

# **Westside Middle School**

**Student Handbook 2016-17**

**“A Recognized School of Excellence”**



# Welcome to Westside Middle School

Dear Students,

Welcome back for the 2016-2017 school year! Westside Middle School is a very special place, and we want to continue to make it even better. Meeting that goal takes a lot of cooperation and hard work on everyone's part.

The mission of Westside Middle School, as an exemplary model of early adolescent education, is to prepare students to become responsible citizens by providing a quality, success-oriented program through a caring school/family/community partnership.

You will belong to an interdisciplinary team of four core content areas (English, Math, Science, and Social Studies) that has approximately 125 students. Our teams provide a smaller group setting and identity for students. All communication with families is facilitated through teams. The team approach is one major component that sets a middle school apart from a traditional junior high school. In addition to interdisciplinary teams, Westside Middle School offers many exploratory classes. Your "Encore" classes provide a curriculum of hands-on learning, cooperative groups, and independent exploration.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you and your parent with information on school procedures and policies. You will see that we want Westside Middle School to be a positive environment for learning. All schools in the district will expect three simple, but effective, expectations to ensure a proper and safe learning environment: Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible. Having a safe environment to learn is important so you can concentrate on learning. Respecting yourself, others and property will reduce name-calling, bullying, and other behavior issues. Taking responsibility for your learning, your actions, and your growth will help you concentrate.

As you read through this handbook, remember we are here to serve you. Please feel free to visit and call us with any questions or concerns. We're excited to start another year of school. Best wishes to you for the 2016-2017 school year!

Russ Olsen  
Principal

# Table of Contents

School Map, Emergency Procedures	4
Bell Schedule, Grading	5
Academic Honor, Textbooks, Binders & School Supplies	6
Lockers, Search & Seizure, Blackboard-PowerSchool-Wikis	6
Guidance Department	7
Safe & Respectful Climate: Anti-bullying Strategies	7-8
Health Services	9
Advisory (SPARK)	10
Academic Organization	11
Boys Town Model for Safe & Effective Schools, Social Skills	12-13
Code of Conduct	14-22
Safe, Respectful, Responsible Behavior	23
Bus Transportation & Bikes	24-25
Guidelines for Appropriate Computer Technology Use	26
Proper Student Dress	27
School Attendance, Tardy Policy, Excessive Absences and Tardies	28
In-School Suspension, Restricted Lunch Procedures, Detentions	29
Phones, Lunch Program, Lost & Found	30
Activities and Athletics	31

\*\*\*Emergency Exits are identified by letter.



### Emergency Procedures



#### Lockdown

- Announcement will be made over the intercom: Lockdown! Locks, Lights, Out of Sight.
- Move away from sight.
- Maintain silence.
- Do not open the door.



#### Lockout

- Announcement will be made over the intercom: Lockout! Secure the Perimeter.
- Return inside the building if outside.
- May move around in the building but may not go outside.



#### Evacuate (Fire)

- Announcement will be made over the intercom: Evacuate Out of the Building.
- Leave all your belongings.
- Follow instructions from the teacher.



#### Shelter (Tornado)

- Announcement will be made over the intercom: Tornado. Evacuate to Shelter Area.
- Follow instructions from the teacher.

## Bell Schedule

Regular Schedule	Wednesday Schedule
Period 1: 8:00-8:44	Period 1: 8:00-8:39
Period 2: 8:48-9:32	Period 2: 8:43-9:21
Period 3: 9:36-10:20	Period 3: 9:25-10:03
Period 4: 10:24-11:08	Period 4: 10:07-10:45
Period 5 (8th): 11:12-12:12	Period 5 (8th): 10:49-11:49
Period 5 (7th): 11:12-11:56	Period 5 (7th): 10:49-11:27
Period 6 (8th): 12:16-1:00	Period 6 (8th): 11:53-12:31
Period 6 (7th): 12:00-1:00	Period 6 (7th): 11:31-12:31
Period 7: 1:04-1:48	Period 7: 12:35-1:13
Period 8: 1:52-2:36	Period 8: 1:17-1:55
Period 9: 2:40-3:24	Period 9: 1:59-2:36

## Grading

Westside Middle School uses a traditional grading scale for all courses.

As a learner working to achieve success in the classroom, it's your responsibility to:

- Stay informed and use PowerSchool and Blackboard.
- Visit with your teachers about their availability to work with you.
- Remember learning takes effort both in and outside of class time.

<b>A+</b>	<b>97 - 100</b>	<b>Awesome</b> (understanding is distinguished, deep, and creative)
<b>A</b>	<b>93 - 96</b>	
<b>B+</b>	<b>89 - 92</b>	<b>Beyond Basic</b> (understanding is proficient in more than the basics)
<b>B</b>	<b>85 - 88</b>	
<b>C+</b>	<b>81 - 84</b>	<b>Competent</b> (understanding is basic)
<b>C</b>	<b>77 - 80</b>	
<b>D+</b>	<b>73 - 76</b>	<b>Deficient</b> (understanding is unsatisfactory)
<b>D</b>	<b>70 - 72</b>	
<b>F</b>	<b>0 - 69</b>	<b>Failing</b>

All assessments given by teachers will be either Formative or Summative.

- **Formative** assessments allow teachers to monitor student learning. The results are used to make on-going instructional decisions and give students feedback to monitor their learning.
- **Summative** assessments allow teachers to evaluate student learning at the end of teaching to an objective or at the end of a unit of study. The results are used to make judgments about student mastery of content standards.

Teachers will base 80% of a student's final grade on summative (formal) assessments and 20% of a student's final grade on formative (informal) assessments.

Student learning behaviors are an important part of the learning process. Each quarter, students will receive a letter grade for behavior in the areas of social skills and work skills.

- A** - Student demonstrates an exemplary level of social skills and work skills.
- B** - Student demonstrates a satisfactory level of social skills and work skills.
- C** - Student demonstrates a minimal level of social skills and work skills.
- D** - Student demonstrates an unacceptable level of social skills and work skills.

## **Academic Honors**

WMS doesn't have an honor roll, but we do recognize academic excellence in two ways. First students earning a first semester GPA of 3.8/4.0 are invited to apply to the WMS chapter of National Junior Honor Society. Secondly, students earning a 3.5/4.0 are eligible for both the President's Award for Educational Excellence and the President's Award for Academic Achievement.

## **Textbooks**

The school district loans textbooks to you. You are responsible for their condition and may be fined up to the full cost of the textbook if there is abnormal wear or damage to any textbook you have been loaned.

## **Binders & School Supplies**

Organizational skills help you to be successful in middle school. Because you will be carrying materials to and from school and between classes at school, we suggest that you use a binder to organize, store, and transport important school papers between classes as well as to and from school.

Supplies you will need for school are least eight notebook folders to keep loose papers, notebook paper, and pencils/pens. Your teachers will notify you in the first few days of school if you need any other specific supplies you will need for each class.

## **Lockers**

Each student is assigned their own locker. Students are not to share lockers for any reason.

- Lockers are school property.
- Use only the locker assigned to you.
- Lockers are subject to inspection at any time. This may include inspection by police dogs.
- Your locker combination is your personal business. Do not tell your combination to anyone!
- Lockers must be kept in an orderly fashion at all times.
- Kicking lockers closed is not acceptable.
- Unlocked lockers leave all items in the locker susceptible to theft.
- Do not preset your locker to open.
- Never leave anything unlocked in the locker rooms.
- If your locker gets stuck, tell the guidance secretary.

## **Search & Seizure**

School officials may conduct searches of lockers, facilities, clothing, desks, book bags and persons for the purpose of finding missing, illegal or dangerous items. A student who refuses to consent to a reasonable search or to surrender items found in a search, may be suspended or expelled. The Omaha Police resource dogs randomly sniff school grounds for illegal substances.

## **Blackboard, PowerSchool, & Wikis**

Students will access the following online resources for coursework and homework. It is suggested that students bookmark these websites on their school computer for easy access.

