVID teacher. The course is designed to prepare students to be ready to enter and succeed in college. Emphasis is on the reading, writing, and study skills necessary to be successful in advanced courses.

Please note that enrollment is based on recommendations, an interview, grade averages, proficiency and motivation. For more information, contact the school's AVID coordinator, Joanne McClelland, 929-2106, ext. 1123.

**Tip: For up-to-the-minute information happenings at school, check out the district's website [www.chccs.k12.nc.us](http://www.chccs.k12.nc.us). Parents can access each school's website from [this district page](#).**

## From the Research

### **Parent Involvement Gives Students an Advantage:**

#### **Here's How to Help at Home**

Here are some tips on how to help give your student an advantage:

- Discuss what happened at school with your student each school day.
- Let your student know school is important. Talk to them about how you still use what you learned in school.
- Give students opportunities to be independent and responsible for their own actions. Hold them accountable.



- Help students to think and to solve problems. Discuss options and examine alternatives with them.
- Limit television viewing and video game time. Students who watch little or no TV tend to have higher grades, read more books and exercise regularly.

The US Department of Education found that students who watch more than 10 hours of TV per week earn lower grades. In addition, studies of students' exposure to violence on television shows that students who watch violence on TV are more like to exhibit aggressive be-

haviors with their peers. From more than 40 years of research and from over 1000 studies, the evidence points to the connection between students watching violence and showing violent behavior.

### **Suggestions for how to be an involved parent:**

- If your child is involved in an incident at school, be willing to listen to all sides.
- Set aside space and time for your child to do homework and to read each day.
- Join in the life of your student's school. The more help parents give teachers, the more time teachers can spend with students.
- Show your children your own love for learning and set their learning sights high.
- Learning is a process. Praise students when they do well; support them when they make mistakes; and give them the respect they deserve.
- Know your children's friends and whereabouts.
- Keep lines of communication open with other parents of high school aged students.
- If you speak another language at home, continue to use it so that family communication remains effective.

## **Glossary of Selected Educational Abbreviations**

ABC – The state of NC program of Accountability, the Basics and Local Control

AYP - Adequate Yearly Progress

DPI – N.C. Department of Public Instruction

ELL - English Language Learners

EOC - End of Course Test (high school tests, largely)

EOG - End of Grade Test (grades 3-8)

ESL - English as a Second Language

GED - General Education Development high school equivalency test

IQ - Intelligence Quotient

LEA - Local Education Agency such as the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools

LEP - Limited English Proficiency; also referred to as ELL

NCLB – federal accountability program called No Child Left Behind

OCR - Office of Civil Rights

PEP - Personal Education Plan

SST – Student Support Team

PK - Prekindergarten

*The **Parent Handbooks** were created in 2005 by a district committee comprised of parents, teachers, school board members and administrators. Its goal was to have a district-wide publication with easy-to-access basic information that every parent should know.*



Title I - programs aimed at America's most disadvantaged students  
SIT – School Improvement Team

## High School Q&A

### **Q: What if my child is anxious about heading off to high school?**

**A:** Each middle school takes eighth graders to visit their high school and conducts a tour. Eighth grade counselors help prepare students for their transition into high school. Also, parents can come over to drive by the campus and visit the school with their children during the summer. Be sure to check in at the office when you come. An orientation for all students new to the high school campus will be held before the opening of school.

### **Q: Where can I find information about graduation and course selection?**

**A:** Each student receives a Course Offerings Guide, typically in early spring. The guide describes graduation requirements, course pathways, and course options. The Guidance Office assists students in course selection. Each student is assigned to a guidance counselor in high school.

### **Q: Can my child park on campus?**

**A:** Students who are eligible may park on campus. In order to park on campus, students must obtain a parking permit. Information and forms can be obtained from Justin Bartholomew's Office. Students who violate the district student substance abuse policy will lose the privilege to park on campus without financial reimbursement.

- **Cost:** A parking permit costs \$100 at the beginning of the school year, or \$50 a semester.
- **Requirements:** Students must be a junior or a senior. Rising juniors must have completed and verified 30 service learning hours by the end of May from the previous school year; rising seniors must have 40 hours. All students must have a valid driver's license and registration. Students cannot have any failing grades as of the end of the previous second semester. Parents must sign the parking form and it must be either witnessed by a school employee or notarized.
- **Leaving Campus:** Only seniors are allowed to go off campus during lunch or their free period. An off-campus form must be on file, signed by the parents (and witnessed), for students to be allowed to go off campus. Students who have an off-campus form on file, have a different background color on their student IDs.

**Please Note: Students must pass five courses each semester to obtain and keep their driver's license.** The State of North Carolina requires that students under the age of 18 have an Eligibility Certificate in order to apply for a learner's permit or a driver's license. The high school issues those driver's eligibility certificates. Students must take and pass five (5) courses in order to be eligible to drive in North Carolina. To keep their licenses, students must pass five classes at the end of each semester. Any student who does not pass five classes at the end of each semester is notified by the state that they have lost their driver's license. Students cannot regain their license until they show that they are passing the required number of courses at the end of the next grading period.

### **Q: Can my child leave school for lunch?**

**A:** Only seniors can leave school for the lunch period. Seniors must have completed 40 hours of their service learning requirement in order to leave campus for lunch. Students who violate the district student substance abuse policy will lose the privilege to park on campus without financial reimbursement.

