2026-27

Welcome Packet

WILLIAMSBURG ACADEMY OF COLORADO

Your Complete Guide to a Successful School Year

Welcome to Williamsburg Academy of Colorado (WAC)!

We want your start to feel smooth, simple, and stress-free. This Welcome Packet pulls together everything you need in one place. It's your guide to the first few weeks of school and the months that follow. Inside, you'll find:

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We recommend keeping this packet somewhere easy to find. You'll likely want to refer back to it throughout the year.

Your student's success and growth are at the heart of everything we do, and our team is here to walk alongside you at every stage of the journey.

We're so glad you're here, and we can't wait to learn, grow, and celebrate together this year!

Warmly,

Heidi Mitchell
Executive Director
Williamsburg Academy of Colorado

Before we get started, here's a quick look at the most important dates to mark on your calendar and an overview of the tech systems you'll use.

Key Start-of-Year Dates

Date	What's Happening
August 3	Orientation & Benchmark Assessments open in the WAC Hub (in Canvas). Students must complete these to unlock their classes.
August 10	Semester officially begins! Students are strongly encouraged to attend Live Orientation.
August 11	Live Orientation continues. Classes unlock as soon as Canvas Orientation and Benchmark Assessments are done.
August 12	Live online classes start via Engageli.

Set Up for Success Week - Live Student Orientation

Kick off the year with us August 10-11 at 9:00 AM MT (both days). Students will meet their mentors, get oriented, and work on Canvas Orientation and Benchmark Assessments. Click the button below to see the full Success Week schedule.

See The Full Schedule

The Systems You'll Use

SIS	Student Information System: Manage your child's enrollment and courses, view their pacing and grades, and message mentors.
CANVAS BY INSTRUCTURE	Where your student will join their classes, see course materials, submit assignments, and message their mentors.
WAC HUB	Where students complete orientation and benchmark assessments and see WAC-specific info (like in-person events)! - Inside Canvas
engageli	Platform for live online classes (camera and mic required).
Remind	Text alerts and updates directly to parents' phones.

Getting Your Student Ready

How to Prepare for School in 5 Steps!

To remove any guesswork, we'll walk you through the **five most important things** to do now to get your student ready for school.

Then, we'll share a few tips and resources to **get you ready** for your time as a WAC parent.

Let's get started!

1 Set Up or Confirm SIS Access, Then Upload Your Student's Photo

Students can't access their courses in Canvas until their SIS login is created.

A: Create SIS Login (Only for New Students)

✅ *Skip to Part B if your student already has an SIS login—they do not need to create a new one!*

If your student hasn't created their SIS login, look for an email titled **"Action Needed: Help create your child's SIS username and password"** sent to you when you added them to your parent account, and follow the instructions.

Students can log in to Canvas starting on August 3 if their login is created or has been created at least 30 minutes prior.

Need help? Contact your Enrollment Advisor or our Customer Support Team.

B: Add Their Profile Photo to SIS

From your SIS parent account, go to your student's profile under "My Students" and upload a **headshot-style photo** of them. This will be used for their school ID.

Go to SIS

2 Make Sure Your Child Completes Orientation & Benchmark Assessments

Orientation is a series of short, pre-start assignments designed to help your student succeed at WAC. **Completing orientation before school begins is required.** Starting on **August 3**, students can log into Canvas and open the **WAC Hub** course to get started!

Get Started in Canvas

ATTENTION PLEASE

Required Benchmark Assessments: As part of orientation, all students complete three learning assessments to help gauge their current skill levels in writing, math, and reading. These assessments are exclusively used by our mentors and student support teams to help your child excel in their classes.

⚠ **Important: Students will not have access to their Canvas courses, including Engageli classroom links, until they have completed both Canvas Orientation and Benchmark Assessments.** Once both requirements are complete, course access will be available within 24 hours, beginning August 10.

3 Confirm Your Student's Books & Materials

We'll ship your student's books and materials (for approved courses) to the mailing address listed in SIS and notify you as soon as they're on the way.

⚠️ **Important:** To avoid delays and ensure everything arrives on time, please go to your profile in SIS and double-check that your address is correct.

Check Address in SIS

Note: Books, materials, and computers cannot be shipped to international addresses. Families living outside the United States are responsible for providing their student's computer and ordering their own books and materials. If you have a U.S. mailing address, shipping there may be possible. For questions or special circumstances, please contact your school's enrollment team at books.computers@wacolorado.org.

