



**WEST DES MOINES**  
**COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

Innovative Spirit. Inspiring Success.

# **JUNIOR HIGH HANDBOOK**

RESOURCES FOR ALL WDMCS  
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL FAMILIES

**2024-25**

## Handbook Language Statement

<b>English</b>	The handbook includes important information about your student's school. You can request oral translation or interpretation of this information. Contact Natalie French, WDMCS ESOL Director, at 515-633-5173 or <a href="mailto:frenchn@wdmcs.org">frenchn@wdmcs.org</a> .
<b>Arabic</b>	يتضمن الكتيب معلومات مهمة حول مدرسة الطالب. يمكنك طلب ترجمة شفوية او كتابية. اتصل ب نتالي فرينج المسؤولة عن برامج متحدثي اللغة الانكليزية كلغة ثانية، على 5156335173 او <a href="mailto:frenchn@wdmcs.org">frenchn@wdmcs.org</a>
<b>Dinka</b>	Athör ë thöŋjë käj anŋic thön/wël thiekiic në biäkde thukul ë menhdun-thukul. Yin lëu ba thiëc në wërë yic ë wël cïke göt cï geriic ka/wälë wël ë thok cï luel cïke wariic e thön kënë. Yuöpë/cöl Natalie French, Bëny ë WDMCS ESOL, në 515-633-5173 ic ka/wälë <a href="mailto:frenchn@wdmcs.org">frenchn@wdmcs.org</a>
<b>French</b>	Le manuel comprend des informations importantes sur l'école de votre élève. Vous pouvez solliciter une traduction orale ou une interprétation de ces informations. Contactez Natalie French, Directrice de WDMCS ESOL, au 515-633-5173 ou <a href="mailto:frenchn@wdmcs.org">frenchn@wdmcs.org</a> .
<b>Hakha Chin</b>	Hi handbook ahhin abiapi mi na fa sianginn kong a tial. Tamdeuh theih na duh holhlet na herh ahcun; Natalie French, WDMCS ESOL Director, at 515-633-5173 or <a href="mailto:frenchn@wdmcs.org">frenchn@wdmcs.org</a> ah request tuah khoh a si.
<b>Somali</b>	Buug-gacmeedkan waxaa ku jira macluumaad muhiim ah oo ku saabsan dugsiga ardaygaaga. Waxaad codsan kartaa turjumaan afka ah ama turjumaada macluumaadkan. Kala xiriir Natalie French, Agaasimaha WDMCS ESOL, lambarka 515-633-5173 ama <a href="mailto:frenchn@wdmcs.org">frenchn@wdmcs.org</a>
<b>Spanish</b>	El manual incluye información importante sobre la escuela de su estudiante. Puede solicitar traducción o interpretación oral de esta información. Comuníquese con Natalie French, Directora de WDMCS ESOL, al 515-633-5173 o <a href="mailto:frenchn@wdmcs.org">frenchn@wdmcs.org</a> .
<b>Swahili</b>	Kitabu cha mwongozo kinajumuisha maelezo muhimu kuhusu shule ya mwanafunzi wako. Unaweza kuomba tafsiri ya usemi au ukalimani wa maelezo haya. Wasiliana na Natalie French, Mkurugenzi wa WDMCS ESOL, katika 515-633-5173 au <a href="mailto:frenchn@wdmcs.org">frenchn@wdmcs.org</a> .
<b>Tigrinya</b>	እቲ ናይ መምርሒ መጽሓፍ ብዛዕባ ቤት ትምህርቲ ተምሃራይ/ሪትኩም ኣገደስቲ ሓበሬታ ዘማለኣ እዩ። ናይዚ ሓበሬታ ናይ ቃል ትርጉም ወይ መስተርጓሚ ክትሓቱ ትኽእሉ ኢኹም። ን ናታሊ ፍረንች (Natalie French)፣ ዳይሬክተር WDMCS ESOL፣ ብ 515-633-5173 ወይ <a href="mailto:frenchn@wdmcs.org">frenchn@wdmcs.org</a> ርኹብ።
<b>Vietnamese</b>	Cẩm nang bao gồm những thông tin quan trọng về trường học của con em bạn. Bạn có thể yêu cầu dịch thuật qua miệng hoặc bằng văn bản thông tin này. Liên hệ với Natalie French, Giám đốc ESOL WDMCS, theo số 515-633-5173 hoặc <a href="mailto:frenchn@wdmcs.org">frenchn@wdmcs.org</a>