### **Q: How does my child sign up for Driver's Education?**

**A:** Students should call Jordan Driving School (919) 772-4877 to register for driver's education.

### **Q: How does my child receive credit for service learning?**

**A:** All students are required to complete 50 hours of service learning during their four years in high

school. The hours are pro-rated for students who transfer into the district during their high school careers. Forms for documenting service, opportunities in the school and community to perform service and other information are available from the service learning coordinator at each high school.

**Q: How do I find out about the college application process?**

**A:** Students receive information at school about the college application process. Each high school has a Career Information Center (CIC), staff and volunteers to assist students in college and career searches. Counselors advertise SAT testing dates and registration deadlines at school and through the PTSA newsletter. Your child's guidance counselor can be contacted for help. Also, check out the high school website for information about colleges and careers.

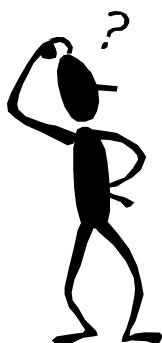
**Q: How does my child sign up for sports?**

**A:** The high schools provide free sport physicals during the year prior to the beginning of the major sports seasons in order for students to get physical exams. The physicals are conducted under the supervision of doctors who are part of the sports medicine program. For information about sports, their schedules and coaches contact Ronnie Hayes, athletic director at: 929-2106 ext. 2108 or email him at [rhayes@chccs.k12.nc.us](mailto:rhayes@chccs.k12.nc.us).

**Q: How can students gain access to school material via the Internet?**

**A:** Students have access to their school work via Connect2Schools (C2S) from any computer connected to the Internet. Students can access the space on the file server where their school work resides. The high school's website connects to the C2S server. This enables students to continue to work on school assignments over the Internet after the school day is over.

## What do I do if . . . ?



- ⇒ **My student is sick?** Report an absence with the assistant principal's secretary. The school nurse is Jennifer Pepin and may be reached at 929-2106 ext. 1104.
- ⇒ **I need to pick my student up early for an appointment?** Send a note with your student the morning of the early pick-up alerting school staff that he or she will miss school. Your student must present the note to the assistant principal's secretary. The day of the appointment, please park your car, go inside the school, tell the secretary your student's name, and sign the student out. The secretary will call the teacher, who will send your student to the front desk. Please arrive early enough to allow time for your student to prepare for your departure.
- ⇒ **I want to set up a conference?** Call or email the teacher.
- ⇒ **I want to see a counselor?** Call or e-mail the counselor. The guidance secretary's number is 929-2106 ext. 1220.
- ⇒ **I need to get a message to my student?** Call the school at 929-2106 and stay on the line to reach the receptionist, who will get the message to your student.
- ⇒ **My student needs to call me?** He or she can use the phone at a secretary's desk with a note from the teacher during class time; most teachers will allow this if it's not disruptive.
- ⇒ **My child has a problem with a teacher?** First, speak with the teacher. If you need more help, call the assistant principal. If concerns persist, contact the school principal. If you are not satisfied, call the superintendent's office at 967-8211 and you will be referred to the superintendent who supervises the school.
- ⇒ **I want to volunteer in the school?** Call the Volunteer and Partners Office, 967-8211, ext. 281. Also, your PTA or child's teacher may have volunteer opportunities. You'll find their numbers in the school PTA newsletter and in the student directory.
- ⇒ **My family needs help?** Call the family specialist, Teresa Pitts, at 929-2106, ext.1273.
- ⇒ **How do I make an anonymous tip on the Safe & Drug-Free Schools TIP-Line?** Call 929-2106, ext. 1888 to anonymously report threats of violence, drugs or alcohol on campus, suicide threats, weapons or vandalism on campus, harassment, aggressive behavior or anything else

that may be harmful to students. In an emergency, call the NC Safe Schools TIP Line, 888-960-9600.

<b>August 27</b>	<b>First Day of School, Grades 1-12</b>
<b>August 29</b>	<b>First Day of School, Kindergarten</b>
<b>September 3</b>	<b>Labor Day Holiday</b>
<b>September 20</b>	<b>Delayed Opening</b>
<b>October 18</b>	<b>Delayed Opening</b>
<b>October 25</b>	<b>End of First Quarter</b>
<b>October 26</b>	<b>Teacher Workday</b>
<b>November 9</b>	<b>Teacher Workday</b>
<b>November 12</b>	<b>Veterans' Day Holiday</b>
<b>November 21</b>	<b>Teacher Workday</b>
<b>November 22-23</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Holiday</b>
<b>December 13</b>	<b>Delayed Opening</b>
<b>December 24-January 4</b>	<b>Winter Break</b>
<b>January 18</b>	<b>End of Second Quarter</b>
<b>January 21</b>	<b>Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday</b>
<b>January 22</b>	<b>Teacher Workday</b>
<b>January 31</b>	<b>Delayed Opening</b>
<b>February 18</b>	<b>Teacher Workday</b>
<b>February 28</b>	<b>Delayed Opening</b>
<b>March 20</b>	<b>End of Third Quarter</b>
<b>March 21</b>	<b>Teacher Workday</b>
<b>March 24-28</b>	<b>Spring Break</b>
<b>April 17</b>	<b>Delayed Opening</b>
<b>May 15</b>	<b>Delayed Opening</b>
<b>May 26</b>	<b>Memorial Day Holiday</b>
<b>June 10</b>	<b>Last Day of School for Students (early dismissal)</b>