

WEST MIFFLIN AREA MIDDLE SCHOOL



STUDENT HANDBOOK 23-24

Mr. Jeff Soles - Superintendent
Dr. Jeffrey Solomon - Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Joseph Esper - Business Manager
Mrs. Noel Haney – Director of Pupil Services
Dr. Dayna Sikora – Director of Special Education
Mr. Mark Zidek – Facilities Director

Dr. Hal Minford - Principal
Mr. Robert Campana - Assistant Principal
Mr. Mark Bonacci - Dean of Students

West Mifflin Area Middle School
81 Commonwealth Avenue
West Mifflin, PA 15122
Phone: 412-466-9131 x2099

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Welcome

Welcome to West Mifflin Area Middle School We are sure this handbook will be valuable as you and your child embark on this journey with us at the middle school. The school staff will work hard to build connections with students and parents/guardians to ensure quality relationships and partnerships. This student handbook has been prepared as a reference guide to school policies and regulations. Please take the time to read this handbook and become familiar with its contents. This handbook is an important guide to success in school. On behalf of the administration, faculty and staff of West Mifflin Area Middle School, we wish you a successful school year.

Mission Statement

Helping our students achieve their best. The West Mifflin Area School District exists to empower students socially and academically through collaboration between staff, families and the community.

Student Rights

Students have legal rights as persons and citizens, students may not be deprived of what the law gives them. These rights include the right to an education, the right to express their opinions, and the right to be free from invidious discrimination. They also have human rights as people and participants in the educational community. These rights include the right to be treated with dignity by other participants and the right to contribute to the educational process.

Student Responsibilities

Student responsibilities include regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work, and conformance to school rules and regulations. No student has the right to interfere with the education of his/her fellow students. Students share with the administration and faculty a responsibility to develop a climate within the school that is conducive to learning. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of all who are involved in the educational process. Students should express their ideas and opinions in a respectful manner so as not to offend or slander others.

The students' responsibilities are to:

- Be aware of all rules and regulations for student behavior and conduct themselves appropriately.
- Dress and groom so as to meet fair standards of safety, health, and common standards of decency.
- Assume that until a rule is waived, altered, or repealed it is in full effect.
- Assist the school staff in running a safe school for all students enrolled therein.
- Be aware and comply with state and local laws.
- Protect and take care of school property.
- Attend school daily, except when excused, and be on time for all classes and other school functions.
- Make all necessary arrangements for making up work when absent from school.
- Avoid inaccuracies in student newspapers or publications and avoid indecent or obscene language and topics that incite student unrest.
- Refrain from using disrespectful, indecent, or obscene gestures or language in direct contact with other people.
- Act in a responsible manner at all school events at our school and when visiting other facilities.
- Give your best effort in all classes and maximize learning opportunities.

Bell Schedules

Middle School Bell Schedule (Grades 4&5)

Period	Daily Schedule “A”	Period	Early Dismissal Schedule “B”	Period	2-hour Delay Schedule “C”	Period	½ Day Schedule “D”
Homeroom	8:42-8:52	Homeroom	8:47-8:57	Homeroom		Homeroom	
Period 1	8:55-9:37	Period 1	9:00-9:27	Period 1	11:00-11:27	Period 1	
Period 2	9:40-10:22	Period 2	9:30-9:57	Period 2	11:30-11:57	Period 2	
Period 3	10:25-11:07	Period 3	10:00-10:27	Period 3	12:00-12:27	Period 3	
Period 4	11:10-11:52	Period 4	10:30-10:57	Period 4	12:30-12:57	Period 4	
Period 5	11:55-12:37	Period 5	11:00-11:27	Period 5	1:00-1:27	Period 5	
Period 6	12:40-1:22	Period 6	11:30-11:57	Period 6	1:30-1:57	Period 6	
Period 7	1:25-2:07	Period 7	12:00-12:27	Period 7	2:00-2:27	Period 7	
Period 8	2:10-2:52	Period 8	12:30-12:57	Period 8	2:30-2:57	Period 8	
Period 9	2:55-3:30	Period 9	1:00-1:30	Period 9	3:00-3:30	Period 9	
						End of Teacher Day	

Middle School Bell Schedule (Grades 6-8)

Period	Daily Schedule “A”	Period	Early Dismissal Schedule “B”	Period	2-hour Delay Schedule “C”	Period	½ Day Schedule “D”
Homeroom	7:57-8:07	Homeroom	7:57-8:07	Homeroom	9:57-10:07	Homeroom	
Period 1	8:10-8:52	Period 1	8:10-8:39	Period 1	10:10-10:39	Period 1	
Period 2	8:55-9:37	Period 2	8:42-9:15	Period 2	10:42-11:15	Period 2	
Period 3	9:40-10:22	Period 3	9:18-9:51	Period 3	11:18-11:51	Period 3	
Period 4	10:25-11:07	Period 4	9:54-10:26	Period 4	11:54-12:26	Period 4	
Period 5	11:10-11:52	Period 5	10:29-10:57	Period 5	12:29-12:57	Period 5	
Period 6	11:55-12:37	Period 6	11:00-11:29	Period 6	1:00-1:29	Period 6	
Period 7	12:40-1:22	Period 7	11:31-12:00	Period 7	1:31-2:00	Period 7	
Period 8	1:25-2:07	Period 8	12:03-12:32	Period 8	2:03-2:32	Period 8	
Period 9	2:10-2:52	Period 9	12:35-1:02	Period 9	2:35-3:02	Period 9	
End of Teacher Day	2:52-3:30	End of Teacher Day		End of Teacher Day	2:50-3:30	End of Teacher Day	

Assembly Programs

Assembly programs are an important part of school life. Good conduct during the assemblies is required. This conduct will be based on good manners and consideration of those participating. Whistling, booing, and other forms of expression that are in poor taste will not be tolerated. Inappropriate behavior during, or prior to the assembly may lead to exclusion of the program and/or further disciplinary action. Students who do not meet behavioral and academic expectations may be withheld from assemblies.

Attendance

Regular and punctual attendance is important to the success of a student's school career. Absences from school are listed as excused and unexcused. If a student does not present an excuse written by the parent/guardian to the homeroom teacher within three days of the absence to the homeroom teacher, the absence will be designated as an unexcused absence. Any student whose absence falls into the excused absence category may have the opportunity to complete any assignments upon returning to school. A doctor's note is required after 10 absences from school. *Please refer to the District Attendance Handbook on the district website for more information.* [Attendance Handbook](#)

Excused Absences

- Illness, death in the family, court appearance
- Family emergency, religious holiday
- Medical appointments
- Absences of students as approved by the administration (other than urgent reasons)
- Approved educational trips (See Educational trips)

Unexcused Absences

- Truancy/illegal employment
- Parental neglect/missed bus, overslept
- Teachers may assign an "F" grade for work missed when a student is absent unexcused.
- Repeated unexcused absences will result in a referral to magistrate court.

Written Excuse

For all excusable absences, a parent/guardian must send a written statement explaining the reason for the absence. The excuse can either be given to the homeroom

Teacher, or emailed directly to the middle school office at kuhnsd@wmasd.org within three days of the absence. The excuse will be filed for attendance records. Any excuse brought in after three school days is automatically recorded on the student's record as unexcused.

Sample Excuse:

Student's name: _____ Homeroom: ____

Parent Signature: _____

Date(s) of absence: _____

Phone Number: _____

Reason for absence: _____

Date student returned to school: _____

Print Parent Name: _____

Tardiness

Exceptions for tardiness are:

- Severe weather conditions
- School bus transportation difficulties
- Personal accident or illness

Parents must sign in your child or it will result in an unexcused tardy (TU)!

