

Westgate Elementary School Family Handbook



**9601 220th Street SW
Edmonds, WA 98020
Office: 425-431-7470
www.wge.edmonds.wednet.edu**

Principal - Stephen Hearn - 425-431-7474 HearnS@edmonds.wednet.edu

Office Manager - Michele Hamilton - 425-431-7470, #9 HamiltonM833@edmonds.wednet.edu

Office Assistant - Cynthia Friart - 425-431-7470, #9 friartc647@edmonds.wednet.edu

School Psychologist - Kathleen Mayes - 425-431-1278 mayesk258@edmonds.wednet.edu

School Counselor - - 425-431-1225

Welcome! We are glad you are here! For students and families we serve in our Westgate community, we are the public school staff committed to the success of all students. Our strategic focus on equity, engagement, and excellence aligns with the [Edmonds School District's 5 year strategic plan](#) and ensures an inclusive, connected, student-focused public school experience. Our students become responsible, critically-thinking learners who care for themselves, care for others, and care for the world around them.

We know that when our students feel safe, heard, connected and appreciated in their school community, they are more ready to learn at high levels, and that is what we are all about.

For ALL Westgate students to be ready to learn, they need to:

- Feel safe
- Know what's expected
- Have a sense of belonging and connection

For ALL Westgate students to learn at their fullest potential, they need us to:

- Know their racial, cultural, and gender identity is valued and respected
- Know and teach into their social/emotional strengths and growth areas
- Know and teach into their academic/lifelong learning strengths and growth areas

At Westgate,

- We take care of ourselves,
- We take care of each other, and
- We take care of this place

How do we do this?

We help each other:

- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible
- Be Safe and
- Be Engaged

Positive School-wide Expectations

Westgate Cougars will:	<i>Class</i>	<i>Walkway</i>	<i>Lunchroom</i>	<i>Playground</i>	<i>Assembly</i>
<u>Be Safe</u>	Be Safe (each classroom agrees on what it will look like)	Keep a calm body to yourself	Sit facing the table	Use equipment appropriately	Quickly respond to quiet sign

<u>Be Responsible</u>	Be Responsible (each classroom agrees on what it will look like)	Walk quietly on sidewalks and in the hallways	Clean up	Play by the rules	Be an active participant
<u>Be Respectful</u>	Be Respectful (each classroom agrees on what it will look like)	Greet each other	Use manners	Solve small problems	Appropriate applause
<u>Be Engaged</u>	Be Engaged (each classroom agrees on what it will look like)	Keep eyes forward	Quietly eat	Include others	Actively listen and participate when appropriate

Our positive school-wide expectations are intentionally taught and reinforced school-wide. Be safe, be respectful, be responsible and be engaged is designed to support and increase students' academic success and behavioral skills. It is a school-wide plan that helps our students reach important social and learning goals. We look for the positive first and encourage prosocial behavior with immediate, frequent, and explicit feedback.

We practice these expectations at all times and in these places:

- In the classroom
- On the playground
- In the cafeteria
- In the library
- In the gymnasium
- In the hallways
- EVERYWHERE!

We need the support and cooperation of families to effectively help each student reach their fullest potential. We are asking families to play a major role in assisting us with school discipline and teaching responsibility. When students see that families support their best efforts, they are given a real incentive to strive for excellence. Please support us by having your children in school on time and by reinforcing positive behavior at school and home. We will keep parents informed of student responsibility and efforts through conferences, report cards, phone calls, and notes.

If there is a significant recurring discipline issue, families will be asked to help staff work with the child to learn an alternative set of behaviors. By working together, families and staff can help the student learn behaviors that will increase opportunities for success.

Positive Supports for Students:

- Focus on building community and sense of belonging
 - Clear schoolwide and classroom expectations
 - Positive feedback and reinforcement of expectations
 - Adult support including administration, office staff, paraeducators and counselors
-

The driving questions for all students at ALL levels of discipline: What are you going to do to make it right? What are you going to do to make sure it doesn't happen again?

Discipline:

When students' attitudes or behavior cause a problem, we will implement the following procedures.

Level 1: *Students and staff work it out.*

Examples of Level 1 behaviors may include:

- **Verbal disruptions**
- **Interrupting the learning environment**
- **Refusing to complete assignments**
- **Inappropriate language**

The focus of action is to help the student make better choices. Consequences will focus on doing something to correct the problem and will be done by the student. Consequences may include: a written and/or verbal apology, loss of privileges, conference with student.

