

**WEST CARTER
HIGH SCHOOL**

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2019-2020



WCHS Student Handbook 2018-2019

Policies of the Carter County Board of Education

I. Attendance

It is the intent of this policy to encourage the regular and punctual attendance of students enrolled in the school system. While it is the responsibility of the parent and the student to ensure regular and punctual attendance, this policy details the attendance expectations for students enrolled in the District. Recording of absences and tardies shall be made in compliance with the requirements of [702 KAR 007:125](#).¹

The Carter County Board of Education believes that there is a direct relationship between poor attendance and lack of achievement. Students who have good attendance generally achieve higher grades, enjoy school more, and are much better adjusted to live in our society.

COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE LAW

All children in the District who have entered Kindergarten or who are between the ages of six (6), as of October 1, and eighteen (18), except those specifically exempted by statute, shall enroll and be in regular attendance in the school in which they are assigned.²

EXEMPTIONS FROM COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE

The Board shall exempt the following from compulsory attendance:

1. A graduate from an accredited or approved 4-year high school,
2. A pupil who is enrolled in a private or parochial school,
3. A pupil who is less than seven (7) years old and in regular attendance in a private kindergarten nursery school,
4. A pupil whose physical or mental condition prevents or renders inadvisable, attendance at school or application to study,
5. A pupil who is enrolled and in regular attendance in private, parochial, or church school programs for exceptional children, or
6. A pupil who is enrolled and in regular attendance in a state supported program for exceptional children.³

PHYSICIAN'S STATEMENT REQUIRED

The Board, before granting an exemption, for a physical or mental condition, shall require a signed statement as required by law unless a student's individual education plan (IEP) specifies that placement of the child with a disability at home or in a hospital is the least restrictive environment for providing services.³

DEFINITION OF TRUANCY

Any student who has attained the age of six (6), but has not reached his/her eighteenth (18th) birthday, who has been absent from school without valid excuse for three (3) days or more, or tardy without valid excuse on three (3) days or more, is a truant.

Any student enrolled in a public school who has attained the age of eighteen (18) years, but has not reached his/her twenty-first (21st) birthday, who has been absent from school without valid excuse for three (3) or more days, or tardy without valid excuse on three (3) or more days, is a truant.

Any student that is considered habitually truant will not qualify for annual District attendance awards.

Any student who has been reported as a truant two (2) or more times is an habitual truant.

For the purposes of establishing a student's status as a truant, a student's attendance record is cumulative for an entire school year, but not limited to the current school year. When students transfer from one Kentucky district to another, attendance information from the previous district shall become part of their official attendance record for that school year.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Causes for absences that are considered to be excused shall be:

1. Illness of the student; parent's personal notes are accepted excusing students for up to three (3) days per semester at the high schools, middle schools and elementary schools. To be excused, days missed beyond this limit must be approved by the school attendance committee, which may require documentation by a clinic or physician; Excuses will only be accepted within five (5) school days after the student returns to school. After a student is notified that an absence is unexcused, an appeal must be filed within five (5) school days if it is to be considered.
2. Death in the immediate family;
3. Appointment with a health professional, where such absence during the school day is justified. This excused absence requires written certification from the attending health professional;

4. Driver's test;
5. Cause pre-approved by the school attendance committee;
6. Court appearance (note signed by the court or appropriate court official must be presented);
7. Failure of District provided transportation system to operate;
8. Two (2) days for college visits for seniors;
9. Attendance at the Kentucky State Fair (1 day only);
10. Religious holidays, as appropriate and for appropriate duration. These absences should be pre-approved by the attendance committee;
11. Documented military leave;
12. One (1) day prior to departure of parent/guardian called to active military duty;
13. One (1) day upon the return of parent/guardian from active military duty,
14. Visitation for up to ten (10) days with the student's parent, de facto custodian, or person with legal custody who, while on active military duty stationed outside of the country, is granted rest and recuperation leave,

Ten (10) days for students attending basic training required by a branch of the United States Armed Forces; or

15. Medical and Health Care Provider Excuses

Medical and health care provider excuses will only be accepted if the student has been seen at the medical facility. The excuse must include the exact date(s) for which the student is to be excused. Due to confidentiality concerns, the excuse must be turned in to the Principal's office in person, copies by email or facsimile will not be accepted. Students presenting forged, false, reproduced or altered excuses may be subject to disciplinary action.

16. All absence events and tardies will be considered unexcused until the appropriate written excuse, or documentation, is provided to the school. These notes, excuses, etc., must be turned in to the school with three (3) days after the absence event or tardy. If not received in three (3) days, the absence event/tardy will remain unexcused.

Note: In cases where the circumstances causes the student to be absent for a part of the day, the student should return to school, when deemed possible by the attendance committee.

EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES (EHO)

Trips qualifying as educational enhancement opportunities, as determined by the Principal.

Students shall be granted an excused absence for up to ten (10) school days to pursue an educational enhancement opportunity determined by the Principal to be of significant educational value. This opportunity may include, but not be limited to, participation in an educational foreign exchange program or an intensive instructional, experiential, or performance program in one (1) of the core curriculum subjects of English, science, mathematics, social studies, foreign language, and the arts. Students/parents should complete the Educational Enhancement Opportunity request form five (5) days prior to the absence.

Students receiving an excused absence under this section shall have the opportunity to make up school work missed and shall not have their class grades adversely affected for lack of class attendance or class participation due to the excused absence.

Unless the Principal determines that extenuating circumstances exist, requests for date(s) falling within State or District testing periods shall not be granted.

The Principal's determination may be appealed to the Superintendent/designee whose decision may then be appealed to the Board under its grievance policy and procedures.

ABSENCES FOR VACATION

The regular school calendar allows students to be off during the summer months as well as holidays, fall break, spring break Christmas break, and teacher professional days. Therefore, absences for family vacation when school is in session will be recorded as "unexcused". Since classroom time is a high correlate for learning, parents are strongly encouraged to plan vacations around the school calendar.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCE EVENTS/TARDIES

1. Student skip days or walkouts/protests are not authorized or approved by Carter County Schools. An absence or tardy on the days that these events occur will not be excused and will be considered skipping. Only a verifiable health care provider's excuse or family emergency may be considered to excuse an absence or tardy occurring on days that these events may occur – no parent excuses allowed.