Blackboard - <https://blackboard.westside66.org>

PowerSchool - <https://powerschool.westside66.org/public/>

Wiki - <https://wmsideas.westside66.org/wiki>

## **Guidance Department**

Ms. Julie Herink - Counselor

Mr. Doug Hauserman - Counselor

Mr. Mike McCann - Counselor

Ms. Jessica Lowe- Social Worker

Susan Hall - Guidance Secretary

There are times when we all get hard on ourselves and lose confidence. There are caring and skilled counselors at WMS to listen. If you need guidance or just need someone to listen to a problem, you have a counselor assigned to you. This person will work closely with your entire team and get to know you better through some Team and Homeroom activities. If you need to see your counselor and cannot locate him/her, leave a message with the guidance secretary, Ms. Hall. Your counselor will get back to you. If something is urgent, don't wait—see another counselor, teacher or administrator!

Counselors can help you with many things including:

- Academic Success
- Attendance
- School/Grade Transition
- Selection of Classes
- Peer/Family Concerns
- Study Skills

Counselors will also be in the classroom periodically to do guidance activities on topics such as:

- Making New Friends
- Peer Pressure
- Cliques
- Bullying
- Sexual Harassment
- Setting Goals
- Decision Making
- Tolerance
- Diversity
- Self Esteem

## **Safe and Respectful Climate**

**Westside Community Schools District Definition of Bullying:** Bullying is intentional and typically repeated behavior targeting another person or group. It involves the imbalance of power and causes physical and/or psychological discomfort or harm. (Policy Number 5300, Category 5000, Number 7)

### **Bullying is WRONG!**

Nobody has the right to hurt other people by hitting them, calling them names, spreading rumors about them or by doing anything else which is intended to be upsetting. Common bullying behaviors: Hitting, graffiti, kicking, shoving, mocking, taunting, gossip, dirty looks, ethnic slurs, name calling, teasing in anyway, intimidating phone calls, cyberbullying, coercion, and verbal threats, etc...

### **Student Behaviors**

All students are expected to behave in a manner that promotes a positive and a safe environment. Students should conduct themselves in a way that promotes respect towards others, themselves, and school property.

Everyone needs to be responsible for his or her own verbal and physical behaviors. Westside Middle School takes any form of bullying seriously. Counselors, administrators, and staff are all here to help any student who may experience any form of bullying.

**If you believe that you are a target of bullying, please remember:**

- It's not your fault that you're being bullied.
- You didn't ask for it.
- You don't deserve it.
- You didn't do anything to cause it.
- Bullying isn't normal. It isn't okay.
- You don't have to face this on your own. Counselors and staff are here to help you.

**HA-HA-SO STRATEGIES**

<b>Help</b>	Seek help from an adult, friend, or peer when potentially threatening situation arises. Seek help also if other strategies aren't working.
<b>Assert Yourself</b>	Make assertive statements to the bully addressing your feelings about the bully's behavior.
<b>Humor</b>	Use humor to de-escalate a situation.
<b>Avoid</b>	Walk away or avoid certain places in order to avoid a bullying situation.
<b>Self-Talk</b>	Use positive self-talk to maintain positive self-esteem during a bullying situation.
<b>Own It</b>	"Own" the put-down/belittling comment in order to diffuse it.

**How Bystanders Can Help**

The role of a bystander is often an uncomfortable one. As a bystander you may be afraid of becoming a victim if you stand up to a bully or may not know how to help. There are many positive things you can do to help your peers and keep our school safe and bully free.

**Don't Join In** — Participating or encouraging any negative behavior only encourages the bully and makes the victim, who could be a friend, feel helpless and alone.

**Assistance** — When you see a potentially threatening situation arise, get an adult immediately.

**Report** — Reporting a bullying incident is taking a responsible leadership role in creating a positive school climate. It is not tattling when you are protecting a fellow classmate from getting hurt. Remember you can remain anonymous.

**Teamwork** — Let a target join you in walking to class or eating lunch together so they are not alone.

**Stand Up** — If you feel safe and confident, go to the victim and say "Come on let's go to class" to remove him or her from the situation. You can also tell the bully "Stop, Leave him or her alone", or "We don't treat people like that at our school."

## **Health Services at Westside Middle School**

A school nurse or health aide is available for you at all times during the school day. If you are not feeling well, first ask the classroom teacher for permission to leave class, have your assignment notebook signed, and check into the Health Office. You must have a pass to come to the Health Office. Do not come during passing periods.

### **Immunizations and Physicals:**

- All 7th grade students must have a current physical on file beginning the first day of school. Students may be ineligible to attend school if they do not have a current physical on file.
- The Nebraska School Immunization Law requires all 7th and 8th grade students to be immunized and provide proof of immunization against the diseases of Diphtheria, Pertussis (Whooping Cough), Tetanus, Hepatitis B, Polio and Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) and Chicken Pox (Varivax) before entering school. The school must have a current record of these immunizations on file in order for children to continue attending school.

### **Health Screenings:**

- 8th grade students will be screened sometime during the school year for: height, weight, vision, hearing, blood pressure, dental and scoliosis. Parents may send a note to the Health Office requesting their child not participate in any part of the screening.
- 7th grade students may also be screened at the request of their parents.

### **Medication:**

- All prescription and over-the-counter medications, including medicated cremes, eye drops, ear drops, herbal products and cough drops must be kept in their original containers in the Health Office. Students are not permitted to keep any type of medication with them or in their locker. The only exception is for students who need to carry an inhaler for asthma (see below). A blue medication form must be completed for any medication taken at school. These may be obtained from the Health Office.
- Medication should be brought into school only when it is not possible to arrange administration outside of school hours.
- The physician portion of the blue medication form must be completed for any non-prescription medication that may be needed at school for more than two weeks and prescription medications needed for any length of time.
- For safety purposes, students on prescribed narcotics are not recommended to attend school.
- The school district will not purchase, prescribe, or provide any forms of medication to any student. This includes cough drops, over-the-counter analgesics, and ointments.
- Inhalers: Students with asthma may carry their inhaler with them, provided the physician and parent authorize this on the blue medication form and an Emergency Action Plan is on file in the Health Office. Students should keep their inhaler in their binder where it is readily accessible. Please consider keeping a back-up inhaler in the Health Office.

### **Lice:**

- Students found to have lice or nits will be sent home until appropriate treatments have been completed. The Health Office or your family physician can assist you with guidelines for treatment.

### **Health Concerns:**

- Keep the school nurse or health aide informed of any health concerns or changes in your health status. If you need to notify your parents about a health concern please do so from the Health Office, not the classroom.

**Parents may call the Health Office at any time with questions or concerns at 402 390-6484.**

**NOTE: Latex products, including balloons, are not allowed at WMS due to allergies.**

## **Advisory— SPARK (Students Participating and Actively Reflecting Knowledge)**

### **Philosophy:**

SPARK is an advisor/advisee program that builds meaningful relationships between students and teachers. Students need to feel connected in positive ways to the goals and purposes of their school. Every student should be well known as a person by at least one caring adult in the school. Every student should have at least one advocate and trusted adult in the building.

### **Purpose:**

- to help students make friends, develop positive peer group relationships and a sense of belonging
- to provide orientation to WMS and the Student Handbook
- to teach, reinforce, and build character as a middle school student working together with our classroom community
- to help students develop a sense of academic purpose and personal commitment to educational goals
- to help students achieve academic success by developing organization skills, time management skills effective study habits, and academic support
- to develop the skills, attitudes and behaviors that will help students function productively
- to reinforce the values of respect, responsibility, personal safety and accountability through character development activities

**Weekly SPARK Schedule: The following weekly schedule will be followed by all SPARKS at WMS. Some changes may be made throughout the year due to testing, speakers, etc.**

### **MONDAY-** DEAR Time (Drop Everything and Read) & Academic Setup

- The purpose of DEAR time is for students to have the opportunity to read material of their own choice while building reading confidence and stamina. DEAR Time will be 20 minutes.
- The purpose of Academic Setup is to help students get ready for the week by checking emails, preparing planner.

### **TUESDAY-** Warrior Character Building

- The purpose of Tuesdays is to help students build character as a middle school student working together with our classroom community.

### **WEDNESDAY-** Academic Check and Academic Study Time

- The purpose Wednesdays is two-fold. Part of this time is dedicated to supporting student learning through academic grade checks and planner checks. The other part of this time is for students to work on school work or read independently.