**Eddy Cisneros**  
Spanish Family  
Engagement  
P: 515-633-4660

E: [cisnerose@wdmcs.org](mailto:cisnerose@wdmcs.org)



**Angelica Moreno-Rangel**  
Spanish Family  
Engagement  
P: 515-633-4793

E: [morenoa@wdmcs.org](mailto:morenoa@wdmcs.org)



**Abdiel Quiroga**  
Spanish Family  
Engagement  
P: 515-633-5906

E: [quirogaa@wdmcs.org](mailto:quirogaa@wdmcs.org)



**Elizabeth Zúñiga**  
Spanish Family  
Engagement  
P: 515-633-4070

E: [zunigae@wdmcs.org](mailto:zunigae@wdmcs.org)



**Biak Thang**  
Hakha/Burmese Family  
Engagement  
P: 515-633-5729

E: [thangb@wdmcs.org](mailto:thangb@wdmcs.org)

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## **Special Section — West Des Moines Community Schools Districtwide Handbook**

## **West Des Moines Community Schools (WDMCS) Overview**

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### **Mission**

Working in partnership with each family and the community, it is the mission of the district to educate responsible lifelong learners so that each student possesses the skills, knowledge, creativity, sense of self-worth, and values necessary to thrive in and contribute to a diverse and changing world.

### **Vision**

WDMCS will be a caring community of learners that knows and lifts every child. We will inspire joy in learning. Our schools will excel at preparing each student for their life journey.

### **Portrait of a Graduate**

A West Des Moines Community Schools graduate will possess the essential skills and integrity to communicate, collaborate, and solve problems as a confident citizen, embracing our diverse and changing world.

### **Boundaries**

Covering 36.6 square miles, our district boundaries are rather irregular but generally lie:

- north of Warren and Madison County lines,
- south of Urbandale Avenue,
- east of the Dallas County line, and
- west of 63rd Street.

The following is a list of schools in our district that provide — or feed — our secondary schools with students as they progress in their education. These are called “feeder schools.”

- Indian Hills Junior High: Clive, Crestview, Crossroads Park, and Westridge
- Stilwell Junior High: Fairmeadows, Hillside, Jordan Creek, and Western Hills
- Valley Southwoods Freshman High School: serves grade 9
- Valley High School: serves grades 10-12
- Walnut Creek Campus: alternative high school, serves grades 9-12

For information about junior high school boundaries or a map of the district, please visit <https://discover.wdmcs.org/boundaries>.

## About Our Junior High Schools\*

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### **Indian Hills Junior High**

9401 Indian Hills Drive  
Clive, IA 50325  
515-633-4700  
Principal: Dr. Shane Christensen,  
christensens@wdmcs.org  
Assistant Principal: Zac Sinram,  
sinramz@wdmcs.org

### **Stilwell Junior High**

1601 Vine St.  
West Des Moines, IA 50265  
515-633-6000  
Principal: Mitch Kuhnert  
kuhnertm@wdmcs.org  
Assistant Principal: David Perrigo,  
perrigod@wdmcs.org

\*Junior high school principals are supervised by:  
Michelle Lettington  
Associate Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Services  
[lettingtonm@wdmcs.org](mailto:lettingtonm@wdmcs.org)  
515-633-5057

### **Educational Non-Discrimination Statement**

The West Des Moines Community School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, and socioeconomic status in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy, please contact the district's Equal Opportunity Coordinator, Dr. Dau Jok, Executive Director of Culture and Access, [3550 Mills Civic Parkway, West Des Moines, IA 50265](https://www.wdmcs.org/3550); Phone: 515-633-5040; Email [jokd@wdmcs.org](mailto:jokd@wdmcs.org). (Adherence to bona fide occupational/educational qualifications will not be interpreted as discriminatory.)