2. Any absences exceeding the allowed number of parent excuses or medical excuses, unless administratively excused on a case by case basis.
3. Examples of absences from class which are not valid and will count toward truancy procedures:
 1. Overslept
 2. Out of town
 3. Hair appointment
 4. Working at home/business
 5. Babysitting
 6. Transportation (missed bus or vehicle trouble)
 7. Birthday or other celebration
 8. Indifference
 9. Poverty
 10. At home suspension
 11. Illness (more than six (6) parent/guardian notes)
 12. Absence unknown by school or parent/guardian
 13. Lessons/events related to a personal hobby or interest

PROCEDURES-HIGH SCHOOL

Students having excused absences shall be allowed to make up work including tests. It is the student's or parent's responsibility to contact the teacher concerning make-up work. For every day of excused absence, the student will receive the same length of time (longer at the teacher's discretion) to complete make-up work. The school will accept three (3) parent notes per semester for consideration for excused event. Excuses will only be accepted within five (5) school days after the student returns to school. After a student is notified that an absence is unexcused, an appeal must be filed within five (5) school days if it is to be considered.

Class work and tests may not be made up until the absence is excused.

Each school will designate a person or persons to determine if a student's absence is excused. That determination should be made within five (5) days of a student returning to school.

Students who are sixteen (16) or seventeen (17) year old who become academically deficient in attendance shall be reported to the Transportation Cabinet for driver's license, permit or driving privilege revocation, under the Kentucky No Pass – No Drive Law.

Academic and attendance deficiencies for student's age sixteen (16) or seventeen (17) enrolled in regular, alternative, part-time, and special education programs shall be defined as follows:

- a.) They shall be deemed academically deficient if they have not received passing grades in at least four (4) courses, or the equivalent of four (4) courses, taken in the preceding semester or trimester.
- b.) They shall be deemed deficient in attendance when they drop out of school or accumulate nine (9) unexcused absences for the preceding semester. Suspensions shall be considered unexcused absences.
- c.) Students whose driving permits are revoked, but later meet the statutory standards for reinstatement, must then apply to the Director of Pupil Personnel to have their standing confirmed. The District shall make the required report to the appropriate agency.
- d.) Students age sixteen (16) through twenty-one (21) in Carter County Schools with a valid driver's license that has been deemed academically deficient or deficient in attendance in the preceding semester shall not be provided school driving privileges. Any student that later becomes compliant may have school driving privileges reinstated on a semester-by-semester or trimester basis by the school Principal.

Students may not leave school early for the day after 2:50 p.m., except in the case of an emergency.

Except in the case of a death in the immediate family, students will not be allowed to take part in after school activities (extracurricular) unless they were at school the entire school day. The Superintendent will develop an administrative regulation to provide guidance for this section and to list exceptions to the policy, if any.

Each school will establish an attendance committee to provide oversight of school attendance procedures and to hear student and parent appeals concerning absenteeism. At least one (1) administrator will serve on the committee.

Students that are truant, as defined in this policy, will be reported to the District director of pupil personnel on the District-approved form. The director of pupil personnel will take action to help return the student to school, and if necessary, refer the student and parent to the county court system.

STUDENTS EIGHTEEN (18) YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER

A student who is eighteen (18) years of age or older may be withdrawn for the remainder of the school year for excessive absence from school. Withdrawal action will begin only after the school has taken documented steps to remedy the problem. If a student is to be considered for withdrawal, the following steps must be taken:

1. After a total of five (5) days of unexcused absences in one (1) school year, a parent-student conference will be held. The purpose of the conference will be to identify, if possible, the cause(s) for the student's repeated absences from school and to consider remedies.
2. After a total of ten (10) days of unexcused absences in one (1) school year, a formal in-school hearing will be held.
 - a. The hearing shall include the student, parent/guardian and school administrator as well as any other persons represented by them.
 - b. The purpose of the hearing will be to review the steps which have been taken to remedy the problems and to serve notice that withdrawal action may be taken after five (5) more days of unexcused absence.
3. After a total of fifteen (15) days of unexcused absences in one (1) year, a student may be withdrawn from school.
4. If the decision is made by the Board to withdraw the student from school, the student and parents shall be notified by certified letter that the student may return to school the following school year.
5. Students will not be permitted to participate in any extracurricular activity after receiving a total of ten (10) unexcused absences.
6. **Any twelfth (12th) grade student who has accumulated eight (8) or more full day unexcused absences will not be allowed to participate in high school graduation ceremonies. Any time period in which a student withdraws from school or has a late enrollment will also be considered as "an unexcused absent day" from the school year. Transfers from one (1) public high school to Carter County Schools will be granted an exemption of three (3) school days for moving and travel. Senior attendance is based on a full year enrollment and official withdrawal from school cannot be used as an avenue to circumvent the eight (8) day unexcused absence rule.**

The following guidelines will be used in relations to a student's unexcused absences and tardies.

Parents will be notified by mail when a student has missed three (3) unexcused absences and the student's name will be referred to the Family Resource Center for any assistance that might be needed. When a student has reached six (6) unexcused absences they will be referred to the Director of Pupil Personnel. After six (6) or more unexcused absences, the Director of Pupil Personnel will refer the student to Family Court for truancy violations.

Students dismissed from school with a parasitic infection will be given two (2) days excused absence and must be cleared by the Principal or designee in accordance with Policy 09.213 in order to return to school. In order to receive any additional excused days the parent must contact the school Principal for approval. Habitual absences due to a parasitic infection will be referred to Family Court.

For the purposes of establishing a student's status as a truant, a student's attendance record is cumulative for an entire school year. When students transfer from one Kentucky district to another, attendance information from the previous district shall become part of their official attendance record for that school year.

Harassment and Discrimination

The Carter County School District does not tolerate acts of harassment and discrimination based on race, color, national origin, age, religion, sex or disability.

Prohibited acts include, but are not limited to, offensive conduct such as racial or ethnic slurs, jokes, derogatory comments, or other verbal or physical conduct against a member of any of the protected classes listed above.