- Five-TU = Conference with Counselor
- Ten-TU = After school Detention
- Fifteen-TU = Saturday Detention
- 15 or more: referral to Magistrate/ISR
- 20 or more= Loss of all extra-curricular activities and events

Schools must create attendance improvement plans prior to referring truancy to the courts. A school attendance improvement conference is defined as a conference where the child's absences and reasons for the absences are examined in an effort to improve attendance with or without additional services. The conference will include the following individuals:

- Student
- Person in parental relation to the student
- Recommended service providers

The school must hold the conference even if the parent or guardian declines to participate or fails to attend after the school provides advance written notice and makes attempts to communicate via telephone. A legal requirement does not exist for either the student or parent to attend the conference. The school must document the outcome of any attendance improvement in the improvement plan.

Backpacks

Backpacks may be used to carry school materials to and from school. Backpacks must be placed and left in the students' locked locker during the school day. The only exception is for gym clothes. A child may use a gym bag when they have gym class only. All backpacks will be subject to search upon entering the building and/or in AM.

Bullying Policy

The district is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for district students. The district recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning, and may lead to more serious violence. Bullying of a student by another student is

strictly prohibited on school property, in school buildings, on school buses, and at school-sponsored events and/or activities whether occurring on or off campus. Bullying is when a student repeatedly and intentionally says or does mean or hurtful things to another person. **Bullying** means an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting and/or outside a school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:[\[1\]](#)

1. Substantially interfering with a student's education.
2. Creating a threatening environment.
3. Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying, as defined in this policy, includes cyberbullying.

School setting means in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school.[\[1\]](#)

Authority

The Board prohibits all forms of bullying by district students.[\[1\]](#)

The Board encourages students who believe they or others have been bullied to promptly report such incidents to the building principal or designee.

Students are encouraged to use the district's report form, available from the building principal, or to put the complaint in writing; however, oral complaints shall be accepted and documented. The person accepting the complaint shall handle the report objectively, neutrally and professionally, setting aside personal biases that might favor or disfavor the student filing the complaint or those accused of a violation of this policy.

The Board directs that verbal and written complaints of bullying shall be investigated promptly, and appropriate corrective or preventative action be taken when allegations are substantiated. The Board directs that any complaint of bullying brought pursuant to this policy shall also be reviewed for conduct which may not be proven to be bullying under this policy but merits review and possible action under other Board policies.

When a student's behavior indicates a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others, district staff shall report the student to the threat assessment team, in accordance with applicable law and Board policy.[\[2\]](#)[\[3\]](#)

Title IX Sexual Harassment and Other Discrimination

Every report of alleged bullying that can be interpreted at the outset to fall within the provisions of policies addressing potential violations of laws against discrimination shall be handled as a joint, concurrent investigation into all allegations and coordinated with the full participation of the Compliance Officer and Title IX Coordinator. If, in the course of a bullying investigation, potential issues of discrimination are identified, the Title IX Coordinator shall be promptly notified, and the investigation shall be conducted jointly and concurrently to address the issues of alleged discrimination as well as the incidents of alleged bullying.[4][5]

Confidentiality

Confidentiality of all parties, witnesses, the allegations, the filing of a complaint and the investigation shall be handled in accordance with applicable law, regulations, this policy and the district's legal and investigative obligations.

Retaliation

Reprisal or retaliation relating to reports of bullying or participation in an investigation of allegations of bullying is prohibited and shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Delegation of Responsibility

Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of others and to ensure an atmosphere free from bullying.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations to implement this policy.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that this policy and administrative regulations are reviewed annually with students.[1]

The Superintendent or designee, in cooperation with other appropriate administrators, shall review this policy every three (3) years and recommend necessary revisions to the Board.[1]

District administration shall annually provide the following information with the Safe School Report:[1]

4. Board's Bullying Policy.

5. Report of bullying incidents.
6. Information on the development and implementation of any bullying prevention, intervention or education programs.

Guidelines

The Code of Student Conduct, which shall contain this policy, shall be disseminated annually to students.[\[1\]](#)[\[6\]](#)[\[7\]](#)

This policy shall be accessible in every classroom. The policy shall be posted in a prominent location within each school building and on the district website.[\[1\]](#)

Education

The district shall develop, implement and evaluate bullying prevention and intervention programs and activities. Programs and activities shall provide district staff and students with appropriate training for effectively responding to, intervening in and reporting incidents of bullying.[\[1\]](#)[\[8\]](#)[\[9\]](#)[\[10\]](#)

Consequences for Violations

A student who violates this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the Code of Student Conduct, which may include:[\[1\]](#)[\[5\]](#)[\[9\]](#)

1. Counseling within the school.
 2. Parental conference.
 3. Loss of school privileges.
 4. Transfer to another school building, classroom or school bus.
 5. Exclusion from school-sponsored activities.
 6. Detention.
 7. Suspension.
 8. Expulsion.
 9. Counseling/Therapy outside of school.
 10. Referral to law enforcement officials.
- West Mifflin Middle School will focus on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) in regard to an anti-bullying program. Students in the SEL will learn techniques on how to gain confidence, set goals, make better decisions, collaborate with others, demonstrate empathy, and navigate the world more effectively. Students' curriculum will be Naviance, an interactive program that helps students reach their goals **developing skills critical for college, career and life** and taught through their career class. Monthly themes will be developed through the PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) team and presented to the students at the Student of the Monthly Assembly as well as weekly presentations during morning announcements. Restorative practices will be used to build communities and strengthen relationships. Bullying rubric and incident form are located at the end of the handbook.

*Please refer to the “Bullying Rubric” located at the end of this handbook.

Bus Regulations

Bus transportation is a privilege. The principal will suspend bus privileges of any student not following the rules. Additional disciplinary action may also be imposed. The safety of all students to and from school is somewhat dependent on an understanding and cooperative effort of parents, students, school bus drivers and school personnel.

Parents are urged to caution their children to obey the following rules:

- Students must obey bus drivers promptly as they are in full charge of buses and pupils while in transit.
- Students must stay off the roadway at all times while waiting for buses.
- Students must cross in front of the bus when crossing a highway.
- Students must wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before attempting to enter or exit the bus.
- Students must keep their arms and heads inside the bus and remain seated at all times.
- Any damage to the bus should be reported to the bus driver at once.
- Any student causing a disturbance on the bus may be suspended from riding the bus. NO HORSEPLAY.
- Students are not permitted to eat and/or drink on the bus.
- Any student that damages a bus may be suspended from riding the bus and is subject to repair costs.
- Students will be picked up and discharged only at their designated bus stop.
- Students may only ride the bus to which they have been assigned by the district.
- Requests to temporarily ride another bus must be made in writing from a parent and approved by an administrator.
- Bus students may not walk home, to doctor’s appointments, activities, or another student’s home without written permission from a parent.
- Any transportation request must be submitted to the office for approval no later than the morning of the request.
- All school rules apply to and from the home to the bus stop. Failure to abide by any of the above rules will result in disciplinary action.

Cafeteria

Breakfast and lunch will now be provided to **ALL students at no cost**. However, all students will still need an account to receive breakfast and lunch. You may set up an account for your child via the district website- <https://www.schoolcafe.com/>. Children with food allergies should notify the office as soon as possible.

Cafeteria Rules

- Depositing all lunch litter in the trash cans
- Leaving the cafeteria dining room in clean condition
- Respectful and appropriate behavior
- Energy drinks and/or glass bottles are not permitted in school
- Students are not permitted to leave the building for lunch
- No open food/drink may be taken from the cafeteria
- Students are not permitted to walk through the hallways eating food of any kind.
- If a classroom teacher has distributed food or snacks of any type, the food items must be consumed in that classroom.
- Students are not permitted to order food to the building from outside vendors.