### **THURSDAY-** Math IXL Reinforcement

- The purpose of Thursday is to provide an opportunity for students to work on Math reinforcement.

### **FRIDAY-** Igniting the SPARK

- The purpose of Fridays will be to help teachers and students build a strong sense of community.

## Academic Organization

Academic Organization is essential to a student's success at WMS. Students are expected to document their coursework and homework for each of their classes. Students can keep track of their coursework and homework by using the following:

- Assignment Notebook - Students can pick a copy in the Guidance Department.
- Stickies Application - Students can use the Stickies Application on their school computer. It is suggested that students create a sticky note for each of their classes.
- iCal Application - Students can use the iCal Application on their school computer.

<b>Benefits of Academic Organization</b>		
<b>Students</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Parents</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All homework assignments are recorded.</li> <li>• Grades will most likely improve.</li> <li>• Establish a process of planning, prioritizing, and goal setting.</li> <li>• Establish school-wide consistency.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure students record assignment(s).</li> <li>• Increase student accountability.</li> <li>• Increase home-school communication.</li> <li>• Establish school-wide consistency.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness of homework assignments.</li> <li>• Increase home-school communication.</li> <li>• Increase parent-child communication.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>

## Well Managed Classroom - Boys Town Model for Safe and Effective Schools

Components of Boys Town Model for Safe and Effective Schools are used at WMS. Staff have been trained to use pre-teaching expectations, relationship building, rationales, effective praise, and corrective teaching. All students learn the majority of the skills listed on these pages throughout the curriculum and in Homeroom. This model helps students experience success in a safe, respectful, and responsible learning environment.

### Social Skills

<p><b>Following Instructions</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Look at the person.</li> <li>2. Say "Okay."</li> <li>3. Do the task immediately.</li> <li>4. (Check back.)</li> </ol>	<p><b>Accepting Feedback</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Look at the person.</li> <li>2. Say "Okay."</li> <li>3. No arguing.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Following Rules</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Learn what rules apply to the current situation.</li> <li>2. Adjust your behavior so that you are following those rules exactly.</li> <li>3. Don't "bend" rules, even just a little.</li> <li>4. If you have questions, find the appropriate adult to ask about the rules in question.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Accepting No</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Look at the person.</li> <li>2. Say "Okay."</li> <li>3. No arguing.</li> <li>4. If you don't understand why, ask calmly for a reason.</li> <li>5. If you disagree, or have a complaint, bring it up later.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Getting the Teacher's Attention</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Look at the person.</li> <li>2. Raise your hand. Stay calm.</li> <li>3. Wait for acknowledgement.</li> <li>4. After acknowledgement, ask question in a quiet voice tone.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Disagreeing Appropriately</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Look at the person.</li> <li>2. Use a pleasant voice tone.</li> <li>3. Make an empathy/concern statement.</li> <li>4. State disagreement specifically.</li> <li>5. Give a rationale.</li> <li>6. Say, "Thank you."</li> </ol>
<p><b>Greeting Someone</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Look at the person.</li> <li>2. Smile.</li> <li>3. Use a pleasant voice.</li> <li>4. Make a verbal greeting.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Decision Making/Problem Solving</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. P-Identify the <u>P</u>roblem.</li> <li>2. O-Examine the <u>O</u>ptions; looking at the advantages and disadvantages of each option.</li> <li>3. P-Make a <u>P</u>lan that includes the best option for you.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Introducing Yourself</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Look at the person.</li> <li>2. Smile.</li> <li>3. Use a pleasant voice.</li> <li>4. State your name.</li> <li>5. Shake the person's hand.</li> <li>6. When departing, say "It was nice to meet you."</li> </ol>	<p><b>Being Prepared for Class</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assemble all books, papers, homework, and writing utensils.</li> <li>2. Be on time for class.</li> <li>3. Present homework and assignments when requested by the teacher.</li> <li>4. Write down assignments and homework to complete.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Making a Request</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Look at the person.</li> <li>2. Use a pleasant voice.</li> <li>3. State request specifically.</li> <li>4. Say please.</li> <li>5. Say "Thank you" after the request is granted.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Staying on Task</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Look at the task.</li> <li>2. Think about the steps/supplies needed to complete the task.</li> <li>3. Focus all your attention on your task.</li> <li>4. Ignore distractions or interruptions by others.</li> <li>5. Only stop working when task is completed an/or an adult gives permission.</li> </ol>

<p><b>Organizing Tasks and Activities</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. List all tasks you are required to do.</li> <li>2. Prioritize tasks based on importance and your abilities and time.</li> <li>3. Complete tasks in the order they have been prioritized.</li> <li>4. Manage your time well and avoid putting off tasks until the last minute.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Reporting Other Youth's Behavior</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Find the appropriate adult or authority figure and ask to speak privately.</li> <li>2. Look at the person.</li> <li>3. Use a clear, concerned voice tone.</li> <li>4. State specifically the inappropriate behavior you are reporting.</li> <li>5. Give a reason for the report that shows concern for your peer.</li> <li>6. Truthfully answer any questions that are asked of you.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Good Quality of Work</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Find out exact expectations or instructions for the task.</li> <li>2. Assemble necessary tools or materials.</li> <li>3. Carefully begin working. Focus attention on the task.</li> <li>4. Continue working until the task is completed or criteria are met.</li> <li>5. Examine the results of your work to make sure it is done correctly.</li> <li>6. Make corrections as needed.</li> <li>7. (Check back.)</li> </ol>	<p><b>Accepting No</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Look at the person.</li> <li>2. Use a serious, sincere voice tone.</li> <li>3. Begin by saying "I want to apologize for..." or "I'm sorry for..."</li> <li>4. Do not make excuses or give rationalizations.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Celebrating Differences</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Examine the similarities between you and the other person.</li> <li>2. Take note of the differences.</li> <li>3. Emphasize the shared interests, tastes, and activities between you and the other person.</li> <li>4. Express appreciation and respect for the other person as an individual.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Resisting Peer Pressure</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Look at the person.</li> <li>2. Use a calm, assertive voice tone.</li> <li>3. State clearly that you do not want to engage in the inappropriate activity.</li> <li>4. Suggest an alternate activity.</li> <li>5. Give a reason.</li> <li>6. If the person persists, continue to say "No."</li> <li>7. Ask the peer to leave or remove yourself from the situation.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Choosing Appropriate Friends</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Choose friends who have interests similar to yours.</li> <li>2. Choose friends who make you feel welcome and good about yourself.</li> <li>3. Choose friends who accept you for who you are and treat you with respect.</li> <li>4. Choose friends who treat others as you want to be treated.</li> <li>5. Choose friends who have personal commitments similar to yours.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Showing Respect</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Obey a request to stop negative behavior.</li> <li>2. Refrain from teasing, threatening or making fun of others.</li> <li>3. Allow others to have their privacy.</li> <li>4. Obtain permission before using another person's property.</li> <li>5. Do not damage or vandalize public property.</li> <li>6. Refrain from conning or persuading others into breaking the rules.</li> <li>7. Avoid acting obnoxiously in public.</li> <li>8. Dress appropriately in public.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Conflict Resolution</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Approach the situation calmly and rationally.</li> <li>2. Listen to the other people involved.</li> <li>3. Express your feelings appropriately and assertively.</li> <li>4. Acknowledge other points of view.</li> <li>5. Express a willingness to negotiate and compromise.</li> <li>6. Help arrive at a mutually beneficial resolution.</li> <li>7. Thank the other person for cooperation.</li> </ol>	

## Code of Conduct

Students of Westside Community Schools represent themselves, their families, their school, and the Westside Community. It is the intent of this Code of Conduct to promote responsible behavior among all students at school and in the community. This policy applies to all secondary and elementary students.