Any student who believes they have been harassed or discriminated against should report this immediately, either verbally or in writing, to their building level Principal.

Any employee who believes they have been discriminated against should report this immediately to the Superintendent.

Complaints of harassment and discrimination will lead to an adequate, reliable and impartial investigation in accordance with the specific Carter County Board of Education Harassment/Discrimination policy.

Students who engage in harassment/discrimination shall be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to, suspension and expulsion.

Employees who engage in harassment/discrimination shall be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to, suspension without pay and termination of employment.

Retaliation against anyone who has reported harassment or discrimination, or who has provided information during an investigation, is strictly forbidden.

The district's official Anti-Harassment and Discrimination Statement is published on the district website at the following link at the "ABOUT US" drop down tab: <https://www.cartercountyschools.org/>

The Carter County Board of Education Harassment/Discrimination policies (03.162, 03.262 for employees and 09.42811 for students) are found at the following link: <http://policy.ksba.org/Chapter.aspx?distid=3>

Notice of Rights under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and eligible students (students over 18 years of age, who are married, or who are attending a postsecondary institution) the following rights with respect to the student's education records.

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within forty-five (45) calendar days of the day the district receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students submit a written request to the school principal/designee that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Principal arranges for access and notifies the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. Parents or eligible students may ask the district to amend a record they believe is inaccurate, misleading or in violation of privacy or other rights. The parent writes the school principal, clearly identifying the part of the record they want changed, and specifying why it is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of their privacy or other rights. If the district decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the district notifies the parent or eligible student of the decision and advises them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures are provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. The district may disclose records to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the district discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll or to other entities authorized by law.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. Family Policy Compliance Office U.S. Department of Education 600 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20202-4605
5. The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee is authorized to release Board approved directory information. Directory Information is information contained in an educational record which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. This information may be released without consent. This information may include the student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and most recent educational agency or institution attended. Any eligible student, parent, or guardian who does not wish to have directory information released notifies the Superintendent in writing on or before September 30 or each school year or within thirty (30) calendar days after the Annual FERPA Notice has been distributed. The written request must specifically state what information may not be classified as "Directory Information".
6. The district keeps educational records in a secure location in each school and Board office.
7. The district obtains written consent from a parent or eligible student before disclosing personally identifiable information to an entity or individual not authorized to receive it under FERPA.

8. For students who have been determined eligible for special education, education records are destroyed at the request of the parent when they are no longer needed to provide educational programs or services.

The district may destroy the educational records of a child without a parent's request three (3) years after they are no longer needed to provide educational programs or services. Parents are advised that data contained in the records may later be needed for Social Security benefits or other purposes.

The district may retain, for an indefinite period of time, a record of the student's name, address, telephone number, grades, attendance record, classes attended, grade level completed, and year completed. Children determined eligible for special education include those children with disabilities who have a hearing impairment, visual impairment, emotional-behavioral disability, deaf-blindness, other health impairment, specific learning disability, mental disability, multiple disabilities, speech or language impairment, developmental delay, orthopedic impairment, autism, or traumatic brain injury, and who because of such an impairment need special education services

West Carter High School Building Procedures, Policies, and Consequences

Entry to West Carter High School

1. All students will be expected to enter the building in the morning through the gym lobby entrance. All other entrances will be locked and secured; students will not be allowed to enter by means of other building doors.
 - a. Students entering will be expected to walk through metal detectors at the gym lobby entrance. They will walk through the first detector, and if it is set off, they will be asked to walk through a second detector.
 - b. During entry, students may be asked to remove boots, empty pockets, or be scanned using a handheld metal detector.
 - c. Students must place ALL bags (backpacks, sports bags, purses, instrument cases, etc.) on the table at the gym entry. These will be searched by teachers or building administrators each day to ensure that no objects are brought in to the building that are against school policy. Strictly prohibited items include:
 - i. Tobacco products (including lighters, e-cigarettes, etc.)
 - ii. Drugs and alcohol (including look-alikes)
 - iii. Weapons (pocket knives included)
 - iv. Television or gaming systems (unless pre-approved by an administrator)
 - d. Bags for use during the school day must be no larger than 18 x 18 inches in size. Students may be asked to bring a new bag to school if it does not comply with this requirement. Sports bags will be stored in the bag room in the gym lobby.
2. Once students have entered the school building, they are not to leave the building for any reason, unless they are signed out by a parent, guardian, or someone on their official pick-up list.
3. Students may choose to report to the cafeteria for breakfast or to the gymnasium. Once a student has entered the gymnasium, they must ask permission of the teacher or administrator on duty to be released from the gymnasium.
4. Students signing in late must report to the front office to do so. They will be scanned using a handheld metal detector and their bags will be searched in the front office. Any student who does not sign in at the front office when late is subject to disciplinary action.
5. Visitors must report to the front door and be admitted by our receptionist. All visitors will sign in, their bags will be searched, and they will be scanned using a handheld metal detector.
6. Students returning from the Carter County Career and Technical Center or from any other school function will enter through the gym lobby doors and walk through metal detectors, using the same guidelines as the morning entry process. Bags will be checked and students may be asked to empty their pockets and remove shoes during this process.

Parking at West Carter High School

1. All automobiles parked on the school grounds must be registered with the school and display the current decal.
2. Parking is strictly limited to spaces provided for students. Vehicles will be assigned a parking space.
3. All students must be licensed and covered by insurance. The school is not responsible for the automobile or its contents. (Students must show proof of license and insurance.)
4. There shall be no loitering in the parking area or visitation at the automobile without permission.
5. Speeding, reckless, driving or making excessive noise on school property will not be tolerated.
6. Student vehicles shall be subject to search if there are reasonable grounds to believe that alcohol, drugs, stolen property, or other contraband might be present in the vehicle.
7. Penalties for driving violations will be at the principal's discretion.
8. Drug testing policy will require that parent's sign off on a form that allows for random testing on their driver. This form must be signed before student can drive to school, it does not mean they will be tested.