All items sold in school must have the permission of the sponsor and principal. These items must be district approved fundraisers. No food or drink may be sold during breakfast/lunch periods. **Failure to comply with these rules will result in loss of privilege or disciplinary actions.**

Cell Phones/Electronic Devices

Cell phones/electronic devices are a disruption to the educational process. If parents need to forward a message to their child during the school day, please contact the office. When ill, students must see the nurse, who will contact the parents. Students are not allowed to contact their parents via their cell phones or any other electronic device.

Students are not permitted to use nor possess cell phones/electronic devices during the school day. All devices should remain in the locker for the duration of the entire school day. Devices that are in sight, ring or vibrate during the school day will be confiscated. Personal laptops, iPad, computers, earbuds, headphones, and any headsets, and others are included in electronic devices. **Refusal to hand over the electronic device will be an automatic out of school suspension.**

- 1st Violation – The electronic device is confiscated and turned into the office. **Device will be returned – dismissal.** It is the responsibility of the child to notify parents after the first violation.
- 2nd Violation - The electronic device is confiscated and turned into the office. **Student will be assigned after school detention.** Parent/Guardian will be contacted to pick up the device. Device will be returned to **Parent/Guardian ONLY.**
- 3rd Violation- The electronic device is confiscated and turned into the office. **Student will be assigned Saturday Detention** Parent/Guardian will be contacted to pick up the device. Device will be returned to **Parent/Guardian ONLY.**
- 4th Violation- The electronic device is confiscated and turned into the office. **Student will be assigned one (1) day of Reflection Room.** Device **WILL NOT** be returned until Parent/Guardian and student meet with Administration.
- 5th Violation **Future violations will result in suspension from school.**

*Any student taking pictures, videos (authorized or not), and/or placing them on social media are subject to disciplinary actions at the discretion of school administrators including out of school suspension.

Cheating/Plagiarism

Cheating on tests, quizzes, homework, projects, assignments, or final exams is a serious flaw in a student's personal character. Cheating results from poor personal judgment and seriously affects the entire class. Cheating is identified and handled by the classroom teacher on an individual basis. Cheating will result in a zero on the assignment or exam. Teacher may provide the opportunity to complete an alternative evaluation. The student may also be subject to disciplinary action.

Child Abuse

The Child Protective Services Law in Pennsylvania requires all school employees to report suspected child abuse. When the principal and the school nurse have reasonable cause to suspect that a child may have been abused, the principal must notify the Childline and Abuse Registry and Allegheny County Children and Youth Services. It is not the responsibility of school officials to determine if there has been abuse or neglect. The principal may permit authorized personnel from the Department of Public Welfare or Child Protective Services to interview the student at school without prior parental consent if the suspected abuser is unknown or may be the parents. If the student has suffered injuries so severe that immediate medical attention is needed, the principal will call the police and/or paramedics to take the child to the hospital. The police will investigate the matter if the suspected child abuse involves law violations under the Crimes Code.

Code of Conduct

All pupils are expected to abide by the necessary discipline regulations since they facilitate the operation of the educational process. These regulations are in effect during the school day, at all school-sponsored activities, and on school buses.

Confidential Communications

A. Use of a student's confidential communications to school personnel in legal proceedings is governed by statutes and regulations appropriate to the proceeding.

B. Information received in confidence from a student may be revealed to the student's parents, the principal or other appropriate authority where the health, welfare, or safety of the student or other persons is clearly in jeopardy.

Computer/Internet Use

The district reserves the right to monitor any Internet usage and any electronic communication. Users of the WMASD technologies should not have an expectation of privacy in the materials that are created, sent, or received by them on the WMASD systems. To the extent allowed by laws and regulations, WMASD authorized personnel may examine all material stored on WMASD systems without prior notice. Messages that are created, sent, and/or received using the WMASD email system are the property of the West Mifflin Area School District. The West Mifflin Area School District reserves the right to access and disclose the contents of all messages created, sent, and/or received using the email system. **The Board establishes that use of the Internet, Network, email and equipment is a privilege not a right. Inappropriate, unauthorized and illegal use may result in the cancellation of those privileges and appropriate disciplinary action.**

For more information on the internet policy please see The Acceptable Use of Internet and Technology Policy (815) [Acceptable Use Policy](#)

*Any student that has downloaded any inappropriate materials or has unauthorized materials on their laptop is subject to disciplinary actions. The West Mifflin School District has the right to check any and all school issued computers. *Please refer to the District Technology Handbook for more information.*

Course of Studies

The Middle School program tries to provide experiences that match student abilities and interests. The course of studies also includes certain experiences required by the state of Pennsylvania. Parents, teachers, and counselors will help to choose the best set of experiences for each student. If changes in a schedule are recommended, parents will be asked to discuss the changes with the guidance counselor.

Dress Code

The school permits a wide variety of clothing to be worn in school. However, that does not mean that all styles are appropriate. We rely upon the students and parents to exercise good judgment in choosing clothing that is not disruptive to the orderly process of education. The school board has established a dress code guideline, Policy #221, for middle school students. No student shall wear any apparel or jewelry that by words, signs, pictures, or any combination thereof appearing on the clothing or jewelry that advocates sexual activity or violence, or the use of drugs, tobacco, alcohol, or demeans or degrades another because of race, sex, religious persuasion, national origin, handicap or disability. The prohibition shall be in effect during regular school hours and at any school-sponsored activity. Students are not permitted to write on school property or themselves during the school day.

DO NOT WEAR:

- Shower Caps, hats, Head coverings or bandanas of any kind
- Spiked apparel/jewelry, chains, or sunglasses, fake glasses, etc.
- Provocative apparel (Backless tops, halter tops, tube tops, spaghetti tops, sheer tops, excessively ripped tops, etc.)
- Tank tops must have a three-finger width minimum
- Excessively short shorts/skirts (shorts/skirts should reach to the end of the fingertips)
- Excessively torn pants/no rips/tears above mid-thigh
- Sagging Pants or exposed undergarments
- Bare midriff
- Slippers or sleeping attire or blankets
- Clothing that is too revealing/inappropriate
- Writing on oneself will not be permitted.
- Flip-Flops

Clothing Students who arrive to school in clothing that violates this dress code will be taken aside and presented with the option of having a parent bring a change of clothes or to change into garments available at school. We prefer that the students comply with the regulations and arrive at school properly attired and ask for parents' cooperation in this matter. Repeated violations will result in disciplinary action.

Early Dismissals

Requests for an early dismissal, stating the specific reason, must be made in writing by a parent/guardian and presented to the student's homeroom teacher on the morning of the dismissal. Parents must come into the office and sign the student out. If returning, the parent must come into the office and sign-in the student. Students will not be sent home without first contacting the parent.

Educational Trips

Educational vacations will be ruled excused if it is the opinion of the building administrator a vacation does have educational value and the following procedure is followed:

- A. The parent submits the WMASD Vacation request form at two weeks prior to departure. Forms available in the office and on the website. [Vacation Request Form](#)
- B. Educational trips will not be approved during the first two weeks of school, the last two weeks of school, and during standardized testing weeks.
- C. The student obtains an approval from the building administrator to present to teachers in order to obtain assignments prior to the absence.
- D. All academic work is completed within a period not exceeding the number of days absent as a result of the trip. Requests will be granted one time per year for no more than five school days.
- E. If the student is absent for more than allowable, the absences will be marked unexcused.

Emergency Information for Sudden Illness or Injury

The Health Office maintains Emergency Contact/Release Information for each student. This information facilitates the care of an ill or injured student as well as provides health office staff with routine contact and release information. Only those persons, (including parents/guardians), indicated on this document will be contacted and can give permission for the student to leave the building. It is essential that parents keep this information current. Facilities are available for temporary care only. Parents should develop a plan that would allow their child to be picked up from school within a half hour of notification of an illness or an injury. To update your child's Emergency Contact/Release Information go to the Parent Dashboard under Account Preferences. Families with more than one Dashboard account should contact their child's Health Office to update.