## Principals' Welcome

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

We welcome you and your student to West Des Moines Community Schools (WDMCS) junior highs. We look forward to working with you to provide the best possible learning environment we can for your student. We are excited about being involved with and guiding you and your student(s) through their seventh and eighth grade years.

You will have numerous opportunities to become involved in the WDMCS junior highs. That involvement is a great way to model to your student the importance of their education. Our parent/guardian-teacher groups provide an opportunity for involvement, as well as a way to stay in tune with what is happening at our school. If you would like to help out in any way, please contact our school.

We, as staff members, realize the high standards the community holds for the schools that serve its young people. We are proud of our school, we appreciate the trust you have placed in us, and we welcome your help and involvement as we maintain the highest academic and social-emotional standards possible.

Sincerely,  
Junior High Administration

Dear Students,

On behalf of the exceptional staff at both junior high schools, we welcome you to a new school year. We are happy that you are here to learn and grow with us! This is an exciting time in your life. We hope to provide you with opportunities that will foster a passion for lifelong learning and fond memories of your time spent with us. Junior high is time for you to become as self-directed and focused as possible as you learn the skills that will prepare you for a successful future. You will discover that you will be more successful as you continuously develop the character traits of being responsible, respectful, and resilient. Everyone is here to help you succeed. We look forward to co-creating a thriving learning environment to co-learn with you, because we believe your lived experiences, gifts, and voices make us better.

We encourage you to become involved in your school community through participation in the many activities available in junior high. Our goal is for each student to be involved in at least one activity, but also for every student to explore as many activities as they wish for a well-rounded experience.

This is going to be a great year! Go Tigers!

Sincerely,  
Junior High Administration

## General School Information

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A hard copy of the handbook is available upon request. In addition, any information linked to content on the WDMCS website can be made available in a hard copy upon request.

## Schedules

### Academic Calendar

The official school district activity calendar (<https://www.wdmcs.org/our-district/calendar>) is your complete reference for district activities and events. The Calendar at a Glance (<https://discover.wdmcs.org/calendar-at-a-glance>) is also available to view or print online. Our website will translate the calendar into Spanish, Arabic, Burmese, Swahili, and Tigrinya.

### Athletic Calendar: <https://valleytigersathletics.com>

- View athletic schedules.
- View directions to athletic events.

### School Hours

- **Regular Schedule** — Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday 7:35 a.m. to 2:35 p.m.
  - Teachers and other staff can be available to help students before and after school.
  - Students arriving before 7:25 a.m. or remaining at school later than 2:50 p.m. must be with a teacher or off school grounds by 3 p.m.
- **Collaboration Schedule** — Wednesday 7:35 a.m. to 1:50 p.m.

### Daily Schedule

- Classes are 45 minutes in length.
- There is a four-minute passing period between classes.
- Occasionally, the schedule will be adjusted to allow for early dismissals, student assemblies, advisory/homeroom schedules, and other activities.

Students must eat at school unless they have received permission from the principal's office to leave the building with a parent/guardian (closed noon hour). Period schedules and lunch schedules for both regular and collaboration days can be found online.

## Attendance

Our role in preparing our students for postsecondary learning, careers, and life is best fulfilled when we are all HERE. We want your student to feel connected and that they belong HERE in WDMCS.

### What is chronic absenteeism?

A student is considered chronically absent if they miss 10 percent of school, which is 18 or more days in a year. This equals only two days a month.

### Why do we need to talk about it?

Research shows consistent attendance:

- helps children reach early academic and developmental milestones,

- helps students develop positive relationships with peers and staff,
- prevents students from falling behind academically,
- connects families to additional community resources, and
- increases graduation rates.