Leaving West Carter High School

1. In the event it becomes necessary for the student to leave school during the school day, permission must be obtained by an Administrator and the student must sign out in the school office. The policy requires that parents present themselves or contact the office by phone before a student may be dismissed during school time, regardless of age.
2. Lunch sign outs are not permitted except for the following: dental or doctor appointment, application for driver's license or test, or emergencies.
3. No student will be dismissed after 2:45 p.m. unless it is an emergency.
4. Each school will require the parent/guardian of every student to submit a list of people (if any) allowed to pick up their children at school. By placing a name on the list, the parent/guardian is giving that person permission to pick up the child at school and the school will require no further contact with the parent/guardian before releasing the student. The school reserves the right to approve or disapprove people on the list and also the right to approve or disapprove on a case-by-case basis the early dismissal of students.
5. Students may be dismissed early into the custody of a person not on the list on a case-by-case basis with a documented note or phone call from the parent/guardian and with school approval.
6. Any person picking up a student at school must sign the sign-out listing in the school office.
7. If school officials do not recognize a person requesting to pick up a student, the visitor may be requested to present identification.
8. Teachers will not dismiss a student from school or into any person's custody without the approval of the Principal or his/her designee.
9. Students wishing to ride a bus other than their regularly assigned bus may do so with parent/guardian permission. Parent/guardian permission must be given in person, in the form of a documented note, or documented telephone call. In case of emergency or for student control purposes, the school may assign students to buses other than their regularly assigned bus without parent consent.
10. The enrollment records of the district shall include information regarding the marital status of a student's parent/guardian and any information regarding legal restrictions on pick-up and/or visitation.

Reporting Illness

Illness of a student must be reported to the office. If there is an existing health condition, such as diabetes, epilepsy, etc. parents have the responsibility of making the school aware of these conditions. The health condition will be a matter of confidential records. If a student becomes ill during the course of the day, the office is to be notified immediately.

Outside Food

Students are not allowed to order food during school hours from local restaurants. Student may bring their lunch but deliveries from local restaurants or others to students is prohibited. Parents who bring students lunch must bring all items in unmarked containers.

Lockers and Locks

Lockers with lock will be made available for student use. Rent will be \$1.00 per student; a fee of \$6.00 will be assessed for lost locks. Locks are to be on lockers at all times. Students may forfeit their rental fee and the right to have a locker if locks are not used. Contents of lockers are the responsibility of the student to whom the locker is assigned.

Senior/Junior Dues

Students will read and sign the Activities Form even if they choose not to participate.

- a. The major fund-raiser for both classes will be held as early in the school year as possible.
- b. The amount of dues is at or near \$20.00 for juniors & \$25.00 for seniors.
All student dues paid after Feb. 1st will increase \$2.00 per month after the 4th day of the next month with no payments accepted after May 4th.
- c. All money collected for Junior/Senior dues will be turned in to the teacher in charge.

Grades

1. Make Up Work

- a. Work must be made up according to the attendance policy guidelines after returning to school.
- b. Students having excused absences shall be allowed to make up work including tests. It is the student or parent's responsibility to contact the teacher concerning make-up work.
- c. Class work and test may not be made up when the absence is unexcused.

2. Intervention Courses

Students may be assigned to intervention courses based on teacher recommendations, class performance, and standardized test scores at the discretion of WCHS administration.

3. Grading Scale

The following grading scale is to be used for computing semester averages: A (90%-100%), B (80%-89%), C (70%-79%), D (60%-69%), or F (less than 60% of class work).

4. Weighted Grades

Students who take an AP course and attempt an AP exam or take a dual credit college course that is a non-remedial freshman college level or above and is one of the four core areas (math, science, language arts, and social studies) is eligible for weighted grades.

Final Exams – exemptions

A student will be exempt from taking a final exam if he-she has an "A" average in the class or has perfect attendance, providing the student has no disciplinary or conduct action on record by that teacher or principal for the semester. However, a student may take the final exam to improve his/her grade.

Dropping/Adding Classes

- A. First three days of the semester
- B. Only upon approval of the principal
- C. Office aide position open only to 11th and 12th with proper attendance, behavior and G. P. A.

Extra-Curricular Eligibility

- A. Grades – checked weekly and must be passing 2/3 of classes

- B. Attendance – student arriving to school after 8:10 a.m. or leaving before 3:00 p.m. will not be eligible for practice or game on that day except for these reasons: orthodontist appointment, specialist appointment, or a death in the immediate family.
- C. Behavior – Any student on out-of-school suspension shall not take part in any extra-curricular activity until the suspension has been lifted. Any student serving ISAE will be at the discretion of the coach or sponsor for participation in extra-curricular activities.

Field Trip (Including Senior Trip) Eligibility

Any student wishing to participate in a school field trip (including a senior class trip) must have a signed form by all of their teachers allowing them permission to miss their class. If a student has poor grades or attendance, a teacher may choose not to sign the permission form. Seniors who are ineligible to participate in graduation ceremonies will automatically also be ineligible to participate in the senior class trip.

Dances

A. Eligibility

Middle and elementary school age children will not be permitted to attend high school dances. Students from other high schools may not attend WCHS dances, except for HOMECOMING, PROM and MILITARY BALL. Students choosing to bring a guest from another high school (including Carter County Credit Recovery) must obtain prior approval from the principal by submitting a request in writing. Out of school guests for the PROM and MILITARY BALL, that are no longer in high school, must be approved in advance by the principal by submitting a request in writing and shall not have reached their 21st birthday on or before the day of the event.

B. WCHS students must meet the following attendance and behavior guidelines

- No more than 5 days with unexcused absences during the semester of the dance and no more than 8 days with unexcused absences for the year
- No more than 6 days of ISAE the semester of the dance
- No more than 5 days suspension during the semester of the dance and no more than 9 days suspension for the year.
- Students must be eligible for extracurricular activities as established by the Carter County Board of Education.

C. Out of school guests

- Students from other high schools may attend Homecoming and/or Military Ball. Students from other high schools must submit a request in writing to attend the dance to WCHS administration. All attendees must be currently enrolled in a high school. The WCHS will approve/disapprove the request.
- Students from other high schools and escorts who have graduated must submit a request in writing to attend the PROM or military ball. No attendee shall have reached the age of 21. That is a guest whose 21st birthday occurs on or before the date of the dance will not be permitted to attend. The WCHS principal will approve/disapprove the request.