Level 2: *Students, staff and families work it out.*

Examples of Level 2 behaviors may include:

- **Chronic Level 1 behaviors**
- **Disrespectful words and actions**
- **Leaving the classroom without permission**

If the problem continues, the teacher will contact the family to discuss the issue. A meeting may also be arranged with family, student and teacher to discuss and decide on a plan of improvement for the student.

Level 3: *Students, staff, families and administration work it out.*

Examples of Level 3 behaviors may include:

- **All unsafe physical behaviors such as slamming doors, throwing furniture, screaming, etc.**
- **Hitting, pushing, and/or other aggressive physical behaviors towards others**
- **Inappropriate language - profanity, threatening language**

At this point, staff will implement consequences and parents/guardians will be contacted. The principal/designee will meet with staff, family and students to implement a plan to change the behavior of the child.

Level 4: *Students may be given school suspension or suspended from school.*

Examples of Level 4 behaviors may include:

- Possession of weapons, drugs, alcohol
- Immediate or continuing danger to self or others
- Ongoing intimidation, bullying and/or harassment
- Excessive physical and/or verbal aggressions

Family will be contacted immediately and must meet with administration and staff. Exceptional misconduct may result in immediate suspension.

BELL SCHEDULE - updated for fall 2023 hours

<u>FULL DAY</u>	<u>FRIDAY EARLY RELEASE</u>	<u>FAMILY CONFERENCE DAYS and last day of school</u>
8:20 Breakfast open 8:45 First bell 8:50 <i>Classes begin</i> 3:20 <i>Dismissal</i>	8:20 Breakfast open 8:30 Arrival/Patrol begins 8:45 First bell 8:50 <i>Classes begin</i> 2:05 <i>Dismissal</i> School lunch is provided, except for the last day of school.	8:20 Breakfast open 8:45 First bell 8:50 <i>Classes begin</i> 11:50 <i>Dismissal</i> School lunch is provided, except for the last day of school.

ACCIDENTS OR ILLNESS

If a child is injured at school, our staff members trained in first aid will provide treatment. Our school nurse is not in our building full time, but is available as needed for consultations, care, and communications. If we believe it is necessary, we will call 911 for emergency aid assistance. The family will be notified immediately and if we cannot reach the family, we will notify the emergency contact you provide in Skyward.

If your child becomes ill at school, staff will assess the situation and determine if the student needs to go home. Per health guidelines and well-being, students who have vomited, experienced diarrhea or a fever must be sent home, and **stay home a minimum of 24 hours without further symptoms** before returning to school.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL (updated for fall 2023)

School hours for students are from 8:50 am to 3:20 pm Monday - Thursday. Friday Early Release schedule school hours are from 8:50 am to 2:05 pm. Students should not arrive prior to 8:30, unless they are eating breakfast. At 8:30, students line up with their class in their designated area. During dismissal, families please wait in the designated meeting area outside, or drive through the pick up line.

ATTENDANCE

The Compulsory Attendance Law of the State of Washington requires accountability from parents and schools regarding student attendance. The law, named The Becca Bill, helps schools achieve improved school attendance and the reduction of unexcused absences and tardies.

EXCUSED ABSENCES AND TARDIES

Under district policy, an excused absence or tardy in one which the family, by call or note, presents an acceptable reason for non-attendance within two days of the child's return.

Acceptable reasons include:

- Illness
- Medical, Dental, or other that cannot be scheduled outside of the school day
- Recognized religious observances
- Family emergency, such as funeral or birth
- A prearranged absence by completing a form in office and approved by the administrator

These criteria guide schools in determining what is an excusable absence or tardy. It is important to note that a parent simply excusing a child's absence or tardy does not make it excused under district policy and state law. Not included are absences or tardies for reasons that may be detrimental to student learning. Absences above 10 days may not be excused without a note from a physician. If your child has excessive absences, excused or unexcused, you will receive a request to meet with administration.

FAMILY VACATIONS

We know that all family vacations may not fall during scheduled breaks and may require time away from school. Families will need to complete a Vacation Approval Request Form which can be found in the office or sent home upon request.