If your child needs to stay home or be late for school, please call the school office before the start of the school day and report your child’s name, homeroom teacher, and reason for the absence or tardiness. If you know of a planned absence, you can report that information through Infinite Campus. View instructions at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/report-absence-online>. If a child is reported absent by the homeroom teacher and the school has not been notified, the secretary or school nurse will contact the home to ensure the child’s safety. In the case of excessive absences, a physician’s note, school nurse, or building administrator’s documentation may be required to excuse the absence. If there is anything our school can do to help your child attend school regularly and on time, please contact your student’s school. Find more attendance resources online at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/HERE>

Students who plan to leave the building at any time during the school day must first report to the office. The office must have written or verbal permission from a parent/guardian for the student to leave.

### **Absence Types**

1. **Excused absence** — Excused absences are illness of the pupil, illness in the family, extremely bad weather, religious observances, medical and dental appointments, etc.
2. **Unexcused absence** — Any absence is considered unexcused until the absence is known and approved by the school.

### **Make-Up Work**

Students should contact their instructor about assignments missed. They will have two days to make up the work for each day of an excused absence, for up to six school days for multiple, consecutive, excused absences. The time allowed for make-up work may be extended at the discretion of the teacher. Students should see teachers in advance of planned absences.

### **Excessive Absences**

We wish to be proactive in reaching out to families regarding excessive absences. In addition to connecting with a family through email, phone, or text, the school will send an automatic letter at 5, 10, and 15 days absent, etc. These letters are generated even when the parent/guardian has excused the student from school. When a student is excessively absent, school administration will work with the parent/guardian and student to address any concerns and create a positive solution.

[Board Policy 501.06 \(Compulsory Attendance\)](#) spells out requirements for student attendance. Attendance is required for a minimum of 148 days, to be met by attendance for at least 37 days each school quarter. Exceptions to compulsory attendance are listed in the policy.

### **Tardies**

Prompt arrival to school and between classes is expected and necessary. Arriving 10-15 minutes before the start time of 7:35 a.m. will make it possible to arrive in class on time. When arriving late to school, it is necessary to report to the main office for a pass.

If students are late to a class after the beginning of the school day, they are to report to that class after reporting to the main office for a pass, and appropriate arrangements will be made with the classroom teacher. Excessive tardiness may result in school administration working with the parent/guardian and student to address any concerns and co-create a positive solution.

## **Nutrition Services**

The WDMCS Nutrition Department participates in the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Nutrition Programs. Our meals and snacks must meet the standard.

### **Nine Schools Automatically Receive Free Meals for 2024-25**

All students who attend the nine schools listed below will receive free meals for the 2024-25 school year. This is made possible through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), a U.S. Department of Agriculture program created to help low-income areas.

- Clive Learning Academy
- Crestview School of Inquiry
- Crossroads Park Elementary
- Hillside Elementary
- Western Hills Elementary
- **Indian Hills Junior High**
- **Stilwell Junior High**
- Valley Southwoods Freshman High School
- Walnut Creek Campus

### **Breakfast**

**Grades 7-12 Cost:** \$2.40 (\$0.30 reduced rate)

**Adults:** \$2.70 (no reduced rate)

- Students can select from a minimum of three entrée choices:
  - alternating main entrée choice;
  - cold breakfast consisting of cereal and toast;
  - yogurt and toast option.
- Assorted flavors of 8 oz. milk.
- Fruit and or vegetable choices including 100% juice.
- Breads/grains in the form of cereal, toast, pancakes, etc., and/or meat or meat alternate.

### **Lunch**

**Grades 7-12 Cost:** \$3.45 (\$.40 reduced rate)

**Adults:** \$5 (no reduced rate)

- Students can select from a hot lunch option, cold lunch option, or a yogurt/granola and string cheese entree kit.

- Choices also include a hot vegetable, cold fruits and vegetables, and their choice of milk (skim, skim chocolate, or 1%).
- Students will pick the meal they would like as they go through the line (no preordering).
- Students bringing lunch from home can supplement their meal with fruits, veggies, and milk (at least three items) from the cafeteria line.

### **A La Carte Items**

School cafeterias also offer a la carte items for purchase at breakfast and lunch. These a la carte items are not part of a lunch and may only be purchased if there are funds in the student’s account for them. The items will not count toward making “complete lunch.”