ESS/ Fall, Winter, and Summer School Eligibility

- A. The minimum score to attend Fall/Winter/Summer School is 55%.
- B. A student can only bring their grade up to 60%
- C. Students from the first semester may complete work beginning with the week following grade card Distribution; the ESS director will provide a schedule for the student to use to make up the work for credit. Second semester classes are to be completed during summer school.

Graduation Requirements

1. Students must earn a minimum of 25 credits.
2. Students must take English & Math all 4 years.
3. Specific Credits needed include:
 - a. 4 credits in English
 - b. 3 credits in Math
 - i. Starting with the class of 2023 students will be required to earn 4 credits in Math
 - c. 3 credits in Science
 - d. 3 credits in Social Studies
 - e. ½ credit in Health and ½ credit in Physical Ed.

- f. 1 credit in Arts & Humanities
4. Students must pass the Civics Assessment.
5. Students must complete a CTE program or reach Transition Readiness.

Graduation Ceremonies

In order to maintain the safest environment possible at graduation ceremonies, there will be limited seating available and heightened security measures in place. Each senior will be issued a set number of armband tickets to distribute to guests of their choice. The number of tickets per senior will be determined based on the class size. Guests attending graduation will only be admitted upon presenting the proper armband. All those attending graduation (including students) will be asked to enter through the gym lobby where they will be scanned using metal detectors. All bags will be searched prior to entering the commencement ceremony. This is not being done in an effort to keep family and friends from attending graduation; it is simply an effort to make this event as safe as possible.

Reward Day Requirements

There will be reward days offered to students (i.e. Field Day, Talent Show, Dodge Ball, other in-school tournaments). In order to participate as a spectator or participant, students must meet the following guidelines:

1. No more than two failing grades that semester (seniors must not be failing a graduation requirement)
2. No discipline referrals for the month in which the event is held.
3. Student must be eligible for extracurricular activities based on attendance (No more than 7.5 unexcused absences)

A firm date will be set for each reward day for students to be made aware of their eligibility based on grades, behavior, and attendance. Students who do not meet the requirements will not be allowed to attend or participate and will be sent to an alternate location in the school. There will be no changes made after this date to allow participation. This date will be posted after the announcement of the event.

Student Discipline

- A. See the following pages for specific infraction/dispositions.
- B. Once a student reaches TEN infractions, that student may be referred to the School Resource Officer and Court Designated Worker for being beyond control of the school.
- C. Escort List – Students who have multiple tardies, skipping, fighting, multiple disruptions, smoking, etc. infractions will be placed on an escort list. Students can be removed from the escort list by not having any infractions for a semester.
- D. Any violation that could be considered a public offense such as, but not limited to, terroristic threatening, criminal mischief, harassment, etc. Administration may choose from the following, depending upon the severity of the violation:

SUSPENSION (May include suspension from any school function during that time period such as, but not limited to: senior breakfast, prom, field trips, club events, graduation ceremonies, etc.), In School Suspension, Notify SRO, Referral to superintendent for pre-expulsion hearing.

Disciplinary Policies and Procedures

We, at West Carter High School, believe that all students deserve a safe and orderly environment. The following list of infractions and dispositions are a reflection of our efforts to assure we do what is best for **ALL** students. **Please be aware that alternative dispositions may be deemed necessary at times; these alternative dispositions may be more or less severe at the discretion of the principal and/or the principal's designee.** The principal and/or the principal's designee will make discipline decisions and will determine any alternative disposition.

When students violate school policy, they will be subject to disciplinary action. This section pertains to behaviors that could result in disciplinary action and explanation of school discipline.

EXPLANATION OF DISCIPLINARY CORRECTIONS

- **Lunch Detention** – Lunch detention will be held during lunch period. All students who are spending the day in ISAE will be in lunch detention during this period. In addition, other students can be placed in lunch detention during this period for inappropriate actions during lunch. Such actions can include, but are not limited to: creating/leaving a mess at your table or

in an area of the cafeteria, disrespectful actions to the cafeteria staff or faculty working the lunch room, loud or unruly behavior, interrupting/talking to students who are in lunch detention. Lunch detention will be assigned by the staff on lunch duty. Days of lunch detention will vary based on the severity of the incident.

- **In School Alternative Education (ISAE)** – Students will report to a designated area to be supervised by an instructor in an alternative setting. Students will be given all assignments from their classes for the day and will receive credit for their work. Students will not have access to their cell phone or other devices while in ISAE.
- **Suspensions** – Any assignments that are given during this time out of school will not receive credit. Students who are suspended are not allowed on school grounds and they may not participate in any activity for any reason. This includes all extra-curricular activities including but not limited to athletic/academic events, dances, and graduation.
- **Pre-Expulsion/Expulsion** – If a student has engaged in a behavior that is dangerous or threatens school safety, he/she may be referred to the district for possible expulsion. This will be handled at the district level and information will be provided to the student and their family if this situation arises.

Bullying, Harassment, Threats, and Confrontation

West Carter High School does not tolerate bullying or harassment. Bullying is defined as the use of force or threats to abuse or intimidate others. It can include verbal harassment or threat, physical assault or coercion and may be directed repeatedly towards particular victims, perhaps on grounds of class, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, appearance, behavior, or ability.

Any instance of potential bullying, harassment or threat should be reported immediately to an adult in the building. Administration will address the situation using any one or combination of the following:

- **Parent Contact**
- **Referral to School Counselor and/or School Resource Officer**
- **ISAE/Suspension/Referral for Expulsion (as determined by the severity of the situation)**

Weapons on School Property

Anything that can cause harm or serious injury/death to any student, faculty, or staff member will be considered a weapon. Knives, guns, ammunition, dangerous instruments, and look-alikes are considered weapons. (In case of a student accidentally carrying an ordinary pocketknife to school, the student may notify an administrator or the SRO prior to entering the scanning process. This student will not face disciplinary actions.)