4 Optional: Request a Computer

Every student needs access to a computer to attend classes and complete assignments. We can provide a loaned student computer if needed, but you must request one.

⚠️ **Important:** If your student needs a device and you haven't already requested one, please submit a request today—*we're ready to ship!*

Request a Computer

5 Complete a Tech Check

Your student needs reliable high-speed internet, a computer with a webcam and microphone, and essential software like Google's productivity suite and Engageli. View our Tech Check page to confirm they have everything they need to succeed at WAC.

Start Tech Check

What Your Student Can Expect

To help your student make the most of WAC, it's important to understand the classroom experience and program expectations. We use these guidelines and tools to create a focused, respectful, and engaging experience that helps all students thrive.

Engageli Etiquette

Your student will be expected to:

- Keep their camera on during class
- Use their real name
- Have a distraction-free study environment and background
- Ensure anyone in the background is dressed appropriately
- Use kind and respectful communication with classmates

Discussions & Lectures

At WAC, our classes are more than just lectures—they're based on active, engaging discussions between mentors and students.

To help facilitate this, mentors use tools such as the Socratic method, group discussions, and dynamic group projects—encouraging students to learn ***how*** to think, not ***what*** to think.

You'll also see mentors deliver engaging presentations and offer timely, quality feedback, with a focus on helping students build toward mastery.

Assessments & Testing

Throughout the year, your student will take several important assessments—including benchmark assessments, end-of-year CMAS assessments, PSAT (grades 9–10), and SAT (for juniors). We also provide assessments to support Gifted & Talented services and English Language Learners. These help us track progress, tailor instruction, and prepare students for college and beyond.

Workload & Materials

In addition to class time, your student will have meaningful homework and projects to work on outside of class. Students can expect to have daily reading and assignments. Instead of relying on traditional textbooks, many of our courses use classical literature and other original sources to make learning more engaging and inspiring.

Attendance & Engagement

At WAC, we monitor attendance and engagement. When students are fully engaged, they generally earn better grades, learn more easily, and gain self-confidence.

How to Be “Fully Engaged”

Engagement means your student is consistently showing up and making steady progress in their learning. Here’s what this looks like in action:

- **Submitting assignments on at least 4 days each week**
  → This is key to staying on track and earning engagement credit

- **Logging into Canvas regularly—at least 4 days a week**
  → Logging in counts toward attendance and helps build strong habits

- **Attending live classes** (if enrolled)
  → Being present deepens learning and builds connection with mentors and peers

💡 ***Tip:*** *Each Tuesday, we check for weekly engagement. If your student has a grade of 80% or higher in all courses or is fully caught up on schoolwork, they’ll receive full engagement credit—even if their week looked a little different.*

If we notice your student isn't engaging regularly, we will reach out to offer support and help get things back on track.

What if My Child’s Absent?

Life happens—and that’s okay! Here’s what to do:

Absent 1-2 days? Call 303-285-0787 to excuse the absence. Your student can message their mentor in Canvas if they need more time for assignments.

Absent 3+ days? Submit an Absence Request Form to excuse the absence (this notifies mentors automatically).

Submit Absence Request

Getting You Ready

Resources for Parents

Watch Our On-Demand Parent Orientation

Whether you're new around here or just need a quick refresh, we're here to help you navigate our online learning systems!

Our **On-Demand Parent Orientation** videos walk through everything you need to feel confident and equipped to support your student. Specifically, you'll learn how to:

- Navigate the WAC Hub, Homeroom, and Parent & Student Handbook
- Use SIS to access class registration, records, and mentor communication
- Check grades, view coursework, and stay updated in Canvas

Watch Our Parent Orientation Videos!

Use the Three-Step Parent Support Plan

This plan is the simplest, most effective way to help your student thrive at WAC. In a group of families who consistently used this approach, 90% of students earned straight A's, with the rest coming close! We can't recommend it enough. The three steps are:

Plan the Week
Help your student plan their week with daily checklists.

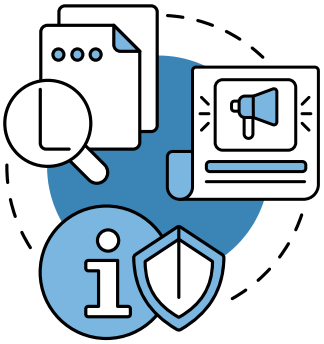
Plan Extra Support
Anticipate when they'll need extra support (from you or a mentor) and schedule it.

Daily Check-Ins
Hold a quick, five-minute accountability meeting each school day to keep them on track.