### Definition of Terms

- "Short-term suspension" means the exclusion of a student from attendance in all schools within the District for a period not to exceed five school days.
- "Long-term suspension" means the exclusion of a student from attendance in all schools within the District for a period exceeding five school days but less than twenty school days.
- "Expulsion" means exclusion from attendance in all schools within the District (except the location designated for alternative education) for a period not exceeding the remainder of the semester in which the expulsion took effect, and in addition, the next full semester to the extent permitted by the Student Discipline Act.
- "Mandatory reassignment" means the involuntary transfer of a student to another school in the District in connection with any disciplinary action.
- "Other disciplinary action" includes, but is not limited to, open mod in-school suspension (applicable to high school only), in-school suspension, short and long-term restrictions on a student's participation in school sponsored activities, clubs, and athletic programs, temporary or permanent loss of privileges to ride on school-provided busses, vans or other transportation, student counseling, parent conferences, rearrangement of schedules, requiring a student to be in school other than regular school hours to do additional work, and requiring a student to receive counseling, psychological evaluation, or psychiatric evaluation upon the written consent of a parent or guardian to such counseling or evaluation.
- "Harassment" on the basis of sex includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome physical contact of a sexual nature and unwelcome verbal, written, or physical advance or suggestion of a sexual nature. Harassment on the basis of race, national origin, disability, age, religious beliefs, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender, or marital status includes, but is not limited to, any verbal or written statements to or about an individual which ridicules, slurs, mocks, derides, disparages, or makes fun of the individual because of his or her race, national origin, disability, age, religious beliefs, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender, or marital status.
- "Bullying" is as defined in Board Policy 5310.
- "Firearm", as defined in 18 U.S.C. 921, means (a) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (b) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (c) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (d) any Destructive Device.
- "Destructive Device" includes (a) any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, bomb, grenade, rocket having propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, a mine, or device similar to any of these devices; (b) any type of weapon by whatever name known which will, or which may be, readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter; and (c) any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described in (a) or (b) and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled.

# STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

## I. On School Grounds/At School-Sponsored Activities/School Transportation

### A. Prohibited Conduct.

The following conduct set forth in Paragraphs 1-27 constitutes Prohibited Conduct if the conduct occurs on school grounds, a school-sponsored activity or athletic event, or in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted by Westside Community Schools being used for a school purpose or in a vehicle driven for a school purpose by a school employee or by his or her designee. The conduct set forth in Paragraph 9 also constitutes Prohibited Conduct regardless of where the conduct occurs.

1. Use of violence, force, coercion, threat, intimidation, or similar conduct in a manner that constitutes a substantial interference with school purposes;
2. Willfully causing or attempting to cause substantial damage to property, stealing or attempting to steal property of substantial value, or repeated damage or theft involving property;
3. Causing or attempting to cause personal injury to a school employee, to a school volunteer, or to any student;
4. Threatening or intimidating any student for the purpose of or with the intent of obtaining money or anything of value from such student;
5. Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting any object or material that is ordinarily or generally considered a weapon. This includes, but is not limited to, firearms, knives and switchblades (regardless of blade length), B.B. guns, stun guns, air-soft guns, or any item that has the appearance of a weapon or that is portrayed by a student as a weapon;
6. Engaging in the unlawful possession, selling, dispensing, or use of a controlled substance or an imitation controlled substance, as defined in section 28-401 of the Nebraska statutes, a substance represented to be a controlled substance, or alcoholic liquor as defined in section 53-103 of the Nebraska statutes, or being under the influence of a controlled substance or alcoholic liquor;
7. Public indecency as defined in section 28-806 of the Nebraska statutes, except that the definition of public indecency applies only to students at least twelve years of age but less than nineteen years of age;
8. Engaging in bullying as defined in Board Policy 5310;
9. Sexual assault or attempted sexual assault of any person if a complaint has been filed by a prosecutor in a court of competent jurisdiction alleging that the student has sexually assaulted or attempted to sexually assault any person, including sexual assaults or attempted sexual assaults which occur off school grounds not at a school function, activity, or event. For purposes of this policy, sexual assault means sexual assault in the first degree as defined in section 28-319, sexual assault in the second degree as defined in section 28-320, sexual assault of a child in the second or third degree as defined in section 28- 320.01, or sexual assault of a child in the first degree as defined in section 28-319.01, as such sections now provide or may hereafter from time to time be amended;
10. Engaging in any other activity forbidden by the laws of the State of Nebraska which activity constitutes a danger to other students or interferes with school purposes;

11. A repeated violation of any rules and standards in this Code of Conduct, if such violations constitute a substantial interference with school purposes;
12. Gambling;
13. Profanity or vulgar language or gestures;
14. Insubordination, dishonesty, or gross disrespect to teachers, school officials, other school employees, volunteers, or bus/van drivers;
15. Behavior that constitutes a danger to any other person or that is disruptive to, or seriously interferes with, class work, school activities, or school transportation;
16. Plagiarism or, cheating, or other academic dishonesty;
17. Skipping school, home room, or regulated time, being tardy, or being out of the building without permission;
18. Attending fewer than four classes (applicable to high school students only);
19. Use or possession of any form of tobacco, tobacco or nicotine delivery device, or tobacco-product look-alike, e-cigarette or vapor (“vape”) dispenser of any kind regardless of the substance, if any, that it contains;
20. Possession or use of any mood-altering or behavior-affecting substance regardless of whether possession or use is unlawful under the laws of the State of Nebraska;
21. Violation of student dress code;
22. Harassment or discrimination of any student, school district employee, volunteer, or bus/van driver on the basis of the individual's race, national origin, sex, disability, age, religious beliefs, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender, or marital status;
23. Retaliation against any student, school district employee, volunteer, or bus/van driver for reporting or asserting a claim of harassment, discrimination or bullying;
24. Falsely reporting or asserting a claim of harassment, discrimination or bullying;
25. Participation in hazing in connection with initiation, orientation, or similar activities intended as an induction into any school program or activity;
26. Violation of the Internet Acceptable Use Responsibility Agreement or any computer use agreement;
27. Photographing, videotaping or audio recording any student, school district employee, volunteer, or bus/van driver without prior consent of that person.

## **B. Disciplinary Action for Prohibited Conduct on School Grounds, at a School-Sponsored Activity or Athletic Event, or in a Vehicle Being Used for School Purposes.**

Prohibited Conduct described in paragraphs (1) through (11) above constitute grounds for short or long-term suspension, expulsion, mandatory reassignment, and/or other disciplinary action. Prohibited Conduct described in paragraphs (12) through (27) above constitute grounds for short-term suspension and/or other disciplinary action. Alternatives to suspension or expulsion will be imposed against students who are truant, tardy, or otherwise absent from required school activities.

### **Procedures**

The principal or designee will conduct a reasonable investigation of the alleged Prohibited Conduct, examine the facts and circumstances, contact law enforcement as required by law, and cooperate with any law enforcement investigation.

The student will be given an opportunity to present his or her version of the situation. The principal or designee will determine the appropriate disciplinary action based upon the severity and extent of the Prohibited Conduct. The principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to notify the student's parents or guardian of the alleged behavior violation and the reasons for disciplinary action.

If the principal or designee determines that the appropriate disciplinary action is short term suspension, the student and the student's parents or guardian will be given oral or written notice of the alleged behavior violation and resulting disciplinary action. The principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to hold a conference with the parents or guardian before or at the time a student returns to school after a short-term suspension. At the time of the short-term suspension, the student and parent or guardian shall be provided with information regarding any opportunity to complete class work (including examinations) missed during the short-term suspension.

Any long-term suspension, expulsion, and mandatory reassignment for Prohibited Conduct shall be subject to the procedural requirements set forth in the Student Discipline Act of the Nebraska statutes.

During any time period that a student is excluded from school due to short-term suspension, long-term suspension, expulsion, or emergency exclusion, the student will be prohibited from being on school grounds (except the location designated for alternative education), from attending any extracurricular activities that take place on district property, and from participating in any school-sponsored activities, clubs and athletic programs. Other disciplinary action may also be imposed in the form of additional restrictions (beyond the length of the suspension, expulsion or emergency exclusion) on the student's participation in school-sponsored activities, clubs and athletic programs, where such curtailment is necessary to aid the student, further school purposes, or prevent interference with the educational process.

If such other disciplinary action is imposed (in the form of restrictions on the student's participation in school sponsored activities, clubs and/or athletic programs) beyond the time-period of the suspension, expulsion or exclusion, or is imposed in a situation where there has not been any accompanying suspension, expulsion or exclusion, the district shall provide such due process as is required by law, and the student and the student's parent/guardian will be provided with a copy of the district's procedures for contesting such restrictions.