Extracurricular Activities

The athletic program is based on instruction and participation for the greatest number of students interested in the program. A program of interscholastic athletic activities for boys and girls is available in grades seven and eight. The Middle School is a member of the SHASDA (South Hills Area School District Association) league.

Academic Eligibility: In order to be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities, including athletics, a pupil must have passed at least three of the four CORE subjects during the previous grading period. The student must also achieve a minimum GPA of 1.5. A 1.5 list will be generated every week to determine eligibility. An ineligible student will not be permitted to participate in regulated competition with the team or activity for 5 school days pending improvement. Academic eligibility then continues on a weekly basis. For fall sports/activities, the final GPA from the previous year is used to determine eligibility.

Attendance Eligibility: In order to be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities including athletics, a pupil must not be absent or tardy more than nineteen and one-half days in any one semester. When accumulating twenty absences in any semester, the student shall be declared ineligible for participation in extracurricular activities for a period of sixty school days. *To attend after school activities, students must be in school prior to 11:00 AM.*

Physical Eligibility: School district policy requires one physical examination per year for all student athletes unless there is an injury. In the event of an injury, the athlete must be examined prior to participating in the same sport or in another sport.

Participant's Responsibility: Students involved in a sport or extracurricular activity which prevents them from attending class must report to the teacher for the homework, or to turn in assignments for that day. **You are not excused from the assignment.** Students are also expected to meet an acceptable level of behavior during school, during practice and at all competitions. Student athletes must represent our school and team in a respectable manner. Failure to do so will result in a temporary or permanent loss of this privilege.

Field Trips

Field trips, when used as a device for teaching and learning integral to the curriculum, are an educationally sound and important ingredient in the instructional program. Students on field trips remain under the supervision and responsibility of the WMASD Board and are subject to its rules and regulations.

***Any student on the 1.5 list is not permitted to attend/participate in any after school activities which includes: sporting events, dances, field trips, clubs or any non-educational after school activity.**

***Any student suspended for 3 days or more or 5 days of ISR (Individual Student Reports) is not permitted to attend any after school activities, sports, cheerleading and/or field trips for the semester in which they have been suspended or received ISR.**

***Students attending after school events must complete form signed by parents or they will not be allowed to attend. Form is located in the back of the handbook. Without a signed form, the student is not permitted in attendance to the after-school events.**

Food and Beverages in School

Students must consume all food and beverages with the exception of water in the cafeteria, including food or beverages brought from home unless given permission and supervised by a teacher. Food or beverages that are dropped or spilled in the building create serious litter and health problems. Delivery of food to school is prohibited unless under the supervision of a staff member. Students are not permitted to sell food/snacks in school unless the sale is part of an administratively approved fundraising activity.

Food and Environmental Allergies

Because of the increasing number of children with food related allergies/restrictions, food provided for school sanctioned events should not contain nuts or peanut products. Additionally, food that is brought to school or dropped off by a parent/guardian for lunch may only be consumed by his/her own child. Students are not permitted to share food due to allergy concerns. A health and safety procedure is established for all students with life threatening allergies. Foods sold in the cafeterias are clearly labeled. Students are responsible for choosing their food purchases.

Freedom of Expression

- A. Students have the right to express themselves unless such expression materially and substantially interferes with the educational process, threatens immediate harm to the welfare of the school or community, encourages unlawful activity, or interferes with another individual's rights.
- B. Students may use publications, handbills, announcements, assemblies, group meetings, buttons, armbands, and other means of common communication, provided that the use of public-school communications facilities shall be in accordance with the regulations of the authority in charge of those facilities.
 1. Students have the responsibility to obey laws governing libel and obscenity and to be aware of the full meaning of their expression.
 2. Students have the responsibility to be aware of the feelings and opinions of others and to give others a fair opportunity to express their views.
- C. Identification of the individual student or at least one responsible person in a student group may be required on any posted or distributed materials.
- D. School officials may require students to submit for prior approval a copy of all materials to be displayed,

posted or distributed on school property.

E. Bulletin boards shall conform with the following:

1. School authorities may restrict the use of certain bulletin boards.

2. Bulletin board space shall be provided for the use of students and student organizations.

3. School officials may require that notices or other communications be officially dated before posting, and that such materials be removed after a prescribed reasonable time to assure full access to the bulletin boards.

F. School newspapers and publications shall conform with the following:

1. Students have a right and are as free as editors of other newspapers to report the news and to editorialize within the provisions in paragraphs (4) and (5).

2. School officials shall supervise student newspapers published with school equipment, remove obscene or libelous material and edit other material that would cause a substantial disruption or interference with school activities.

3. School officials may not censor or restrict material simply because it is critical of the school or its administration.

4. Prior approval procedures regarding copy for school newspapers shall identify the individual to whom the material is to be submitted and shall establish a limitation on the time required to make a decision. If the prescribed time for approval elapses without a decision, the material shall be considered authorized for distribution.

5. Students who are not members of the newspaper staff shall have access to its pages. Written criteria for submission of material by non-staff members shall be developed and distributed to all students.

G. The wearing of buttons, badges, or armbands shall be permitted as another form of expression within the restrictions listed in sub-section (c).

H. School officials may set forth the time and place of distribution of materials so that distribution would not materially or substantially interfere with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school.

1. A proper time and place set for distribution is one which would give the students the opportunity to reach fellow students.

2. The place of such activity may be restricted to permit the normal flow of traffic within the school and at exterior doors.

I. School officials should adopt and publish guidelines for student use of school facilities and equipment.

J. The constitutional right of freedom of speech guarantees the freedom of public-school students to publish materials on their own.

1. The school has no responsibility to assist students or to provide facilities in the publishing of such materials.

2. The students themselves have sole responsibility for any statements published.

3. Approval procedures must be followed prior to distribution or display of materials on school property. See subsection (a).

Fundraising

The Board prohibits the collection of money by a student for personal benefit in school building, on school property or at any school sponsored activity. Collection of money by approved school organizations may be permitted by the principal. Collections by students on behalf of school organizations outside the schools may be permitted only by the Superintendent.

Grading

The letter grade indicates the student's level of achievement:

A = Superior achievement (90%-100%)

B = Above average achievement (80%-89.9%)

C = Average achievement (70%-79.9%)

D = Below average achievement (60%-69.9%)

F = Performance does not meet minimum standards (59.9% or lower)

P = Pass

I = Incomplete work

- High Honor Roll: 3.75 – 4.0 GPA
- Honor roll: 3.10 – 3.749 GPA

*In grades 6-8, students must pass two of four core classes to be promoted to the next grade level.

*Students must earn 4 quality points in each class to pass that particular class

*Lowest grade a student can receive is a 50%

*If student passes first two terms, and earns 4 quality points, they may be retained based on regression.

Requirements for Advanced courses

- A/B grade in course
- Teacher Recommendations
- Proficient or Advanced PSSA (Pennsylvania System of School Assessment) score
- PSSA projection
- Keystone projection
- Diagnostic testing scores

Guidance Counselors

The Middle School guidance counselors serve as advisors to students and parents and consultants to teachers. If your child is having a problem adjusting to the middle school, a parent should contact the child's counselor. You can call or email.

Grade 4,5, & 6 (A-K) - Mrs. Jodie Lyons, lyonsj@wmasd.org

Grade 6 (L-Z) & 7,8 - Mrs. Lisa Lyon, lyonl@wmasd.org

Hall Passes

All students must use the e-hall pass or classroom pass for requesting a hall pass. Failure to comply, or abuse of this rule, will result in a loss of the privilege, or additional disciplinary action. Students must go directly to the designated area only, and then return to the classroom.

Health Insurance

If your child does not have health insurance, free or low-cost coverage is available through Pennsylvania's Children's Health Insurance Program, (CHIP). CHIP is administered by the Pennsylvania Insurance Department, and the coverage is for quality medical services through regular health insurance companies. Applications for CHIP are available in all the school health offices or you may call 1-800-986-KIDS.