EARLY DISMISSALS

We discourage early dismissals during school hours, but understand that sometimes a child may have a doctor, dental or other appointments that cannot be scheduled outside of school hours. Please come to the office to sign out your student. Please allow for extra time as your student may be at recess or in a specialist class and it may take longer to gather their backpack. Children will only be released to parent, guardian, or other adults who are designated as emergency contacts on the registration forms. If someone not on those lists will be picking up your child, we must be notified in the office.

AFTER SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

Anytime your child is leaving campus in a way that is different than usual, please call the main office 425-431-7470, option 9 with the details of the change, especially if it's a change from your morning plan. If you are planning ahead, email the teacher and they will inform the office or vice versa. If a student needs to ride a different bus, a note from the Office is required and must be requested to the office/teacher by a parent or guardian and presented to the bus driver. Please do not email the teacher any last minute changes, as teachers do not always have the ability to actively check email during the school day.

AFTER SCHOOL SOCIAL PLANS AND INVITATIONS

Social plans between students must be arranged and approved by families before students arrive at school. Students may not come to the office after school and make calls to arrange activities. The office requests a written note or parent communication(email/phone) when students accompany other students home. Invitations to social events may only be distributed at school if an invitation is extended to every student in the class. If a family chooses to invite only some students to an event, those must be delivered outside of school and school hours.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

The Food Service Department of the Edmonds School District is a centralized food system. Students eat lunches in the gym or the classroom depending on the grade. Menus are provided online each month, and can also be found on the Edmonds School District mobile app. Families can pay for lunch with cash, check, or card in the office, or online at the Edmonds School District website. You can also check your child's meal balance on the website.

Free and Reduced lunch application forms are available in the office. To maintain privacy and confidentiality, students qualifying for free and reduced lunch use the same card system as all students. We encourage students to memorize their lunch number, as it will be the same throughout their schooling in the ESD. Free and Reduced Lunch Applications need to be completed every school year in September when the children return to classes.

[Edmonds School District Wellness Policy](#)

BICYCLES

Students in grades 3-6 are allowed to ride bicycles or scooters to school. Riders must wear a safety helmet and obey traffic rules. It is the families' decision whether or not their child has enough skill and judgment to ride safely. The school assumes no responsibility for bicycles or scooters that are brought to school. Bikes and scooters must be walked while on campus at all times, and locked up at the bike rack during the day.

BUSES

Students riding district buses to and from school are expected to wait in their designated bus line before boarding. Drivers will instruct students regarding bus rider rules. If you have any

questions regarding bus transportation, schedules, stops, drivers, or behaviors, please contact our Transportation Department at 425-431-7230.

CELL PHONES/SMART WATCHES

Smart watches are okay at school as long as they are being used as a watch. If students are using the device like a cell phone for texting, calling, emailing, or web based activities, then the smart watch (just like a cell phone) needs to be turned off and left in their backpack during school hours.

COMMUNICATION PROCESS

Communication is essential for successful relationships. To that end, we will use the following guidelines for communication. Questions and feedback are important in the continuous improvement process. It is important that we have this conversation in a respectful, civil manner. Even when we disagree, it is important that we work hard to be role models for our students about how conflicts are resolved in a positive manner.

First, please contact the staff member directly responsible for the issue you have a concern about. Be as clear as possible about what information you need or what outcome you would like. If you continue to be dissatisfied with the outcome, please contact the administration. If there is a district level concern, or you are not satisfied with the result of your meeting with administration, please contact the Edmonds School District office.

DRESS STANDARDS

We encourage full expression of our personalities and cultures. With that in mind, we also take into consideration health and safety. We expect students to:

Be Safe: Clothing should be safe for students throughout school. Open-toe shoes can lead to injuries on the playground, so students should wear closed toe shoes at all times. Students should not wear masks that have the potential to impair their vision.

Be Respectful: Clothing should not have inappropriate language or references. Hats/hoods in class are at the discretion of the teacher.

Be Responsible: Students are asked to follow the [district's dress code policy](#).

Be Engaged: Clothing should not cause a disruption to the learning environment.

FAMILY TRANSPORTATION

If you are driving your student to or from school, please note the bus only area in the front of school. To avoid congestion, please drop off and pick up students in the drive through area only, pulling all the way forward. Entry to our car drop off and pick up area is from Northbound 96th Ave SW only [Click here](#) for specific drop off/ pick up instructions.