### **School Transportation**

The Code of Conduct requirements set forth in this policy apply equally to students when using any District-provided transportation.

Disciplinary action for behaviors that occur on District transportation includes, but is not limited to, temporary or permanent loss of riding privileges. During any period in which the transportation privilege is lost due to the misconduct of the student, transportation to and from school becomes the sole responsibility of the parent/guardian.

The Superintendent or designee will conduct a reasonable investigation of the alleged Prohibited Conduct, and shall make reasonable effort to notify the student's parents or guardian of the alleged behavior violation. The student will be given an opportunity to present his or her version of the situation. The Superintendent or designee will determine the appropriate disciplinary action based upon the severity and extent of the Prohibited Conduct, and shall make reasonable effort to notify the parent/guardian.

Any long-term suspension, expulsion, and mandatory reassignment from school for Prohibited Conduct shall be subject to the procedural requirements set forth in the Student Discipline Act of the Nebraska statutes.

## **II. Off School Grounds/Not at School Sponsored Activity or School Vehicle**

**A. Prohibited Conduct.** The following constitutes Prohibited Conduct if the conduct occurs off school grounds, and not at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event or in a vehicle being used for a school purpose:

1. Assault, attempted assault, or use of violence, threats, intimidation, or bullying of a student, a staff member, or any other person.
2. Willfully damaging property, stealing, or attempting either;
3. Causing or attempting to cause physical injury to a school employee, student, or other person;
4. Illegal possession of a weapon or intending to use, attempting to use, or using a weapon;
5. Engaging in the unlawful possession, selling, dispensing, or use of a controlled substance or an imitation controlled substance, as defined in section 28-401 of the Nebraska statutes, a substance represented to be a controlled substance, or alcoholic liquor as defined in section 53-103 of the Nebraska statutes, or being under the influence of a controlled substance or alcoholic liquor;
6. Unlawful possession of drug paraphernalia, as defined in section 28-441 of the Nebraska statutes;
7. Sexual assault or attempted sexual assault of, or unwanted sexual contact with, of any person prior to, or in the absence of, a complaint being filed by a prosecutor.
8. Participation in hazing in connection with initiation, orientation, or similar activities intended as an induction into any school program or activity; and
9. Violation of the Internet Acceptable Use Responsibility Agreement or the terms of any computer user agreement.

### **B. Disciplinary Action for Prohibited Conduct Off School Grounds and Not at a School Sponsored Activity or Athletic Event Or in a Vehicle Being Used for a School Purpose.**

**Alleged Violation.** If the administration believes a student has been involved in Prohibited Conduct, a conference may be initiated with the student and his or her parents or guardians to discuss the matter and decide upon appropriate intervention, if any.

**Evidence of Violation.** If the administration obtains direct evidence that a student has engaged in Prohibited Conduct, although not cited or charged, the administration may initiate an intervention procedure. This procedure may involve a conference with the student, parents or guardians, and the appropriate school officials to discuss the conduct and an appropriate intervention. Intervention may include open-mod in-school suspension (applicable to high school students only), in-school suspension, an approved counseling program or screening procedure (with written consent of parent or guardian), school attendance at times other than regular school hours, and short or long-term restrictions regarding the student's participation in school-sponsored activities, clubs and athletic programs.

**Charged with Violation.** Any student receiving a citation and/or charged criminally for Prohibited Conduct or on whom a petition has been filed in juvenile court for Prohibited Conduct, wherever or whenever such conduct occurs, may be subject to disciplinary action. The disciplinary action may include in-school suspension, short-term suspension, an approved counseling program or screening procedure (with written consent of parent or guardian), and short or long-term restrictions regarding the student's participation in school-sponsored activities, clubs and athletic programs for up to one school year.

**Guilty of Violation.** If a student is found guilty of prohibited conduct, he or she shall be disciplined. The discipline may include short-term suspension from school or other disciplinary action.

**Procedure for Short-Term Suspension.**

In the event of short-term suspension, the student shall be given oral or written notice of the alleged Prohibited Conduct and an explanation of the evidence the principal or designee has to support the allegations, and the student shall have an opportunity to present his or her version. The principal or designee shall send a written statement to the student and to the student's parents or guardian describing the Prohibited Conduct and the reasons for the short-term suspension. The principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to hold a conference with the parents or guardian before or at the time a student returns to school after a short-term suspension. At the time of the short-term suspension, the student and parent or guardian shall be provided with information regarding any opportunity to complete class work (including examinations) missed during the short-term suspension.

During the short-term suspension the student will be prohibited from being on school grounds and from attending any extracurricular activities that take place on district property and from participating in any school-sponsored activities, clubs and athletic programs. Additional restrictions (beyond the length of the short-term suspension) may also be imposed on the student's participation in school-sponsored activities, clubs and athletic programs where such curtailment is necessary to aid the student, further school purposes, or prevent interference with the educational process.

**Appeal Process.** Any secondary student receiving a short-term suspension for Prohibited Conduct off school grounds and not at an educational function or event, a school-sponsored activity or athletic event or in a vehicle being used for school purposes may appeal the disciplinary decision to the Superintendent and may appeal the decision of the Superintendent to the Board of Education.

If restrictions are imposed on the student's participation in school sponsored activities, clubs and/or athletic programs beyond the time of the short-term suspension, or are imposed in a situation where there has not been any accompanying short-term suspension, the district shall provide such due process as is required by law, and the student and the student's parent/guardian will be provided with a copy of the district's procedures for contesting such other disciplinary action.

### III. Other Disciplinary Provisions Applicable To All Students

**Possession of a Firearm.** A student found to have knowingly and intentionally possessed, used, or transmitted a firearm (as defined in 18 U.S.C. 921) on school grounds, at a school sponsored activity or athletic event, or in a vehicle being used for a school purpose shall be expelled from school for a period not less than one calendar year. The period of expulsion may be extended beyond one year to the beginning of the semester following the one-year period. The Superintendent is authorized to modify the expulsion requirement on an individual basis.

**Alternative Programs for Expelled Students.** Expelled students will be offered educational alternatives for the duration of their expulsion. The educational program may include, but shall not be limited to: 1) an educational program at an alternative school setting 2) participating in an educational program in another district or educational institution, 3) individually prescribed educational and counseling programs, 4) community-centered classrooms with on-the-job training, or 5) specialized tutoring. Such programs will include an individualized learning program to enable the student to continue academic work for credit towards graduation during the term of their expulsion.

Legal Reference: Statute 79-266

**Review of Long Term Expulsion.** Any expulsion remaining in effect during the first semester of the following school year shall be reviewed prior to the start of the school year as follows:

1. A hearing examiner shall give notice to the student's parent/guardian and shall conduct the hearing.
2. The review shall be limited to new evidence or changes in the student's circumstances since the original hearing.
3. The hearing officer may recommend, based upon the new information, that the student be readmitted.
4. The student may be readmitted by the Superintendent unless the Board of Education or a committee of the Board took the original action to expel, in which case the student can be readmitted only through Board action.

**Emergency Exclusion Up to Five Days.** The principal or designee may exclude a student from school for not more than five school days if:

1. The student has a dangerous communicable disease transmissible through normal school contacts and the student poses an imminent threat to the health and safety of the school community, or
2. The student's conduct presents a clear threat to the physical safety of the student or to others, or is so extremely disruptive as to make temporary removal necessary to preserve the rights of other students to pursue an education.

Before such emergency exclusion takes effect, the student shall be given oral or written notice of the reason for the exclusion, an explanation of the evidence supporting such exclusion, and be provided an opportunity to present his or her version. The principal or designee shall send a written statement to the student and the student's parents or guardians describing the reasons for the action taken. The principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to hold a conference with the parents before or at the time the student returns to school.