HOMELESS Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness (ECYEH)

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act was established in 1987 and amended by Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015. The Act defines the term "homeless children and youths" as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The federal mandate ensures that homeless children and youth have access to the same free and appropriate public education as other children. Children who are homeless may qualify for assistance with school lunch, school supplies, tutoring and transportation so that they can remain in their school of origin. [Attendance Handbook](#)

If you believe that your child may qualify for this service, please contact: Melissa Wall, Home and School Visitor
Phone: 412-466-9131 ext. 1006 email: wallm@wmasd.org

Homeroom

Each student begins the school day by reporting to homeroom. Announcements will begin at the opening of homeroom. Homeroom is a great time to review the information in your planner as well as a great time to mentally prepare for the school day. Teachers will take attendance in homeroom. All excuses, early dismissal requests should be given to the homeroom teacher. Anytime your child is not in Homeroom our automated phone system will call your home. Please make sure accurate numbers are submitted to the office.

Homework

Students are assigned homework to reinforce the material presented in class. Homework is used to verify the ability to put into practice skills learned in class. Parents should check with their children every day to ensure assignments are completed and ready to return to school. *Middle School students need parents to check, review, and quiz them on class material. They are not too old for this support.*

Immunization Requirement

PA Code requires that all children, kindergarten through 12th, including all public, private, parochial, intermediate unit and home-schooled students, show written proof of immunization before they can attend school in the Commonwealth. Your child will not be permitted to attend school until proof of immunizations have been submitted and approved by the Certified School Nurse.

Make-Up Work

A parent may call the office and request work for a student who's absent for three or more excused days. Work will be collected and placed in the main office for pick-up by the parent

Medication

Students are made aware that any medicine, prescribed or over-the-counter medication, must have a doctor and parent signature on file with the school nurse and kept in the nurse's office. Students are not permitted to possess any form of medication in school. Medication permission forms are available from the school nurse. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action.

Obligation/Financial Responsibility

Students are responsible for items that are loaned to them by the school district, such as laptops, headphones, textbooks, library books, locks, calculators, uniforms, etc. Students also are responsible for the proper use and care of equipment in class, such as industrial arts tools, home economics supplies, art supplies, computer equipment, lab tables and equipment, etc. The student will be charged a fair assessment if property is lost or damaged based on school district policy. Every effort will be made to work cooperatively with the student and parent to fulfill the obligation. Lack of cooperation will result in a referral to the magistrate.

Students with outstanding obligations will not be able to attend or participate in extracurricular activities.

Parent / Teacher Association (PTA)

National PTA® comprises millions of families, students, teachers, administrators, and business and community leaders devoted to the educational success of children and the promotion of family engagement in schools.

PTA is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit association that prides itself on being a powerful voice for all children, a relevant resource for families and communities, and a strong advocate for public education. Membership in PTA is open to anyone who supports the **PTA mission** and wants to be involved and make a difference for the education, health, and welfare of children and youth.

PTA funds provide academic enhancements, Cultural Art programs, and many other activities for all students. Meeting information can be found in each individual building website and/or calendars.

PBIS

Grades 6-8 PRIDE

Grades 4/5 3R's

P - Participation	R - Responsible
R - Responsibility	R - Respectful
I - Integrity	R - Ready to Learn
D - Dedication	
E - Emphathy	

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an evidence-based three-tiered framework to improve and integrate all of the data, systems, and practices affecting student outcomes every day. PBIS creates schools where all students succeed.

Pictures

Individual student picture will be taken during the fall. Students will receive notices in advance of the photo sessions. Picture money and necessary forms must be returned in a timely fashion in order to purchase pictures.

Photos/videotape footage of West Mifflin students involved in school-related activities are often used in district publications, video productions, newspapers, yearbooks, on television, and the district's website. If for any reason you do not want photographs or video tapes of your student used in this manner, please complete the photo refusal form distributed at the beginning of the school year and return it to the main office.

PowerSchool

PowerSchool is a district student information management system available to parents to monitor their child's academic progress. Parents will utilize a unique username/password to access their child's account.

Prohibited Materials

NO DANGEROUS ITEMS OF ANY KIND MAY BE BROUGHT TO SCHOOL FOR ANY REASON. Administration has the right to determine what is dangerous. Violation will result in disciplinary action in accordance to school board policy. See *WMASD Code of Conduct for complete school board policy*.

A sample of prohibited articles and equipment is listed below:

- Shock devices, laser pointers, etc.
- Skateboards, hockey sticks, etc.
- Flammable objects
- Electronic devices, etc.
- Sharp or dangerous objects
- Weapons, toy weapons (see WMASD Board policy)
- Illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or any look alike products, medication-see above
- Vape and/or electronic cigarettes
- Fake, movie prop, play or counterfeit money

School Discipline: Violations and Consequences

School discipline is essential for learning. Failure to follow regulations will result in any combination of the following:

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| • Telephone call | • After School Detention |
| • Lunch detention | • Saturday Detention |

- In School Reflection
- Out of school suspension
- Police citation
- Expulsion (longer than 10 days)
- Exclusion from activities/events/athletics
- The more severe the violation; the more severe the penalty.

School violations may include but are not limited to the following list:

- Fighting or assault
- Instigating/Videotaping a fight/negative
- Bullying/Harassment
- Sexual Harassment
- Inappropriate use of technology
- Causing a school disruption
- Insubordination
- Tardy to school or class
- Cutting class/truancy
- Dress code violations
- Verbal, written threats
- Misconduct, disobedience, disrespect
- School bus/bus stop violations
- Forging school documents
- Obscene language or gestures
- Stealing/Vandalism
- Violations to Electronic Device policy
- Smoking/possession or use of tobacco
- Vaping/electronic cigarettes
- Drug policy violation, including medicines not approved by the nurse
- Use or possession of drugs/alcohol/look alike products
- Possession or threatened use of a weapon including look-a-likes
- Inappropriate displays of affection
- Any offense deemed inappropriate by administration

Exclusions from School

A. Exclusions affecting certain exceptional students shall be governed by SS13.62 and 341.91.

B. Exclusion from school may take the form of suspension or expulsion.

1. Suspension is exclusion from school for a period of 1 to 10 consecutive school days.
 - a. Suspensions may be given by the principal or person in charge of the public school.
 - b. No student shall be suspended until the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond. Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when it is clear that the health, safety or welfare of the school community is threatened.
 - c. The parents will be notified when the student is suspended and receive written notification via U.S. mail.
 - d. When the suspension exceeds 3 school days, the student and parent shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing consistent with the requirements set forth.
 - e. Suspensions may not be made to run consecutively beyond the 10-school day period.
 - f. Students shall have the responsibility to make up exams and work missed while being disciplined by suspension and shall be permitted to complete these assignments within guidelines established by the board of school directors. Failure to make-up work will result in an "F" grade for that assignment.
2. Expulsion is an action that may only be administered by the Board of School Directors. An expulsion is a penalty that exceeds the 10-day out of school suspension from the building principals. Expulsion is a very serious action taken by the school district. An expulsion hearing is a legal action and may require the parent to hire an attorney. No student has the right to interfere with the education of his/her fellow students. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of students, teachers, administrators, and all involved in the education process. Students who are less than 17 years of age, are still subject to the compulsory school attendance law, even though expelled, and must be provided an education.

C. The following offenses shall lead to the initiation of expulsion proceedings:

1. Assault on School District Personnel.
2. Possession, threatened use, or actual use of a weapon on West Mifflin Area School District property, see Weapons Policy.
3. When in flagrant and repeated violation of his/her responsibilities upon the recommendation of the principal.
4. When in violation of the Board Policy regarding The Use of Drugs by Students as follows:

A student shall not knowingly possess, use, transmit, sell or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, anabolic steroids, marijuana, alcohol or intoxicant of any kind or **look alike** (stimulants or depressants only). Use of drug authorized for the student by a medical prescription from a registered physician shall not be considered a violation of this rule.