If you would like to restrict your student from being able to purchase these items, please create a restriction on your student’s account in the family portal at <https://lingconnect.com/main> or call the Nutrition Department at 515-633-5085 to get assistance with adding a restriction.

### **Allergies**

WDMCS promotes a safe and inclusive allergy aware environment for all students. Students with allergies may be entitled to services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Act. Accommodations and/or modifications will be considered and addressed on a case by case basis.

If your student needs diet modifications, a physician needs to complete the form: <https://discover.wdmcs.org/diet-modification>

When completed, return the form to the Nutrition Services Department. Please check with your school nurse for specific information on restrictions and procedures related to allergies.

### **Food Deliveries**

Families can drop off a lunch or school materials when needed at the school office. Please do not deliver food for anyone other than your student, and students are not allowed to order food delivery (UberEats, GrubHub, etc.)

## **Miscellaneous Information**

### **Advisory/Homeroom Groups**

Students are assigned to an adviser group or homeroom called Tiger Time for the school year. These groups of students will be scheduled together periodically to teach the State of Iowa’s five Social Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Other topics will include digital citizenship, decision-making, executive functioning, and goal-setting. Students will also experience Encore which is the junior high system for MTSS (Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports) to support academics, behavior, and SEL through interventions and extensions.

### **Student Fees**

Each student pays a book fee. Students may elect to purchase an activity ticket for regular season

athletic events within the Central Iowa Metropolitan League and a yearbook. A combination lock is provided for the physical education locker. If the lock is lost, the student will be responsible for a replacement cost. Families can contact the building principal if financial assistance is needed.

View current fee list online at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/school-fees>.

### **Lost and Found**

Found articles are to be taken to the office or given to the custodian who will place them where they may be reclaimed. All belongings should be marked with the student's full name. This helps to identify lost articles and increases the chances of their being returned. All articles not claimed within a reasonable time will be given to charitable organizations.

### **Media Center**

The media center is for everyone's use. The teacher librarian will have special classes during which time students will be shown how to use the media center.

Books may be checked out for a period of two weeks unless they have been placed on "reserve" by a teacher for a special purpose. Reserved books may be checked out for one period of study or for overnight use. All other material may be checked out for shorter periods of time. All material must be checked out at the circulation desk.

Students are responsible for the proper care of all materials loaned or checked out. Fines and charges will be made for damaged or lost material. Damaged materials are to be given to the teacher librarian for repair. Lost books are to be paid for by the borrower according to the teacher librarian's price list.

### **Pets/Service Animals**

Student safety and the cleanliness of the building are put at risk when animals accompany their owners for a drop-in visit at school. Other than a few exceptions, pets are not allowed in WDMCS buildings. In keeping with state and federal law, WDMCS recognizes there may be a need for employees or students to use or have access to qualified service animals. Students who need service animals, which are defined by law as "animals that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for persons with disabilities," are welcome to consult with their building administrator.

### **School Supplies**

Buildings will provide a list of supplies which students will need for school. Pencils and paper are used in most classrooms. Students who need assistance with obtaining school supplies can contact their school counselor. Families can contact the building principal if financial assistance is needed.

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## **Communication and Family Involvement**

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### **1:1 Chromebooks**

The Chromebook 1:1 program in WDMCS issues each student in grades PK-12 a Chromebook for use with their academic studies. Chromebooks have become incredibly popular in schools across the

country, largely because of their low cost and ability to meet the needs of students at all grade levels. Tight integration with Google tools such as Docs, Sheets, and Slides as well as the Canvas Learning Management System make Chromebooks the perfect fit for our school district.

District-provided technology resources exist solely for the advancement and promotion of learning and teaching. The use of these resources will be consistent with the district's educational mission and policy, as well as state and federal laws and regulations.

Chromebooks are the property of WDMCS. Students should have no expectation of privacy related to content created, websites searched, or documents saved.

- [Board Policy 605.08 Technology Use By Students](#)

### **Student Responsibilities**

Students who check out a Chromebook provided by WDMCS should be careful to not lose or damage the device.