Watch our Three-Step Parent Support Plan videos to give your student the support they need to thrive this school year!

If you're short on time, check out our quick, two-minute "3-Step Parent Support Plan (in a nutshell)" video in our Parent Video Library.

Parent Resource Center



Our Parent Resource Center is your one-stop hub for all the information you need as a WAC parent. From school news to event info, this page keeps you in the loop. Click below and bookmark the page so you can easily come back to it!

Go to the Parent Resource Center

How We Keep You Informed

Weekly Parent Updates

Each week, we'll send you a Weekly Parent Update (via Remind) with key action items, important announcements, and upcoming events. We also have an archive of past updates on our website.

View Weekly Parent Updates

Text Messaging with Remind

We also use Remind Messaging to share important updates throughout the school year, occasionally including time-sensitive information.

Canvas & SIS Communications

Course-specific updates are sent through Canvas, and mentors and counselors use SIS to share important information about your student's progress. To stay informed, keep an eye on your email and both platforms—and remember you can contact your student's mentor at any time directly through SIS.

WAC Academic Calendar

Our calendar lists all key dates throughout the school year, including important events and holidays. We recommend reviewing the calendar periodically, as new events and activities are added throughout the year.

View & Bookmark Calendar

Parent & Student Handbook

We recommend reviewing the Parent & Student Handbook to gain a deeper understanding of school policies, academic guidelines, student services, and how to stay connected with our community. It's a helpful resource for questions that may come up during the year!

View & Bookmark Handbook

Getting Ready for Unique Courses

If your student is taking either of the following unique course types, read below for some helpful tips. If not, learn how they can get involved!

Adventures Courses

Adventures courses offer hands-on learning through outdoor and leadership activities—building confidence, friendships, and real-world skills.

Adventures happen in two ways: our traditional in-person Friday course or new asynchronous Adventures Foundations course.

Not enrolled yet? We might still have space! Contact the WAC Registrar to register your student.

Concurrent Enrollment

Concurrent Enrollment lets 10th-12th grade students earn high school and college credit at the same time through our Colorado college partners.

If enrolled in concurrent enrollment courses through WAC, **follow the registration steps** from your student's selected college and **note important college deadlines.**

Not enrolled? Visit our Concurrent Enrollment page for details.

Learning Brave

At the Learning Brave Teen Retreat, your student will build character, confidence, and leadership skills.

This immersive experience brings together students and mentors in a supportive, outdoor environment where students are encouraged to step outside their comfort zone, build confidence, and form meaningful connections with peers!

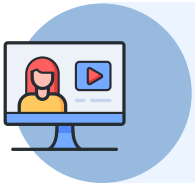
Stay tuned for more information on the next event.

Top Parent FAQs

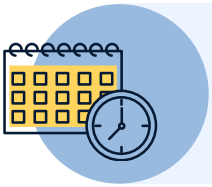
“How can I support my student in their learning?”

The best way to support your student is to help them start strong before classes begin! Here’s how:

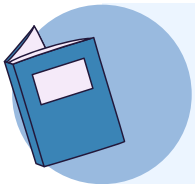
Implement the Three-Step Parent Support Plan with daily checklists, timely support when needed, and quick accountability meetings. You can start by planning when they’ll complete their orientation assignments!



Complete Orientation—both of you! It’s a great way to learn about schedules, Engageli etiquette, and common tech tips.



Look ahead at their schedule for the whole semester so they know what to expect each week.



Ensure they have their books and know which classes they’re for—students can find the syllabus and book list for each course in Canvas.

Help them create a distraction-free study space that keeps them focused and in the zone, stocked with note-taking basics like notebooks, pens, pencils, and highlighters.

If you don’t see your question answered here, our team is happy to help! Keep reading to view more support options.

"If my student needs help with their courses, what should I do?"

There are several ways your student—and you as their parent—can get extra support:

Engageli Office Hours: The syllabus page of each Canvas course lists office hours when students can drop in to ask their mentor questions or get help. In some cases, mentors can adjust workloads when needed.

Contacting Mentors: Both students and parents can email mentors directly through SIS. Mentors strive to respond within one school day.

Creating a Canvas Observer Account: This lets you view your students' courses and assignments and track their progress. To get started, check out the Canvas Observer Account video on our **Parent Orientation** page.