Further, a student shall not knowingly use patent medications and/or other drugs (e.g. cough medicine, aspirin, no-doze, etc.) other than for their intended purpose and in accord with the dosage indicated on or within the manufacturer's point of sale container. Lastly, a student shall not transmit or sell patent medicines or other drugs.

***Responsibilities as outlined in Section 12.2 Student Rights and Responsibilities, PA Code Title 22, Educator. This policy will govern student conduct:**

- a. On the school grounds during and immediately before or immediately after school hours;
 - b. On the school grounds at any time when the school is being used by any school group;
 - c. On the school bus or at the school bus stop;
 - d. Off the school grounds at any school activity, function or event;
 - e. Off the school grounds going to or from school, any school activity, function or event.
5. Anabolic Steroids-Specific penalties: Act No. 93 of 1989 requires the following minimum penalties for any violation of the foregoing drug policies involving anabolic steroids:
- (1) For a first violation, suspension from school athletics for the remainder of the season.
 - (2) For a second violation, suspension from school athletics for the remainder of the season and for the following season.
 - (3) For a third violation, permanent suspension from school athletics.

No student shall be eligible to resume participation in school athletics unless there has been a medical determination that no residual evidence of steroids exists. The Board may require participation in any drug counseling, rehabilitation, testing or other program as a condition of reinstatement into a school athletic program.

A PARENT/GUARDIAN MUST ACCOMPANY THE STUDENT BEFORE HE/SHE IS READMITTED TO SCHOOL.

D. Any student that is excluded from school will have the opportunity to make up the work missed under the following guidelines:

1. The student will receive a daily failing grade in each subject during the exclusion.
2. All work that is missed, that must be made up shall be supplied to the office for delivery to the student.
3. Upon receipt of the work that subject teacher will correct and give credit for the work received and

remove the failing grade from their grade book.

4. Any student who has been expelled as a result of a board hearing may be directed to attend an alternate education program for one semester. After the semester an evaluation of the student's progress in the alternative program will be determined. If the administration recommends to the board that the student is to be placed in regular classes, he will be placed in regular classes on a probationary basis. Any further violations of the district's discipline policy can warrant permanent expulsion and permanent exclusion to the alternative program.

Racial and Ethnic Intimidation

It is the policy of the West Mifflin Area School District that all employees and students should enjoy a working and learning environment free from all forms of discrimination, including racial and ethnic intimidation.

There is hereby established a policy strictly prohibiting all forms of racial and ethnic intimidation in any work area, learning area, activity area or any other place under the permanent or temporary control of the West Mifflin Area School District, or toward any administrative or professional staff member, full or part-time employee, contracted services employee, job applicant, visitor, student, aide or volunteer of the West Mifflin Area School District.

All persons associated with this school system, including, but not necessarily limited to, the Board, administration, the staff and students, are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from racial and ethnic intimidation. Any person who engages in racial or ethnic intimidation while acting as a member of the school community will be in violation of this policy. Appropriate sanctions shall be applied against all proven offenders of this policy.

Report Cards

Report Cards will be available via the parent portal every 9 weeks. Each course will receive a letter grade. Parents are expected to review and discuss their report card with their child. After discussing the grades and comments on the report card with their child, parents may wish to follow with a conference with the teacher. Simply call the student's guidance counselor to make an appointment.

School Closings/Delays/Emergencies

In the event that there is inclement weather or a mechanical breakdown, school may be closed. If no report is heard, it can be assumed that school will be in session. Check the West Mifflin school website, watch the TV and/or listen to the radio. The district will also contact each parent/guardian with any school closings/delays or vital emergency information. Please make sure to keep an accurate phone number on file with the office.

School Events

The PTSA will sponsor numerous dances this school year. Students who purchase a membership with the PTSA will be charged \$1 to attend each dance. Students who do not join the PTSA will be charged \$5 for each dance. Tickets for the dances will be sold during lunch in the school cafeteria on Thursday, and Friday of the week of the dance. NO tickets will be sold at the door. Support groups may also sponsor dances during the school year and will set prices for the dance. **Dances are 6:30-8:30 PM.** Requirements also include, not being habitually truant, receiving an OSS during the 9 week period of the dance, 5 days of ISR during the term.

Students must remain in good standing with the principal's office to be eligible to attend school dances/activities/events/trips. Students suspended from school will not be permitted to attend the upcoming dance/activity. Students with flagrant/consistent code of conduct violations may be excluded from any/all dances/activities/events. Team requirements for behavior and academics must be met for all activities. Students violating school rules at the dance/activity will be sent home and will not be permitted to attend the next school dance/activity. Additional disciplinary action may also be imposed. Students are subject to all eligibility requirements listed under athletics/ extracurricular activities. Students must maintain a 1.5 GPA to be eligible to attend dances/activities. Eligibility rules also apply to the 8th grade dance at the end of the year. Students suspended more than six days will not be permitted to attend the 8th grade dance. All eligibility requirements will be reviewed prior to the event.

School Safety and Property – Lockers

Lockers are school property assigned to individual students. Students may not share a locker. The administration of WMAMS has the right to search a student's locker when there is reasonable suspicion that it is being used for purposes other than storage of school materials. Lockers must be locked. All students will be issued a school combination lock. Personal locks are not acceptable. **A LOST LOCK COSTS \$7.00.**

Each Grade level will determine locker usage that will best meet the needs of the students' and their schedules. Locker usage will be outlined during the first day of school and the rules set forth by the grade levels will be reinforced by the office.

School Safety and Property – Searches

The policy concerning criminal activity by students on school property, search of the student or a locker, and periodic searches of student lockers, shall be as follows:

1. It is prohibited for any students, while at school, to possess on his or her person or in a locker/storage or to use in any manner or to sell any substance, item, or device, the use, possession, or sale of which is a crime under the laws of Pennsylvania.
2. Any building administrator or teacher who reasonable suspects that a student has in his possession on the school property or sells or uses on school property an illegal material, shall proceed as follows:
 - a. Since by law an administrator or teacher stands in the place of a parent to the students in the school, the matter or incident should be referred immediately to the building principal with an explanation of what facts led to the conclusions that the student possess, uses, or sells illegal matter.
 - b. The principal shall then confront the student privately with the facts as related to the principal and ask the student to consent to a search of his person and/or locker.
 - c. The principal shall be persistent in his request, and if necessary, insist upon the search.
 - d. If the student uses force to resist, the police should be called.
 - e. When a search is made of a student or his/her locker, at least one other teacher or school official should be present.
 - f. Prior to a locker search, the District will make every effort to notify and given an opportunity for

students to be present. However, where school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the locker contains materials which pose a threat to the health, safety and welfare of students in the school, student lockers may be searched without prior warning even if the student is not notified or present.

g. Student lockers and storage space will also be subject to “canine sniff search.”

h. If illegal material is found, it should be confiscated, marked in some identifying manner in the presence of the student, if possible, and that of at least one other teacher, and then held in a safe place for delivery to the police. An attempt should then be made by the principal to notify the student’s parents.

i. If illegal material is found and marked, the police should be called immediately and advised of the matter and all material should be delivered immediately to the police.

3. Unannounced blanket searches of all student lockers may be conducted whenever the principal deems necessary. Any illegal material or evidence of the commission of a crime, shall, after identification, be confiscated and turned over to the police with a complete report.

4. Reasonable suspicion, while difficult of definition, is defined as a conclusion arrived at by a reasonable, prudent, and conscientious mind, from facts at hand; it is not caused by such improper motives as dislike for the student or malice, but only from the facts which are known. If the logically, rationally and in exercise of good sense, lead a reasonable, prudent, and discreet person to conclude that a student has legal material on school property or on his person, but there must be a fair and conscientious consideration of only the facts that are known.