#### **Helpful Tips**

- Keep Chromebook in its protective case.
- Charge Chromebook each night so it is ready for use at school.
- Avoid keeping the Chromebook in extreme temperatures because it could damage it.
- Be careful when eating or drinking near the Chromebook. Spilling items on it could cause damage.
- Let your teacher know if your Chromebook is not properly working or appears damaged.
- Let your teacher know if you misplaced your Chromebook.
- Do not share passwords or account information with other students.
- Turn in your Chromebook, including your charge cord and protective case, when asked or when you leave WDMCS.

### **Parent/Family Responsibilities**

Parents and families play a critical role in the success in their child's education. Please help support your student by encouraging them to be careful with the device. Fines possibly up to the full replacement cost may be applied if the device is damaged or lost. Please do not use the Chromebook for personal family use.

#### **Helpful Tips**

- Please supervise the student's use of the Chromebook at home.
- Encourage your student to charge the Chromebook each night and keep it in the protective case when transporting it to and from school.
- Please contact the school if the Chromebook is damaged or not properly working. Do not attempt to repair the Chromebook on your own.
- Please discuss the importance of protecting your online identity by not sharing passwords or other personal information with friends and strangers.
  
- Please ensure the Chromebook, including the charging cord and protective case, is returned

when requested or when your student leaves WDMCS.

### **Costs**

There is no fee being assessed up front for your student's use of the Chromebook. Replacement costs are listed below:

- 1:1 Chromebook: no cost to family
- Chromebook Full Replacement: actual cost of replacement at the time of the damage (about \$346; no reduced fee)
- Chromebook Case Replacement: actual cost of replacement at the time of damage or if lost (about \$22, no reduced fee)
- Chromebook Charger Replacement: actual cost of replacement at the time of the damage or if lost (about \$22, no reduced fee)

### **Assessments**

[Board Policy 505.04](#): The WDMCS Board of Education believes that assessment is a planned and integral part of instruction which guides and documents student growth. Assessment is an ongoing process involving students, teachers, and parents/guardians in observation, interaction, and analysis. It consists of both formal and informal measures of individual and group progress.

### **Assessments By Semester**

- September: Fall Screening aMath and aReading
- September: Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Fall Screening Window
- September-November: Iowa Youth Survey, eighth grade only
- January: Winter Screening aMath and aReading
- March-April: SEL Spring Screening Window
- Spring: English Language Learners: ELPA21 (English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century)\*
- Spring: Conditions for Learning Survey
- April: ISASP (Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress)\*
- May: Spring Screening aMath and aReading

\*state-required assessments

### **Surveys**

In order for WDMCS to provide the best service possible for our students and families, it is important that we have reliable data and feedback on which to make decisions. Surveys are one way for our district to obtain this valuable information. WDMCS distributes various student surveys throughout the year. Parents/guardians will be informed of any state-mandated surveys. Parents/guardians may be informed in advance of student surveys and asked to provide written or electronic permission based on guidelines outlined in the [State of Iowa Senate File 496](#).

### **Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) – Viewing Academic Work and Grades**

Canvas is West Des Moines Community Schools' official learning management system. A learning management system (LMS) is a software that helps provide, track, and report on classes and

assignments. Canvas provides parents and students with greater access to their curriculum and learning by housing important student curricular expectations and information. This could include their online textbook, links to resources, homework, videos, assessments, online discussions, and so much more. Learn more about Canvas online at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/canvas>.

### **Change of Address or Telephone Number**

If there is a change of address or telephone number during the school year, parent/guardian(s) or students can make updates through Infinite Campus. This is a helpful online tool WDMCS families can use to access their students' grades, attendance, update contact information, and more.

### **Complaints Regarding School Personnel**

[Board Policy 906.01](#) provides a process for students, parent/guardian(s), and community members to file complaints regarding any district staff member.

### **Effective Grading Practices**

We are committed to and are making strides toward improving our grading practices to ensure each student's grades are a true picture of what they know and are able to do in each course. The purpose of grading is to communicate achievement relative to course standards to students and parents/guardians.