GRADING/CONFERENCES

Common grading standards and expectations exist within a grade level and are compatible with adjacent grade levels. Students are made aware of expectations and receive feedback about their progress throughout the year. Formal reports to students and parents are scheduled two

times each year. All teachers are prepared to provide informal information as needed and will send home a written explanation of their grading policies and procedures in the fall.

Family conferences are a vital link in effective family-teacher communications. Formal conferences will be held with families in October and informal conferences may be called by either families or teachers whenever necessary. We encourage families to contact the teacher at any time during the year if they have questions about their child's school performance.

LIBRARY

Students have library class weekly. They are able to check out items for 2 weeks and renew them if needed. 1st-3rd graders can check out 3 items, and 4th-6th graders can check out 4 items. Students can also check out library items when the library is open before school or at recess. They cannot check out more items if they have an item that is overdue by a week or more. Students are responsible for library items checked out on their account. Library items that are lost or damaged must be paid for before the student checks out more items. All items must be returned to the library and fines paid for students.

Fines for damaged or lost library resources are based on prices from library vendors and can be higher than retail due to factors such as special binding, library processing, covers, shipping, and tax. The fine amount often does not completely cover the cost of purchasing and processing a new item, so \$1 extra is requested. **

LOST AND FOUND

Please mark coats and other personal belongings with your child's name. Any articles found on the school grounds are put in one of the lost and found areas. Twice a year we will place items with no name out for students to view, and any unclaimed items will be donated to Clothes for Kids.

MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

Sometimes students need to have medication administered during school hours. District and state policies require us to follow these guidelines:

1. We must have written doctor's instructions and written parent permission, even for over the counter medication. The required forms are available from the school nurse in the office, or online at the district website. Please call us anytime for clarification.
2. Medication must be in the original prescription container, which shows the students name, name of the medication, and the prescribed dosage.

Please contact our school nurse for further information.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

A question we often hear from families is: "Is this allowed at school?" The answer: Only if it is helping your child and/or other children to be safe, respectful, responsible and engaged. Our expectation at Westgate is for students to be focused on learning throughout the school day. If a child brings a toy/electronic device, etc., from home that is distracting from his or her learning

or the learning of others, they will be asked to put it away. Students are responsible for things they bring from home. Students are not allowed to have toys or devices from home out at recess. If you have items that are important to you and your child, are expensive or that you don't want broken or lost, please keep those items at home. The school is not responsible for broken or lost items.

PROHIBITION OF HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, OR BULLYING

The Edmonds School District Board of Directors is committed to a safe and civil educational environment for all students that is free from harassment, intimidation or bullying. "Harassment, intimidation or bullying" means any intentionally written message or image — including those that are electronically transmitted — verbal or physical act, including but not limited to one shown to be motivated by race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation including gender expression or identity, mental or physical disability or other distinguishing characteristics, when an act:

- A. Physically harms a student or damages the student's property;
- B. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
- C. Creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
- D. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Nothing in this section requires the affected student to actually possess a characteristic that is a basis for the harassment, intimidation or bullying. "Other distinguishing characteristics" can include but are not limited to physical appearance, clothing or other apparel, socioeconomic status and weight. "Intentional acts" refers to the individual's choice to engage in the act rather than the ultimate impact of the action(s).

Behaviors/Expressions of Harassment, intimidation or bullying can take many forms including, but not limited to, slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendoes, demeaning comments, drawings, cartoons, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats or other written, oral, physical or electronically transmitted messages or images. This policy is not intended to prohibit expression of religious, philosophical or political views, provided that the expression does not substantially disrupt the educational environment. Many behaviors that do not rise to the level of harassment, intimidation or bullying may still be prohibited by other district policies or building, classroom or program rules.

RAINY DAY RECESS

If students are indoors due to inclement weather, they will engage in cooperative activities in an atmosphere of respect and responsibility. Students will be monitored by a recess staff member and will be expected to follow his/her direction.