5. All school personnel shall cooperate with the police in every manner possible in carrying out this policy.

School Safety and Property – Video Surveillance Cameras

All students, parents and staff are advised that as a public-school facility, students, staff, parents and building visitors do not have a right to expect privacy in connection with their actions and activities while in, on, or about the school facilities. In an effort to increase school security, provide safety for students, staff and building visitors, and to reduce vandalism and theft, many areas of the Middle School, both internal and external shall be subject to observation and monitoring by video cameras. The tapes of such observations shall be available for use by the school district, school police and administrative staff, if necessary to enforce the law and the provisions of school district policy.

School Safety and Property - Visitors

All visitors will be admitted through the security entrance located in the front of the building.

The school district is responsible for student welfare: during instructional hours of the school day, during instructional hours on district property, in school district vehicles at events before, during and/or after school when directly supervised by school authorities, while at the bus stop in the morning and until they reach home in the afternoon. Therefore, it is vital for students to follow school rules.

Sexual Harassment

It is the policy of the District to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from sexual harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any member of the district staff to harass a student through conduct or communications of a sexual nature as defined: Sexual harassment shall consist of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when made by any member of the school staff to a student, when made by any member of the school staff to another staff member or when made by any student to another student when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made wither explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or education, or when
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic or employment decisions affecting that individual, or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic or professional performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive employment or education environment.

Sexual harassment, as defined above, may include, but is not limited to the following: verbal harassment or abuse; pressure for sexual activity; repeated remarks to a person, with sexual or demeaning implications; unwelcome touching; suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, job, etc.

Any person who alleges sexual harassment by any staff member or student in the district may use the district's complaint procedure or may complain directly to his/her immediate supervisor, building principal, guidance counselor or other individual designated to receive such complaints. Filing of a complaint or otherwise reporting sexual harassment will not reflect upon the individual's status nor will it affect future employment, grades or work assignments.

The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the accused, will be respected consistent with the district's legal obligations, and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and to take corrective action when this conduct has occurred. A substantiated charge against a staff member in the district shall subject such staff member to disciplinary action, including discharge. A substantiated charge against a student in the school district shall subject a student-to-student disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion, consistent with the student discipline code.

Student Assistance Program (SAP)

The purpose of the Student Assistance Program (SAP) is to identify students who are experiencing significant personal problems that may place their academic success at risk. Examples of problems might include: substance use (drug/alcohol), depression, suicidal thoughts, and other crisis situations. The goals of the SAP are to develop an atmosphere of trust in which students will seek help from support team members; to assure students that problems are resolvable with help from professionals; and to acquire necessary counseling services for students in need before problems reach a crisis level. Assistance is always available by visiting the School Social Worker, Guidance Counselor, or by contacting a team member.

Student of the Month

The PBIS Middle School Team coordinates a Student of the Month program that coordinates with the PBIS lesson plans and the acronym "PRIDE (Participation, Responsibility, Integrity, Dedication and Empathy)" Participation; Responsibility; Integrity; Dedication & Empathy. The teachers make a nomination each month by grade level teams and the selected students receive a lunch and certificate.

Terroristic Threats/Acts

See *WMASD Code of Conduct for complete school board policy*. Recognizing the danger that these threats and actions present to students and staff the school board acknowledges the need for immediate and effective action.

When evidence exists, the following guidelines are considered:

- immediate disciplinary action
- contacting Superintendent
- referral to police dept.
- recommendation for expulsion

Telephone

The nurse and office phones are to be used for OFFICIAL business. Student use of the telephone is restricted to emergencies first discussed with a staff member. **No student is permitted to use their cell phone during the school day to call home-you will be subject to disciplinary action.**

Testing

The PSSA and Algebra Keystone testing dates are listed below. PSSA data is used as a summative assessment of instruction. The Keystone is the end of the year Algebra exam. The dates indicate the time period when the test must be given. Exact testing dates are yet to be determined. Please make a note of these dates and avoid the scheduling of any vacations, doctor appointments, or early dismissals. Attendance is critical during this time period.

Testing Schedule will be provided on the district website.

Textbooks/Electronic Devices

All textbooks/devices are owned by the school district and are loaned free of charge. The student is responsible for their care and return. Disfiguring or serious damage of an item will cost the student the price of replacing the item, or the price of repairing. Although calculators are available for student use, the math department encourages students to purchase their own Texas Instrument Model TI 30X IIS.

Title IX

It is the policy of the WMASD not to discriminate on the basis of sex, handicap, age, race, color, and national origin in its educational and vocational programs, activities, or employment as required by Title IX, Section 504 and Title VI.

Tobacco Use and Possession

Students are prohibited from smoking or using smokeless tobacco in any form while on School District property or during District sanctioned activities. Possession of cigarettes, cigars, pipes, smokeless tobacco, or smoking equipment, vapes or e-cigarettes are also prohibited.

<https://www.boarddocs.com/pa/wmif/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies#>

Use of Metal Detectors

Metal detectors are used daily within the middle school during morning entry on a random or uniform basis. All students are required to be searched and must comply with all school rules during the search or be subjected to disciplinary actions. Students who possess illegal objects as defined by the prohibited item list, will have disciplinary action. Opened containers, sharp objects, unapproved medications will be confiscated. All items must comply with

Code of Conduct. All school visitors must pass through a metal detector before entry. All visitors' bags will be searched. School Board policy states: When the administration has reasonable cause to believe that weapons are in the possession of student(s) or persons on school district property, including grounds, vehicles, buildings, etc., the administration is authorized to use stationary or mobile metal detectors in accordance with the following guidelines: (continued...)

1. Reasonable cause for use of metal detector.
2. Conducted by the administration or his/her designee.
3. In the presence of witness designated by the administration.

Hand held metal detector shall be administered by persons of the same sex as the student unless special circumstances dictate otherwise. In the event of a student or person on school district property refusing to cooperate in scanning procedures, the appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, including involving parent or law enforcement officer. In the event of the presence of a weapon, the procedures identified in the West Mifflin Area School District weapons policy is to be followed.

Valuables

To prevent loss or theft, valuables of any kind should not be brought to school. This includes electronic devices (cell phones, air pods, headphones), jewelry, clothing, and other articles or equipment that the student wears, carries in book bags, or stores in his locker. The safest place for your valuables is in your home. The school does not assume the responsibility for lost/stolen valuables.

Weapons Policy

Possession of a weapon or "look-alike" weapon by students, employees or visitors is prohibited in any West Mifflin Area School District building or on any District grounds. In addition, weapons or "look-alike" weapons are prohibited at District or building-sponsored functions, activities or events held on or off school grounds. Refer to Policy 218.1 for further information. <https://www.boarddocs.com/pa/wmif/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies#>

Title 1

We are a Title I school, meaning, we receive federal funding to supplement our programs to help children. Our schools run a School wide program (SWP) so that we can use the funding to enrich the academic experience for all children within the school. Each year, we will hold meetings to discuss the SWP and our plans to help children learn. As a parent you are entitled to specific rights, such as the Right to Know explained in this section of the handbook. We also value your feedback. At our meetings, we will ask for your input as to how to improve our program. Your feedback is very important to us as we work together to maximize your child's education.

Title I Complaint Resolution Policy

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) legislation requires State Educational Agencies (SEAs) to adopt written procedures for “receiving and resolving any complaint alleging violations of the law in administration of programs.” In accordance with this legislative requirement, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) has also required Local Educational Agencies (LEAs (Local Education Agency)) to adopt written procedures for resolving complaints filed.