Important Contacts

Executive Director

Heidi Mitchell
executivedirector@wacolorado.org

Student & Parent Services

Samantha Shoener
Student & Family Engagement Coordinator
familysuccess@wacolorado.org

Registrar

Lynne Fendall
Applications, Registration, Enrollment
registrar@wacolorado.org

IT Equipment Specialist

Chromebook/Laptop Use & Tech Repair
books.computers@wacolorado.org

School Counselors

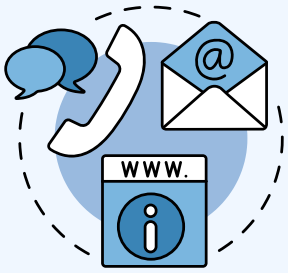
Katie Cooke
Serves Students with Last Names A-L
counseling@wacolorado.org

Erin Gansz
Serves Students with Last Names M-Z
counseling@wacolorado.org

Unsure Who to Contact?

Call or email us and we'll direct you to the right team member! You can even chat us from our website.

Customer Support
(303) 285-0787
support@williamsburglearning.com



See More on Our Website

Please note: Program details, benefits, and policies are subject to change.

How You Know You're Ready

If you've checked everything off, your student is officially ready for school!

🔑 SIS & Photo

- ☐ Your student's SIS login is set up
- ☐ A headshot-style photo is uploaded to their SIS profile

▶️ Parent Readiness

- ☐ You've watched and bookmarked Parent Orientation
- ☐ You've bookmarked the Parent Resource Center and Handbook
- ☐ Remind text alerts are turned on

💻 Tech

- ☐ Computer with working webcam + microphone
- ☐ Reliable high-speed internet
- ☐ Engageli, Google productivity suite, and Canvas tested via Tech Check
- ☐ Loaner device requested (if needed)

📅 Calendar

- ☐ Key dates are marked, including Back-to-School Night
- ☐ You have a plan for the Three-Step Parent Support Plan

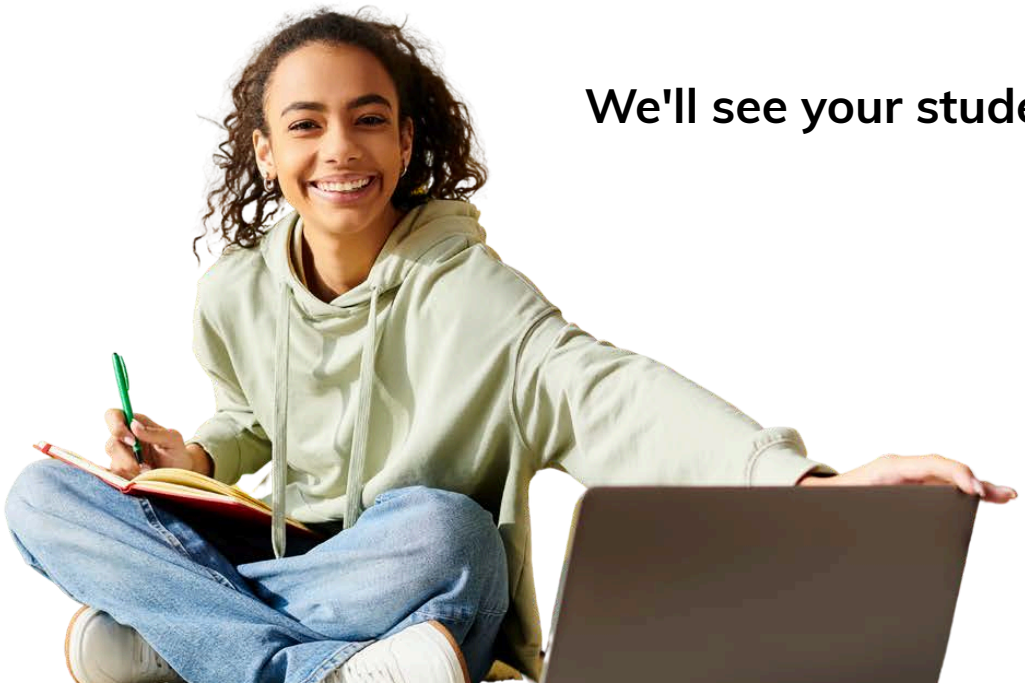
📚 Books & Materials

- ☐ Books and materials are home or on the way
- ☐ Your mailing address in SIS is confirmed correct

🎓 Orientation & Benchmarks

Note: *Complete during Live Orientation on August 10-11*

- ☐ Orientation assignments in the WAC Hub are complete
- ☐ Benchmark assessments (reading, writing, and math) are done
- ☐ Courses have unlocked in Canvas



We'll see your student in class soon!