Penalty for Weapon on School Property:

1st 10 day suspension and/or possible expulsion

Fighting

Punishment will equal severity of the offense. The faculty, staff, and administration of West Carter High School do not believe that words are justification for physical violence. Disagreements with fellow students should be brought to the attention of the counselor, principal, teacher, or appropriate school personnel. Punishment for fighting may include suspension for starting a fight, fighting, not stopping when told to stop, and other fighting offenses. Even though a student does not start a fight, if they fight back in any way, they are subject to punishment as well. In addition students may be charged with assault, disorderly conduct, or criminal mischief under Kentucky Revised Statutes. Discipline for what is deemed an **assault** can be elevated based on the severity of the incident. In an instance where there is a clear aggressor (person who starts the fight) this individual could be dealt with more severely than the other participant. In a case of clear cut self-defense, it is possible there will be no disciplinary actions taken on that individual.

Penalty for Fighting:

1st 3 days suspension and 2 days ISAE

2nd 5 days suspension and 3 days ISAE

3rd 10 days suspension and possible expulsion

Instigation of a Fight/Actions used to create a fight between two students

Instigation of a fight includes spreading false rumors, encouraging a fight between students by being a messenger, offering money for individuals to fight or trying to pay another individual to fight in your place, or any other action that would facilitate or encourage fighting between two individuals. Actions may be referred to SRO.

Penalty for Instigating a Fight:

1st 3 days suspension and 2 days ISAE

2nd 5 days suspension and 3 days ISAE

3rd 10 days suspension and possible expulsion

Disrespect of a Teacher/Refusal to Comply with Request of Authority

Disrespect of a teacher is defined as when a student is uncooperative, refusing to follow directions or orders from a teacher, or is rude and lacking the appropriate behavior that a student should display toward an adult.

Penalty for Disrespect/Refusal:

- 1st – 3 days ISAE
- 2nd – 3 days Suspension
- 3rd – 5 days Suspension
- 4th – 10 days Suspension and recommendation for expulsion

Abuse of a Teacher/Administrator

Abuse of a teacher occurs anytime a teacher is attacked **VERBALLY** or **PHYSICALLY**. Profanity and physical actions towards faculty and staff will be referred to the SRO and charges will be filed in addition to the school disciplinary actions.

Penalty for Abuse of a Teacher/Administrator:

- 1st – 5 days Suspension
- 2nd – 10 days Suspension and recommendation for expulsion

Stealing

The stealing of any objects or materials that do not belong to you will result in school disciplinary action and charges filed by the school SRO. Involvement in stealing (purchasing stolen goods at school, serving as a lookout for stealing to occur, etc.) will result in same punishment.

Penalty for Stealing:

- 1st – 5 days Suspension
- 2nd – 10 days Suspension

Tobacco Possession/Use

Includes cigarette lighter and other tobacco look alike products. Punishments may also include tobacco cessation programs.

Penalty for Tobacco Possession/Use:

- 1st 1 day ISAE
- 2nd 2 days ISAE
- 3rd 3 days ISAE
- 4th Suspension and notification to CDW and/or police

Penalty for Use Possession of Electronic Cigarette/Vapes/JUUL:

- 1st – 3 days Suspension
- 2nd – 5 days Suspension
- 3rd – 10 days Suspension (reduced to 5 with completion of a counseling program)

Penalty for Tobacco on School Bus:

- 1st – 3 days ISAE
- 2nd – 5 days ISAE
- 3rd – 3 days Suspension

Not Turning in Medication

Students shall not carry medication (prescription or over-the-counter) into the building. All prescribed medications must be turned in to the front office and distributed to student per the prescription. Proper paperwork must be completed in order for this to occur.

Penalty for Not Turning in Medication:

- 1st – 1 Day ISAE
- 2nd – 3 Days ISAE
- 3rd – 5 Days ISAE
- 4th – 3 Days Suspension

Inappropriate Display of Affection

Includes kissing, hugging, arm around shoulder or waist of the same or opposite sex. Holding hands will be appropriate.

Penalty for Inappropriate Display of Affection:

- 1st 1 day ISAE and parent contact
- 2nd 2 days ISAE and parent conference
- 3rd 3 days ISAE and parent conference
- 4th Suspension

Inappropriate Sexual Contact/Behavior

Any contact including touching and groping but does not involve a sexual act.

Penalty:

1st offense – 3 days ISAE and parent contact

2nd offense – 5 days suspension

3rd offense – 10 days suspension and recommendation for expulsion

Any sexual act including oral sex.

Penalty:

1st offense – 5 day suspension

2nd offense – 10 day suspension and recommendation for expulsion

Profanity

Includes profanity toward other students, discriminatory or racial remarks, and obscene gestures.

Penalty:

1st 1 day ISAE

2nd 2 days ISAE

3rd 3 days ISAE

4th Suspension

Out of Assigned Area/Skipping Class ON School Grounds

When you leave the classroom, you are responsible to go where you ask to go or are sent to. For example, if you ask to go to your locker, that is where you need to go, if you do not go to your locker, you are out of area. If you ask to go to the restroom, you go to the restroom closest to your class, if you do not, you are out of area.

Penalty:

1st 1 day ISAE

2nd 3 days ISAE

3rd 5 days ISAE

4th Suspension

Skipping Class OFF School Grounds

Any time a student leaves the campus of West Carter High School without the appropriate permission, they are considered to be skipping OFF school grounds. This is not only against school policy, but it is also dangerous to the safety of the student.

Penalty:

1st 3 days ISAE and loss of driving privileges for 1 week (pertaining to students that drive.)

2nd 3 days ISAE, 2 days after school detention, loss of driving privileges for two weeks and referral to court for out of control charges.

3rd Suspension and loss of driving privileges for the remainder of the year and referral to court for out of control charges.

Lying, Cheating, Forgery, Gambling

Penalty:

1st 1 day ISAE

2nd 2 days ISAE

3rd 3 days ISAE

4th Suspension

General Class Disruption

Minor incidents need to be handled by the teacher.

Penalty for Actions Harmful to Other Students (Ex. Horseplay, throwing objects, etc.)