Definition

A “complaint” is a written, signed statement filed by an individual or an organization. It must include:

- a) A statement that a school has violated a requirement of federal statute or regulation that applies to Title I.
- b) The facts on which the statement is based.
- c) Information on any discussions, meetings, or correspondence with a school regarding the complaint.

Complaint Resolution Procedures

1) **Referral** – Complaints against schools should be referred to the District’s Federal/State Programs Office:

Brian Plichta- Federal/State Programs Director
91 Commonwealth Ave
West Mifflin, PA 15122

2) **Notice to School** – The Federal/State Programs Office will notify the school Superintendent and Principal that a complaint has been received. A copy of the complaint will be given to the Superintendent and Principal with directions given for the Principal to respond.

3) **Investigation** – After receiving the Principal’s response, the Federal/State Programs Office, along with the Superintendent, will determine whether further investigation is necessary. If necessary, the Federal/State Programs Director and the Superintendent may do an onsite investigation at the school.

4) **Opportunity to Present Evidence** – The Federal/State Programs Director may provide for the complainant and the Principal to present evidence.

5) **Report and Recommended Resolution** – Once the Federal/State Programs Director has completed the investigation and the taking of evidence, a report will be prepared with a recommendation for resolving the complaint. The report will give the name of the party bringing the complaint, the nature of the complaint, a summary of the investigation, the recommended resolution, and the reasons for the recommendation. Copies of the report will be issued to all parties involved. The recommended resolution will become effective upon issuance of the report.

6) **Follow up** – The Federal/State Programs Director and the Superintendent will ensure that the resolution of the complaint is implemented.

7) **Time Limit** – The period between the Federal/State Programs Director receiving the complaint and resolution of the complaint shall not exceed sixty (60) calendar days.

8) **Right to Appeal** – Either party may appeal the final resolution to the Department of Education. Appeals should be addressed as follows:

**Ms. Susan McCrone, Chief
Division of Federal Programs
Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street, 7th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333**

Right to Know

Parent Right to Know Information as Required by The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) [Section 1112(e)(1)(A)] and Every Student Succeeds Act [Section 1112(e)(1)(A)]

Your child attends one of the elementary schools within **West Mifflin Area School District** which receives Federal Title I funds to assist students in meeting state achievement standards. Throughout the school year, we will be providing you with important information about this law and your child's education. This letter lets you know about your right to request information about the qualifications of the classroom staff working with your child.

We, the West Mifflin Area School District, are very proud of our teachers and feel they are ready for the coming school year and are prepared to give your child a high-quality education. As a Title I school, we must

meet federal regulations related to teacher qualifications as defined in ESEA. These regulations allow you to learn more about your child's teachers' training and credentials. We are happy to provide this information to you.

At any time, you may ask:

- Whether the teacher met state qualifications and certification requirements for the grade level and subject he/she is teaching,
- Whether the teacher received an emergency or conditional certificate through which state qualifications were waived, and
- What undergraduate or graduate degrees the teacher holds, including graduate certificates and additional degrees, and major(s) or area(s) of concentration.

You may also ask whether your child receives help from a paraprofessional. If your child receives this assistance, we can provide you with information about the paraprofessional's qualifications.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) which was signed into law in December 2015 and reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1956 (ESEA) includes additionally right to know requests. At any time, parents and family members can request:

- Information on policies regarding student participation in assessments and procedures for opting out, and
- Information on required assessments that include
 - o subject matter tested,
 - o purpose of the test,
 - o source of the requirement (if applicable),
 - o amount of time it takes students to complete the test, and
 - o time and format of disseminating results.

Our staff is committed to helping your child develop the academic knowledge and critical thinking he/she needs to succeed in school and beyond. That commitment includes making sure that all of our teachers and paraprofessionals meet applicable Pennsylvania state requirements.

If you have any questions about your child's assignment to a teacher or paraprofessional, please contact your child's principal.

Teacher Certification

On December 10, 2015 a new Federal education law was signed by the President. This law, every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), requires schools that receive federal Title I funding ensure that all teachers teaching in a program supported with Title I funding must hold appropriate state certification and licensure requirements, including any requirements for certification obtained through alternative routes to certification.

The new law also requires us to notify parents if their child is being taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher in a Title I school or program who does not yet meet the definition of “appropriate state certification.” It is the intent of every school in the district to employ highly qualified teachers to provide the best education possible for your child. A highly qualified teacher has attained the required certification and demonstrates the skills necessary to help every child attain high academic standards.

It is sometimes necessary to employ and place skilled teachers in positions for which they do not hold required certification due to shortage of qualified teacher candidates. If our school is ever in this situation, to comply with the law, you will receive a letter notifying you after four or more consecutive weeks.

Three-Way School Compact

We will send a copy home for you to sign.

Staff Pledge: We understand the importance of the school experience to every student and our role as educators and models. Therefore, we agree to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of our ability:

- Teach grade level skills and concepts.
- Strive to meet the individual needs of your child.
- Communicate with you regarding your child’s progress.
- Provide a safe, positive, and healthy learning environment for your child.
- Communicate homework and classwork expectations.

Student Pledge:

I realize that my education is important. I know I am the one responsible for my own success. Therefore, I agree to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of my ability:

- Get to school on time every day.
- Complete and return homework assignments on time.
- Be responsible for my own behavior.
- Attend school regularly.
- Respect and cooperate with other students and adults.
- Ask for help when needed.

Parent/Guardian Pledge:

I understand that my participation in my child's education will help his/her achievement and attitude. Therefore, I will continue to carry out the following responsibilities to the best of my ability:

- See that my child attends school regularly and arrives on time.
- Make sure that my child gets enough sleep each night.
- See that my child's homework is completed and returned on time.
- Provide a quiet place/time for my child to do homework.
- Attend my child's school conferences.
- Communicate and work with school staff.

Please sign the next page and return to your child's teacher as indicated.

Thank you.



West Mifflin Area Middle School

2023-2024

This official document certifies that I have received the West Mifflin Area Middle School handbook and Code of Conduct, read its contents carefully, and have had it explained to me in classrooms and at the class code of conduct meeting.

If at any time, I am unsure of the practices, procedures, responsibilities, or expectations as explained in the handbook, I will meet with my guidance counselor, principal or teacher to clarify the matter.

I understand the contents of the handbook, I agree to abide by all of the school rules.

Please sign and return this page to your child’s homeroom teacher.

My child, _____ and I have reviewed the West

(print student name/homeroom)

Mifflin Area Middle School handbook for the 2023-2024 school year.

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____



School Activity

Parental Permission Form

Activity: _____ Date: _____

_____ has our permission to attend this school sponsored activity. We understand that if students have been: Suspended, On the 1.5 list, habitually truant, or an Administrative Decision, student is not permitted to attend.

Parent Signature, Phone Number, and Date



School Activity

Parental Permission Form

Activity: _____ Date: _____

_____ has our permission to attend this school sponsored activity. We understand that if students have been: Suspended, On the 1.5 list, habitually truant, or an Administrative Decision, student is not permitted to attend.

Parent Signature, Phone Number, and Date

Bullying Rubric

Behavior	1 st Offense	2 nd Offense	3 rd Offense or more
Non-Verbal	Meeting with guidance counselor.	Peer mediation or written warning. Student calls parent.	(1 day) After school detention. Student calls parent.

Verbal	Guidance Referral, Peer mediation, (1 day) After school detention. Student calls parent.	(2 days) After school detention. Student calls parent.	Discipline Referral, level II violation of the school policy.
Physical	Discipline Referral, level II violation of the school policy.	Discipline Referral, possible level II/III violation of the school policy.	Alternative probation with a possible alternative setting.
Cyber (during school hours)	Peer mediation, (1 day) After school detention. Student calls parent.	Discipline Referral, level II violation of the school policy.	Discipline Referral, level II violation of the school policy.

West Mifflin Bullying Complaint Form

[Bullying Complaint Form](#)