**Emergency Exclusion Beyond Five Days.** If the Superintendent or his or her designee determines that an emergency exclusion shall extend beyond the initial five school days, the following notice and hearing procedures shall be followed, and all procedures shall substantially comply with the provisions of sections 79-266 to 79-287 of the Student Discipline Act:

1. Written notice of the basis for the emergency exclusion beyond five days shall be given to the student and the student's parent/guardian by personal delivery or sent by registered or certified mail on or before the sixth day of the emergency exclusion, and shall include:

- a) A form on which the student or the student's parent/guardian may request a hearing, the date by which the hearing request must be received, and notice that, if such timely request is received, the requestor has a right to have that hearing held and a final determination made within ten school days after the first day of the emergency exclusion;
  - b) Hearing procedures and appeal procedures; and
  - c) Advisement of the right to examine the student's academic and disciplinary records and any affidavits to be used and of the right to know the identity of witnesses and the substance of their testimony;
2. If a timely request for a hearing is made, the Superintendent or his or her designee shall appoint a hearing examiner, and the hearing examiner shall give oral or written notice to the principal, the student, and the student's parent/guardian of the time and place for the hearing. If the request of the student or the student's parent/guardian is received after the deadline date provided on the request for hearing form, the same basic procedure should be followed and the hearing should be an expedited one since the student is already out of school, but the hearing and determination need not be completed by the end of the tenth school day following the exclusion.

**Rules Regarding Other Conduct.** In the event that individual coaches or sponsors of activities and/or clubs impose eligibility restrictions for student participation in school sponsored activities for behavior other than those listed above, those restrictions or rules shall be written and communicated to the participating students. Violation of the restrictions or rules shall result in discipline ranging from a reprimand to permanent removal from the school sponsored activities and/or clubs.

**Students with Disabilities.** Suspension, expulsion and/or emergency exclusion of verified or eligible disabled students under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or Section 504 shall comply with District procedures and state and federal law.

Legal Reference: Statute 79-254 - 79-296

### **Guidelines for Positive Human Relations**

The primary goal of these guidelines is to prevent the occurrence of insensitive or offensive acts including bullying and harassment.

### **What should be reported?**

Any act(s) perceived to be offensive including, but not limited to, physical, verbal, or written abuse, drawings, gestures, symbols or bullying should be reported by any person aware of the act. These acts may be based on, but not limited to race, religion, gender (see sexual harassment pg. 21), ethnicity, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic situation, physical appearance or marital status.

### **How do I report an incident?**

If you believe you have been a victim of an offensive action you should immediately contact:

- One of your teachers
- Your counselor
- Any dean
- Your assistant principal
- Your principal

To the degree possible, the identity of persons who report offensive incidents will be protected, but anonymous reports are discouraged and may not be acted upon. The District's Code of Conduct prohibits retaliation against anyone filing a report or providing information. Retaliation results in very serious consequences.

## **What action will be taken?**

When insensitive or offensive acts occur the following actions will be taken:

- Responses to reports will be prompt. Any offending written material will be removed immediately and reports of offending actions by students and staff will be promptly investigated.
- Consequences for offensive actions on the part of students will be handled in accordance with the District Code of Conduct, Policy 5300, and existing school discipline procedures.
- When a staff member is accused of committing an offensive or insensitive act, the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources will be contacted by the principal. An investigation will be conducted and action taken based on the results of the investigation and existing district policies, state and federal law.
- In addition to standard discipline procedures, a plan for developing greater sensitivity will be initiated for students and staff members who have committed insensitive or offensive acts

## **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination based on gender. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following behavior directed at an individual on the basis of gender:

- Unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors.
- Unwelcome leering, staring, sexual flirtation or propositions.
- Unwelcome sexual slurs, epithets, threats, verbal abuse, derogatory comments, or sexually degrading descriptions.
- Unwelcome graphic verbal comments about an individual's body, or overly personal conversation.
- Unwelcome sexual jokes, stories, drawings, pictures or gestures.
- Unwelcome spreading of sexual rumors.
- Unwelcome touching of an individual's body or clothes in a sexual way.
- Cornering or blocking of normal movements in a sexual manner.
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects in educational/work environment.

**The person who believes he or she is being sexually harassed is considered the victim and is the one who determines if the action is unwelcome.**

Westside Community Schools will not tolerate sexual harassment and any student found sexually harassing another person will receive serious consequences that may include suspension, or exclusion from school.

**CAUTION:** If you are involved in a complaint you may not retaliate for being reported. To do so is a serious offense, and there will be serious consequences for retaliation!

## **Safe, Respectful, Responsible Behavior**

All students are expected to be Safe, Respectful, and Responsible.

### **Responsible Behavior Before School**

If you arrive to WMS before 7:52 a.m., please enter through the Performing Arts Center doors and go to either the cafeteria or the East gym. Students are not permitted in other areas of the building before 7:52 a.m. unless they have a pass from a staff member.

### **Responsible Class Behavior**

Teachers will communicate with you when you're not meeting the expectations for student behavior. Teachers will also notify your parent/guardian if you fail to meet classroom expectations.

### **Responsible Hallway Behavior**

- Stay to the right.
- Move with purpose.
- Walk safely, no running.
- Get to assigned areas on time.
- Keep hands and feet to yourself. No shoving, tripping, book-checking, etc.
- Log in and out of classrooms. You must have a signed pass or assignment notebook with you at all times.

### **Responsible Behavior On The Stairs**

- Walk on the stairs.
- Take one step at a time.
- Use the handrail when possible,
- No passing. Take your time and wait for others to clear.

### **Responsible Cafeteria Behavior**

- Follow the traffic pattern described in Homeroom.
- Use a tray under all food purchased or brought from home.
- Clean up the area around where you sit. Wipe tables clean and pick up anything that is on the floor in your area.
- Stay in your seat unless you are returning your tray or getting food. Follow the Stoplight Cue:
  - Red Time = Everyone is sitting and eating. If you need to get up to get something/go somewhere, raise your hand.
  - Yellow Time = Students should be dumping trays, using the restroom, or getting extra food at this time.
  - Green Time = Used after May 31st. :)
- The seat you eat in is the same seat you return to after using Yellow Time.
- Leave the cafeteria when the supervisor has dismissed you.
- If you leave the cafeteria for any reason, you must get permission, sign out and have a pass.
- Students must sit in their assigned area and will be dismissed at the end of lunch.
- It is the student's responsibility to use the restroom during lunch and be on time your next class.

### **Responsible Behavior After School**

Students are expected to be off campus by 3:45. Students needing to wait after 3:45 are expected to make arrangements to be working on homework in the Library or with a teacher. Students needing to use the Library after school must have a pass from a teacher. Students riding either the 4:15 or 5:15 bus, must have a pass from a teacher, club sponsor or coach. Students without passes will not be admitted to the Library or on buses.

## **Building & Grounds**

Your parents and the taxpayers in this school district pay for our educational program, materials and facility. This is a major investment! You are expected to care properly for the furniture, equipment and building.

- Pick up your trash and the trash around you.
- Recycle paper, pop cans, and plastic bottles whenever possible.
- No open containers of pop or other liquids are permitted in the hallways, except water.

## **Bus Transportation & Bikes**

Bus transportation is a privilege and not a district obligation. Bus transportation is provided by the district if you live north of Dodge or west of the Interstate. A stop is also made at the WHS Career Center and Rockbrook.

If you are not eligible for district transportation, contact Chief School Bus Company regarding possible opportunities for parent pay buses at 402 392-2144. The route schedule with times is online at the WMS homepage.

## **Responsible Behavior on the Bus**

- Stay seated on the bus from the time you get on until the bus stops at your departure spot.
- Keep all of your body and possessions inside the bus.
- Eating, drinking and smoking are not allowed on the bus.
- Throwing items is not permitted.
- Treat everyone on the bus with respect.
- Use appropriate language and keep the noise level down.
- Pick up all litter.
- Defacing or damaging the bus inside or out will not be tolerated.

When you depart from the bus and intend to cross the street, walk approximately 12 feet in front of the bus and stop. The driver will then signal you when it is safe to cross. walk around to the rear of the bus after getting off.

It is the bus driver's responsibility to make sure you are a responsible passenger. The driver may assign a seat to a student who is not demonstrating safe or responsible behavior. If misbehavior continues, you will be written up by the bus driver and a report will be given to the assistant principal. Your parent/guardian will be called, and it is possible that you will be removed from the bus for a specified length of time. Video cameras are operational in buses.

**If you show respectful, responsible and safe behaviors, you may ride the bus. If not, you will lose the privilege to ride.**

## **Bus Passes**

### **WHY do I need a bus pass?**

- Keeps the number of students on the bus below the maximum occupancy.
- Helps the driver get to know your name and the names of anyone causing problems that jeopardize safety.