1st – 1 day ISAE

2nd – 2 days ISAE

3rd – 3 days ISAE

4th - Suspension

Penalty for Actions Harmful to Self (Ex. Continued lack of materials, sleeping in class, etc.)

1st – Referral to Counselor, Parent Contact

2nd – 1 day ISAE

3rd – 2 days ISAE

4th – 3 days ISAE

Tardy to Class

Once you have made it to the building for the day, there is no excuse for tardiness. Excessive tardies **WILL** result in loss of driving privileges.

Penalty for Tardiness:

1st – Warning

2nd – 1 day ISAE and loss of driving privileges until time served.

3rd – 3 days ISAE and loss of driving privileges for the remainder of the semester or two weeks - whichever is shorter.

4th – Suspension and potential loss of driving privileges for the year

Penalty for Tardiness to the Vocational Bus:

1st and 2nd Warning and student conference will be transported to vocational school.

3rd Remainder of vocational day will be spent in ISAE.

Electronic Device Policy

While on school property or while attending school-sponsored or school related activities, whether on or off school property, students shall be permitted to possess and use personal telecommunications devices and other related electronic devices, provided they observe the following conditions:

1. Devices shall not be used in a manner that disrupts the educational process, including but not limited to, use that:

- Poses a threat to academic integrity, such as cheating,
- Violates confidentiality or privacy rights of another individual,
- Is profane, indecent, or obscene,
- Constitutes or promotes illegal activity or activity in violation of school rules, or
- Constitutes or promotes sending, sharing, or possessing sexually explicit messages, photographs, or images using any electronic device.

2. Unless an emergency situation exists that involves imminent physical danger or a certified employee authorizes the student to do otherwise, devices shall be turned on only before and after the regular school day and during the student's lunch break. Phones or earbuds shall not be used in the hallways.

3. Students are responsible for keeping up with devices they bring to school. West Carter High School shall not be responsible for loss, theft, or destruction of devices brought onto school property.

4. Students shall comply with any additional rules developed by the school concerning appropriate use of all electronic devices.

Penalty for Electronic Device Violation:

If a student violates our Electronic Device Policy, the device will be confiscated AND he/she will be subject to the following disciplinary guidelines:

- a. **1st - Warning, device must be picked up by a parent at the end of the day.**
- b. **2nd - 1 day ISAE, device must be picked up by a parent when punishment is complete.**
- c. **3rd - 2 days ISAE, device must be picked up by a parent when punishment is complete.**
- d. **4th - 3 day Suspension, device must be picked up by a parent when punishment is complete.**
- e. **Refusal to comply with the request to put away an electronic device in class will result in disciplinary action (see Refusal to Comply with Request of an Administrator or Teacher.)**

Additionally, some behaviors regarding electronic device misuse may be more severe than simply using it at an inappropriate time. When a behavior is more severe, the following discipline will be taken:

VIDEO/PICTURE WITHOUT CONSENT - Any student who takes a picture of films another student or group of students without clear written permission will be disciplined and charges will be filed.

- a. **1st offense – 5 days suspension and no cell phone for the rest of the year.**
- b. **2nd offense – 10 days suspension, recommendation for expulsion and no cell phone for the remainder of that school year**
- c. **(If a teacher is filmed or photographed it will be an automatic 10 day suspension and loss of cell phone for the remainder of that school year)**

RECEIVING/SENDING A VIDEO AT SCHOOL – Students who receive a video of another student, a member of the faculty and staff, or other prohibited videos should report the video immediately. Any student who shares one of these videos will face disciplinary action.

- a. **1st offense – 3 days Suspension (Loss of cell phone privileges for the rest of the semester)**
- b. **2nd offense – 5 days Suspension (Loss of cell phone privileges for the remainder of the year)**

SOCIAL MEDIA POST MADE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY – Any post made during the school day can be subject to the following discipline:

- A. 1st offense - 3 days ISAE
- B. 2nd offense - 5 days ISAE (Loss of cell phone privileges for the rest of the semester)
- C. 3rd offense – 3 days Suspension (Loss of cell phone privileges for the remainder of the year)

OBSCENE, DISPARAGING, FALSE, or SLANDEROUS POSTS ABOUT OTHER STUDENTS, FACULTY, STAFF, OR THE SCHOOL MADE AT SCHOOL VIA SOCIAL MEDIA

- a. 1st offense – 3 days Suspension (Loss of cell phone privileges for the rest of semester)
- b. 2nd offense – 5 days Suspension (Loss of cell phone privileges for the remainder of the year)

INAPPROPRIATE USE OF TECHNOLOGY – Students using technology to view inappropriate material or tampering with school technology will be disciplined as follows:

- a. 1st offense – 5 days suspension and loss of Internet privileges for the remainder of the school year
- b. 2nd offense – 10 days suspension, recommendation for expulsion

ELECTRONIC DEVICE POSSESSION AFTER LOSS OF CELL PHONE PRIVILEGES

- a. 1st offense – 3 days Suspension and cell phone must be picked up by parent
- b. 2nd offense – 5 days Suspension and cell phone must be picked up by parent

Dress Code Policy

- A. Shorts/skirts must be no shorter than three inches above the knee.
- B. Tops can be sleeveless; however, the straps should be AT LEAST THE WIDTH OF A CREDIT CARD (no spaghetti straps, tanks or halters). Shirts must cover chest area. No cleavage is to be shown.
- C. Leggings/yoga pants are allowed; however, shirts worn with leggings/yoga pants MUST EXTEND BELOW THE TOP OF THE INSEAM BETWEEN LEGS. (In other words, it must cover your behind!)
- D. No bandanas in any part of the building. Hats and hoods must be removed at the request of a school employee.
- E. No drug/alcohol/tobacco or otherwise inappropriate advertisement or logo.
- F. Absolutely NO holes will be allowed from the waist of the pants to the top of the inseam. Holes in pants should not be larger than a credit card.
- G. Undergarments shall not be exposed.
- H. Bags are allowed in the school as long as they are no larger than 18x18 inches.

Consequences for Violation of Dress Code are as follows:

- a. 1st Warning and change clothing.
- b. 2nd Change clothing and spend the day in ISAE
- c. 3rd Change clothing, parent contact, and 3 days ISAE
- d. 4th Change clothing, parent contact, and suspension

Refusal to comply with the request to change clothing will result in disciplinary action (see Refusal to Comply with Request of an Administrator or Teacher.)