SAFETY PATROLS

Safety Patrols assist in providing safe conditions for students before and after school. All students must follow the directions and safety measures practiced by these safety patrols. Patrols will be assigned to crossings at 8:30 am and 3:20 pm daily. We urge you to work with us by instructing your child to take the safest and most direct route to and from school. It is an honor and a privilege for a student to be selected for Westage Safety Patrol. Students must

maintain exemplary behavior and demonstrate academic effort. Patrol is limited to students in the 5th and 6th grade.

SAFE SCHOOLS

The district has established a Safe Schools Alert that is active 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The tipline can be accessed online via our school district website, via text message, or via phone call. It is a fast, effective and safe way to let school officials know about unsafe situations without having to be identified as the source of the information.

SAFE SCHOOLS ALERT Text or Call: 425-551-7393

SKYWARD FAMILY ACCESS

What is Family Access?

Family Access is an easy-to-use website that allows families to access information about their students from any device with Internet access. Family Access allows you to play a more involved role in their student's education and improve communication with the school.

Family Access login page:

<https://www2.saas.wa-k12.net/scripts/cgiip.exe/WService=wedmonds71/seplog01.w>

Login and password for parents can be obtained at your student's school. The link to log in is also on our website.

Families of elementary students can view:

- Attendance
- Fee/Fine Information
- Food Service balances
- Report Cards
- Schedule
- Student Information
- Immunization Record
- Test Scores
- Messages from schools and teacher

STUDENT ALCOHOL/DRUG USE POLICY

The Edmonds School District recognizes that the use/abuse and possession of alcohol, controlled, illegal, addictive, or harmful substance(s), including anabolic steroids, is a societal problem and may represent an impairment to the normal development, well-being, and academic performance of students. To ensure the safety, health, and well-being of all students, the District is committed to the development of a program which emphasizes prevention, intervention, aftercare support, and necessary corrective actions.

The District also recognizes the effects to the school, home, and community resulting from drug and alcohol use/abuse. While the primary obligation to seek assistance rests with the student and their families, school staff shall work with the home and community to develop and implement a comprehensive prevention and intervention program.

TECHNOLOGY USE

Every student is issued a district Chromebook, which they access using a Google for Education account. The district provides two layers of filters. The Internet is filtered as it comes into the district through PaloAlto which protects all users. Students have a secondary filter, called SecURLy, which monitors Chromebooks. This tool also has monitoring services that will send the principal an email if certain words or images are used (especially related to potential harm to self or others). Families can use the Parent Portal in SecURLy to limit the use of some websites during home hours.

Here are the ways we educate and protect students during the school day:

- Teachers are teaching monthly Digital Citizenship lessons at all grade levels. You can access the resources that are being used at each grade level here: [2022/23 Digital Citizenship Curriculum Progression](#).
- Teachers also have access to Hapara which allows them to view students' screens and see their Gmail and Google Drive documents between the hours of 6:30am and 4:30pm. They can close down or block inappropriate use on devices.

TIPS FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

- ★ Arrive at school on time and with all necessary materials
- ★ Have a breakfast with less sugar and more protein
- ★ Listen carefully in class and follow teacher and school wide expectations
- ★ Try your very best and ask for help if needed
- ★ Celebrate and learn from mistakes
- ★ Have a specific time and place for homework and personal practice each day
- ★ Read or have someone read to you 20 minutes every day
- ★ Get 8-10 hours of uninterrupted sleep each night

VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

Our families are welcome in classrooms and we encourage you to visit. However, we require you to arrange your visits in advance as a courtesy to our teachers planning and instruction times. Simply contact the teacher to arrange a visit. Please understand that bringing younger children along while visiting/volunteering is not allowed as it can be a distraction in class. Once at the school, please sign in to the main office and obtain a visitor's badge. If you are not wearing a badge while on campus, we will ask for you to return to the office to sign in. This policy allows us to easily identify adults who are authorized to be on school grounds. Volunteers play a very important role at Westgate. We invite you to become involved in a number of ways from classroom helper to recess helper. In order to volunteer, you must complete an [online volunteer application](#) each year.

WEAPONS

Please click [here](#) for the district policy regarding weapons.

WESTGATE PSO

Westgate boasts an active, engaged and committed group of volunteer families with a long history of providing fabulous family events and enrichment for our students, staff and families. We encourage all families to participate in some way with our PSO. If attending meetings in person, child care is provided. For more information, see the [Westgate PSO website link](#) or the Westgate Family Group on Facebook.