### **WHEN do I need to carry or show my pass?**

- At all times! You must show your pass whenever the bus driver, a supervisor or a teacher asks to see it.

### **WHEN do I get my bus pass?**

- Before the end of the second week.

### **WHAT if I forget my bus pass?**

- Before this happens ask your parents: “If I forget my pass, should I walk home? Who should I call to come and get me?” REMEMBER...your pass is your responsibility.
- If you forget your bus pass, you may request a temporary bus pass in the main office. This request should be made before 10 a.m. Any requests made after 10 a.m. will not be granted and students will need to call for a ride home.
- You may only ask for 3 temporary passes for the entire year. After three, you will need to buy a new pass.

### **WHAT if I lose or can't find my bus pass?**

- Your first replacement pass will cost \$1.00.
- Additional passes are \$5.00.

### **Additional Bus Information**

- Visitors are not allowed on the bus.
- Buses leave promptly at their designated times.
- If you ride the 4:15 bus you will need your bus pass **AND** a pass from a teacher. Teachers will not write you a pass to ride the 4:15 bus unless you have been with that teacher since school was dismissed.
- **ONLY** students who are involved in an athletic activity or an **approved** after-school program may ride the 5:15 bus.
- You should be at your bus stop **5 minutes** before the scheduled pickup time. If you are late, the bus will not wait and you will be responsible for getting to school.

### **Bikes**

- Park bikes in the bike racks located outside the Library.
- LOCK...LOCK...LOCK...your bike at all times.
- The school is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged bikes.
- Students are not permitted to ride bikes on campus during. They are asked to walk them while other students are present.

### **Additional Information**

- Skateboarding is not permitted on school grounds.
- Non-licensed (e.g., go-peds, go-carts, mini bikes, etc.) motorized vehicles are prohibited on school property.

## **Guidelines for Appropriate Computer Technology Use at Westside Middle School**

- The first way to protect your data is to keep your password secure. Sharing your password with other people is not acceptable.
- The second way to ensure that your work is safe is to keep your computer safe. Do not leave it unattended and always securely lock your locker.
- Third, back up your files on an external drive, such as the school student server, a flash drive or external hard disk drive.
- Be mindful that printing capacity is limited. Pick up your printed material promptly. Observe all copyright laws.
- You are permitted to view, send or display only materials that contain no offensive content.
- Respect computer technology by taking proper care of it.
- The installation of illegal software, shareware, or freeware, may interfere with the operation of the computer or the network. Students may lose their computer privileges if they copy, load, or delete software on WMS computers without permission from a staff member. Likewise, students may not modify the settings on WMS computers.
- Using a computer to harm other people or their work will not be tolerated.
- Notify an adult immediately, if by accident, you encounter materials which violate the rules of appropriate use.
- E-mail and electronic organizers are to be used for school related purposes only.

Computers at WMS are essential for student learning. However, students may lose their computer privileges if the “Guidelines for Appropriate Technology Use” are not followed.

### **Laptop Information**

Your school laptop is property of Westside Community Schools. When using your school laptop, you should follow these expectations. Not following these expectations could result in loss of laptop privileges.

- I understand this laptop is for academic purposes.
- My laptop is assigned to me and is ALWAYS my responsibility.
- I will use my laptop as instructed by teachers or my parents.
- I will not chat, share files, or add software to my laptop unless instructed by my teacher.
- I will not bypass or change my laptop management settings or network management settings.
- I will come to school with my laptop fully charged and in its case.
- I will always carry my laptop with the lid closed and in its case.
- I will protect my laptop from food or beverage spills.
- I will follow all copyright laws.
- I will never post my image, name, address or other personal information online.

### **Tech Support**

Tech Support is located in Room 117 and is open from 7:45 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily. You **MUST** have the following items when you come to Tech Support or you will be sent back to your class:

- Written pass from your teacher.
- Laptop in your bag.

### **DONT FORGET:**

- Earbuds and blank CD’s are sold in the Bookstore. Flash drives are sold in Tech Support.
- You must have teacher permission to print from your laptop. Ask your teacher if you’re not sure what printer selection is appropriate. Printed materials may be picked up in the library before and after school.

## **Proper Student Dress**

In order to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning, all students at Westside Middle School will follow the regulations below. In addition, WMS administrators will make final decisions regarding dress code issues that are disruptive to the educational environment, but not specifically noted in these guidelines. WMS dress code applies to students both during the school day and at any school sponsored activities.

**Tops:** Any shirt or blouse worn to school should completely cover the back, top of shoulders, and stomach. Any top that allows the midriff, cleavage, or undergarments to be exposed is unacceptable. The following items are unacceptable: see-through blouses or shirts, tube tops or crop tops, halter-tops, and spaghetti straps. Students must leave heavy winter coats, long overcoats, trench coats, and other jackets in their lockers between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:22 p.m.

**Tank tops and Muscle Shirts:** Tank tops may be worn if the tank is part of an outfit with an over shirt and undergarments can not be seen. Tank tops for boys or girls are not acceptable if they are worn as a stand alone shirt. Any top that allows the midriff, cleavage, or undergarments to be exposed is unacceptable.

**Pants:** All pants must be worn no lower than the hips; no sagging is permitted. Undergarments must be covered. Sleepwear, such as pajama bottoms, are not acceptable at school.

**Shorts/Skirts:** Shorts/Skirts must be to mid thigh. A great way to determine if shorts/skirts are acceptable for school is to place arms at the sides and relax them. The finger tips naturally stop just about mid thigh. If the shorts/skirts are shorter than the finger tips, then they are not acceptable to wear to school. In addition, the shorts/skirts should have pockets and not be made out of some kind of stretchy material such as spandex. All shorts/skirts must be worn at the hips so undergarments cannot be seen.

**Leggings:** Leggings are fashionable and trendy and can be worn at school if there is some kind of additional clothing covering the waist at least to mid thigh. Leggings for boys or girls will not be acceptable as a stand alone pant.

**Footwear:** Appropriate shoes must be worn at all times. Slippers are unacceptable footwear.

**Accessories:** Hats, caps, bandanas, hair picks, sunglasses, visors, and sweatbands must be placed in lockers during the school day. Backpacks and other book bags must also be stored in lockers between 8:00 a.m. and 3:22 p.m. For safety reasons, chains, dog collars, or sharp objects are not to be worn to school.

**Offensive Dress:** Clothing or other personal items that are racist, sexist, or promote drugs/alcohol/tobacco are not permitted. Clothing which contains violent, obscene, offensive, or suggestive words, images, or language is not permitted. Gang-related symbols worn, written, carried, displayed or communicated will not be tolerated.

Any student wearing clothing that violates the dress code, disrupts the learning atmosphere or is deemed inappropriate may be asked to go home and return to school properly dressed or will be asked to change their clothes before returning to classes.

*Students who do not follow the above expectations will be dealt with on an individual basis. Any school time missed due to correcting dress code violations will be made up after school.*

## School Attendance

Good school attendance and being on time to school are important in order for you to **learn** and be successful in school. There is no substitute for regular attendance. Many classroom activities cannot be made up. If you are absent from school all or part of the day, the following guidelines are important:

- A parent/guardian must call 402-390-6484 before 8:30 a.m. when you are absent.
- If you arrive after the school day has started, you must report to the main office and sign in.
- If you are leaving the building before the school day is over, you must report to the main office and sign out.
- If you have a long term absence from school, work with your counselor to get your work caught up.
- If you know of the absence in advance, contact the attendance office to receive a form to obtain homework.
- Upon returning to school from an absence, report directly to classes and talk to each teacher about your make-up work.
- It is your responsibility to make arrangements to make up all missed work.

## Tardy to School Policy

Arriving to school on time is very important. When you are tardy, you must check-in to the main office. If a third tardy is earned in a quarter, the parent/guardian will be notified. If a fourth tardy is earned in the quarter, a consequence will be issued.

## Excessive Absences and Tardies

Attendance to school is not only a high priority, it is the law. When you miss school you are not only missing out on what the teacher is presenting but on the class interactions. These expectations are almost impossible to duplicate. Certainly, students who are ill should stay home. If a student has repeated illnesses it is important that the parent(s) be in contact with the school counselor.