Drug and Alcohol Violation (Includes Look-alikes)

ALCOHOL use by a STUDENT is illegal and poses a serious threat not only to his/her own well-being, but also to the well-being of the entire school community. Drug or alcohol use will not be tolerated during school hours, on school property, or at any school-sponsored activity or event during or after school hours. Students who violate the school policy on use, possession, sales or distribution may be subject to disciplinary action as set forth in The Student Handbook.

When determining possible alcohol use or intoxication by a student during the school day or at a school-related function the safety of the student is the primary concern. An assessment of a student's suspected alcohol use may be aided by the use of a breath alcohol testing device which indicates the presence or absence of alcohol.

Breath Alcohol Testing Policy & Procedure

1. During the normal school day or at school-sponsored events (including dances, Prom, and Graduation).

a. School administrator may determine possible student alcohol use without the aid of a breath alcohol testing device by observing one or more of the following indicators:

- Slurred speech, Unsteady gait, Impaired MOTOR CONTROL, Flushed face, Smell of intoxicating liquor on breath, clothing or person, Vomiting

b. If the school administrator determines that a student is intoxicated or has used alcohol based on one or more of the above indicators:

- Parent/Guardian is notified and requested to take the student home.
- Emergency help is called if student is assessed to be at risk for alcohol poisoning or in need of MEDICAL ASSISTANCE.
- The police may be called to take the student into PROTECTIVE custody.
- Disciplinary action may be taken as indicated in WCHS Student Handbook.

c. If a student is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or is suspected of having consumed alcohol. The school administrator/their designee may administer a breath test.

d. The school administrator/police CHECKS calibration of the breath alcohol testing device according instructions for use.

e. The test is administered in privacy in the presence of two witnesses.

f. If the test is positive (.01BAC) the STUDENT may request a maximum of two additional tests taken at least 2 minutes apart. If these additional tests are positive:

- The parent/guardian is notified and requested to take student home.
- Emergency help is called if student is assessed to be at risk for ALCOHOL poisoning or in need of MEDICAL ASSISTANCE.
- Disciplinary action may be taken as indicated in the WCHS Student Handbook and may result in suspension.

g. If the test is negative:

- The student will be allowed to resume activity if the school administrator does not suspect the use of other drugs.
- His/her parent/guardian will be notified that the breath test was administered.

h. If a student who is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or who is suspected of having consumed alcohol refuses the test:

- The school administrator will notify parents to pick up the student and detain the student until parent's arrival.
- The school administrator may consider the refusal and all other evidence to determine whether or not the student is intoxicated or has consumed alcohol and may discipline the student in accordance with the WCHS Student Handbook.

i. If any student suspected of intoxication leaves the scene against the school official's request:

- Parent/Guardian is notified.
- Disciplinary action for insubordination is taken as indicated in the WCHS Student Handbook.

2. Policy at Dances, Prom and Graduation

Prior to ENTERING the dance (the Prom and/or Graduation), all students will be screened as follows:

a. Students purchase their tickets prior to the event.

b. At the discretion of the school administrator upon entering the school students may be directed to one of several screening areas. One student will be tested at a time in each area. The screening area will be a room or an area where the students can be tested without the process being witnessed by other students.

c. An ADMINISTRATOR or trained teacher will administer the breath test.

d. The student will be admitted to the event if the reading is negative.

e. If the reading is positive (.01BAC) the student may then request a maximum of two additional tests taken at least 2 minutes apart. If these additional tests are positive, the student will NOT be admitted to the event and his/her parent-guardian will be notified and requested to take the student home.

f. If the student has tested positive and the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the administrator will keep the student at school (or the location where the event is taking place) until arrangements can be made to get the student home safely, even if it means calling the school resource officer to take the student into PROTECTIVE custody.

g. If the student has tested positive but is not in possession of alcohol (or other illegal substances), no disciplinary action resulting in a suspension from school will be taken against him or her. However, any student testing positive on the breath test will not be allowed to attend any WCHS dances for the remainder of the school year including the Prom, and/or Graduation. If the student is a senior s/he will also not be allowed to attend any remaining senior ACTIVITIES (e.g. senior breakfast, senior picnic, senior trip that occur after the event where s/he has been tested positive for alcohol).

h. If a student refuses to take the breath test, s/he will not be admitted to the event and his/her parents will be contacted and asked to come and take the student home. The student's school administrator may consider the refusal and all other evidence to determine whether or not the student is intoxicated or has consumed alcohol and impose the social sanctions listed in section (g) above.

There is always the possibility that a student may become intoxicated after passing an initial breath test screening. If the administrator in charge of the function observes the behaviors listed in Section 1(a), in such a student, then s/he may administer the breath test. If the student tests positive on the breath test, s/he may request a second and third test. See Section 1 (f). If these tests are positive, then the administrator will follow the procedure as written in Section 1 of the breath test policy. School discipline will be administered and may result in suspension.

3. STUDENT ATHLETES

Students representing West Carter High School athletic teams are held to a high standard of conduct. The conduct of these student athletes is governed not only by rules established by the KHSAA but also those established in the West Carter High School Student Handbook which states that a student will be removed from the team for the current season for "known possession, use or consumption of ALCOHOL or drugs including the use or possession of tobacco products in any form." Therefore, if a student athlete tests positive on a breath test during the screening at a dance, Prom and/or Graduation the student's name will be given to the athletic director who will consider this as evidence that the student has consumed alcohol. The athletic director may then remove the student from the team.

Penalty for Drug/Alcohol Use or Possession:

1st 10-day minimum suspension plus the police will be notified and charges will be filed. Drug counseling (Alert Program) will be expected to shorten suspension to 5 days. Driving privileges and extracurricular activities will be suspended for the remainder of the year.

Other Strictly Prohibited Behaviors

Discipline will be based on the severity of the offense. Consequences could include possible suspension and/or expulsion and referral to the School Resource Officer for possible criminal charges. **Discipline will be handled at the principal's discretion.**