- At five absences, a letter will be sent home as a point of communication.
- At ten absences, attendance letter will be sent home by the student's counselor, and in some cases, parents may be asked to attend a parent meeting and develop an intervention plan for the student.
- At fifteen absences, parents attend an attendance meeting to cooperatively develop an intervention plan for the student.
- If the plan is not followed and absences continue, a letter will be sent to the parents/guardians notifying them we will be required to notify the Douglas County Attorney's office.
- At twenty absences, written notification will be sent to the county attorney specifying what actions have been taken by the school to address the problem, what the child and/or parents'/guardians' response has been to the problem, the conduct of the student and any other basic information as required by the statute.
- You are considered truant if you are not in school or in an assigned class when you are supposed to be.

**One Truancy = One day of In-School Suspension.**

You must be in attendance at least half of the school day in order to participate in extracurricular activities that day. This does not include absences for school-sanctioned functions. If you are absent for **two or more days**, call before 10:00 a.m. to get make-up work.

## **In-School Suspension (ISS) Procedures**

The rules and expectations while in in-school-suspension (ISS):

- You are to bring with you all of your school materials.
- You are to stay in the seat assigned to you unless you have permission to leave.
- Lunch will be provided for you but you may bring a lunch from home if you choose. Catered food is not allowed.
- You are to complete all assignments sent to you by your teachers before ISS can be completed.
- You may be required to complete additional tasks, which will be related to the offense for which you are assigned in-house, or you may be required to complete a mediation essay.
- You are to remain quiet and not talk or pass notes to anyone.
- ISS is from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.
- **Failure to comply with these rules and expectations can result in additional time assigned to ISS or an out of school suspension.**

## **Restricted Lunch Procedures**

If you are assigned to restricted lunch you are expected to:

- Arrive and be in the assigned room by the time the tone rings. Consequence may be assigned if you are late.
- Lunch will be provided for you but you may bring a lunch from home if you choose. Catered food is not allowed.
- If you are on free or reduced lunch or are assigned restricted lunch without sufficient notice to bring a lunch, you will be provided a sack lunch at your regular rate of pay.
- Be responsible for cleaning up your area when you are done with lunch.
- Remain quiet.
- Be present for the assigned number of days. Absences will not count for days assigned.
- **Failure to follow these expectations will result in an extension of assigned days in restricted lunch.**

## **Detentions Before or After School With a Teacher**

If you are assigned a detention before or after school with a teacher, you are expected to:

- Arrive and be in the assigned room by the time the teacher has designated. Consequences may be assigned if you are late.
- Carry and maintain a pass from a teacher if you have a morning detention. Without a pass, you may not be able to continue to the destination.
- Follow instructions and complete work.
- **Failure to follow these expectations will result in further detentions**

## **ZAP (Zeros Aren't Permitted)**

ZAPs are assigned if students come to class without their homework/coursework or without the work being complete to teacher standards. If you are ZAPPED by a teacher:

- Arrive and be in the assigned room by the time the tone rings or is designated on the ZAP Pass. Consequence may be assigned if you are late.
- ZAP can be assigned before school (student will be given pass by the assigning teacher), during lunches (student will go to cafeteria to get lunch first and then go to assigned location), and after school (student will be given a pass to get on bus, when applies).
- The assigning teacher and student will contact parent(s)/guardian(s) when ZAP is assigned by phone or email.
- Students who are assigned multiple ZAPS in a day will need to schedule times with teachers in the order the ZAPS are received.
- Students who fail to complete their assigned ZAP time or fail to attend their ZAP will be contacted by the dean and parents will be called.

## **Classroom Phones**

We have phones in each classroom. Students may request to use the phone and teachers will determine if the request is appropriate. Office and Library phones can be used for emergencies only.

## **Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices**

- Students will be permitted to carry phones/electronic devices with them during the school day.
- During instructional time these devices are not seen or heard, unless the teacher gives permission.
- Outside of instructional time, electronic devices may be used as long as they are in compliance with the student Code of Conduct.
  - Violation of the Internet Acceptable Use Responsibility Agreement or any computer use agreement.
  - Photographing, videotaping or audio recording any student, school district employee, volunteer, or bus/van driver, without prior consent of that person.
  - Behavior that constitutes a danger to any other person or that is disruptive to, or seriously interferes with, class work, school activities, or school transportation.
  - Retaliation against any student, school district employee, volunteer, or bus/van driver for reporting or asserting a claim of harassment, discrimination or bullying.
  - Consequences:
    - **First Incident:** The item will be taken and the student may pick it up at the Main Office at the end of the school day.
    - **Second Incident:** A parent will need to claim the item in the Main Office.

**Westside Middle School accepts no responsibility for lost, stolen, or damaged items.**

## **Lunch Program**

- You may bring or purchase your breakfast or lunch.
- We have an automated system for students to use in purchasing their breakfast or lunch.
- Federal School Food Service guidelines do not permit bringing large quantities of food into the building for groups of students at serving time.

## **Free & Reduced Lunch Program**

Students who received free or reduced meals last year will qualify automatically the first week. However, the parents of those students must fill out a new application form and return it to the main office the first week of school in order to continue receiving free or reduced meals. All students will be given application forms and guidelines. Students will be notified if they are eligible.

## **Lost & Found**

Westside Middle School's "Lost & Found" is located in the main office. If you lose a textbook, sweatshirt, purse, or anything else, tell the secretaries in the office, and they will help you locate the lost item. The Lost and Found is cleaned out at the end of each quarter, and items are given to charity.

## **Activities and Athletics -- A Fun Way to Learn!**

There will be appropriate and interesting activities for all students after school, before school, and during Homeroom. We encourage all students to become involved in many activities.

The school day at WMS does not necessarily end when the bell rings at the end of the day. There are several opportunities for students after school, however students need to report to the designated areas directly after school, or bring a signed note if they are first staying after with a teacher. Students not participating in an after school activity are expected to be off school property by 3:45 p.m. If a student is participating in any extra curricular activity they must be present at school for at least half of the school day.

### **Teacher Help**

### **Library**

### **Athletics**

### **After School**

All of these opportunities are available for students staying after school. Students involved must follow the school guidelines when staying after school.

### **WMS Athletic Opportunities**

WMS combines competitive and intramural programs for both 7th/8th grade girls and boys. Our philosophy is to provide an opportunity for all students to participate at their developmentally appropriate level. Therefore, we have a “no cut” policy. Every student who chooses to participate in athletics will be placed on a team. Competitive teams are divided based on ability and intramural teams are divided randomly.

### **Important things to know before participating:**

- For safety reasons, all students who choose to participate in athletics at WMS are required to have an athletic physical and family consent on file in the athletic director’s office before they will be allowed to practice or play. WMS provides no insurance coverage. It is the responsibility of the athlete’s family to provide adequate insurance. The school does offer supplemental student accident insurance and forms may be obtained in the main office.
- Because athletics is an extracurricular activity, students will be required to be in school for more than half of the school day in order to practice or play in a contest. Students need to be in good academic standing. Athletics will not take precedence over academic concerns, behavior issues, or religious obligations.
- Each athlete is required to behave in a manner that exemplifies good sportsmanship and conduct. Any athlete who discredits WMS will be subject to disciplinary actions.
- Competitive athletic practices typically run from 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. everyday. Bus transportation is available for athletes who normally ride the bus. This bus leaves at 5:15 p.m.
- Competitive athletic contests are typically scheduled on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4:00 p.m. Unless notified in advance, transportation to and from all athletic contests will be provided by WMS.
- Intramurals run for three weeks after school from 3:30 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. Bus transportation is available for students who normally ride the bus. This bus leaves at 4:15 p.m.
- Student spectators will not be allowed at intramural contests.
- Students reading the age of 15 prior to August 1 are not eligible for interscholastic competition at WMS.
- Athletic schedules can be viewed on the middle school homepage.

### **After School Programs:**

Westside Middle School is able to offer after school programs through various community partnerships. If you are interested in after school programs contact Assistant Principal Kim Eymann at 402 390-6464, or e-mail at [eymann.kimberly@westside66.net](mailto:eymann.kimberly@westside66.net)