### **How to Sign Up for Our Group Email to Parents/Guardians**

If you wish to receive email communication, please make sure that we have a current email address in Infinite Campus. You may provide this information during registration or at any time during the school year.

### **Infinite Campus — <https://discover.wdmcs.org/infinite-campus>**

The West Des Moines Community Schools uses a student information management system called Infinite Campus. This program increases access to student information for our teachers and administrators. Infinite Campus also allows students and parents/guardians to view some of this information through a secure internet connection.

Parents/guardians can view information about all of their students, including schedules, grades, attendance, health, etc. If you had an Infinite Campus account from a different school district, you will need to create a new one. The information does not transfer from other districts.

### **Updating Information in Infinite Campus**

- Update email address under "Change Contact Info" tab.
- Addresses and phone number updates can be made by contacting the school office.

### **Parent/Guardian-Teacher Organizations**

All parent/guardian-teacher organizations are independent groups who help support the district. WDMCS has no oversight or control over their funds. They collaborate with school administrators to understand and support building goals.



Each school in the district has an active, dedicated parent/guardian-teacher organization. Your membership and active participation is encouraged. Each parent/guardian-teacher organization holds regular meetings throughout the school year. Please check your school newsletter for meeting dates and other information. There are many ways parents/guardians can get involved and connected to the district in addition to joining their school's parent/guardian-teacher organization. Reach out to your school's principal to learn about other opportunities.

Parent/guardian-teacher organizations are encouraged to have a representative join School Community Network (SCN). This group meets several times a year to collaborate with each other. District representatives join some meetings to provide important district information that can be shared with parent/guardian-teacher organization members.

Parents/guardians enter the building through the front door and check in at the office to pick up a visitor badge every time they visit. Please bring your personal identification with you. Examples of personal identification include a state-issued ID, passport, military license, Mexico Consular ID card, and Permanent Resident card. Your ID will be run through a screening process called Raptor. They will also be asked where they will be in the building. This helps school staff understand where individuals are in the event of an emergency. Individuals who do not pass the Raptor screening process will not be allowed into the building.

### **Promotion and Retention System for Junior High**

According to [Board Policy 505.02 \(Promotion and Retention\)](#), promotion practices in the West Des Moines Community Schools will have as their objective the placing of the student in an environment where maximum development will take place.

### **Social Media**

WDMCS is actively involved in social media. The district, WDMCS Community Education, and each school building have Facebook pages. In addition, WDMCS has Twitter and Instagram. See below for each web address.

- **Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/wdmcs> (links to each of the building pages on the "Welcome" tab)
- **Instagram:** [https://www.instagram.com/wdmcs\\_district/](https://www.instagram.com/wdmcs_district/)
- **Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/WDMCS>

Both junior high schools also have Facebook pages:

- Indian Hills: <http://www.facebook.com/wdmindianhills>
- Stilwell: <https://www.facebook.com/wdmstilwell/>

### **Staff Directory**

The district continues to provide ways to assist with communication between school, families, and the community through the internet. Our district website provides a "one-stop shop" staff directory page. This page contains a searchable listing of contact information for our staff, including buildings and email addresses online at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/directory>.

## **Translation and Interpretation Services**

An interpreter, translator, or sign language interpreter can be made available at most district events. In addition, WDMCS will work with families who have vision, auditory, or language needs to effectively communicate important district and student information. Please contact your school at least 48 hours in advance of the event to request these services.

No qualified individual will be excluded on the basis of a disability from participating in a public meeting in the West Des Moines Community Schools. To receive more information or request an accommodation to participate, please contact the School/Community Relations Department at 515-633-5023.

## **Visitors and Volunteers**

WDMCS welcomes visitors and volunteers to its school buildings. Visitors are individuals who come to watch an assembly, eat lunch with their student, or visit their student's classroom. Typically, visitors arrange 24 hours in advance when they wish to meet with a classroom teacher and limit their visits to a short period of time. It is important that they do not interfere with the class in progress or discuss individual concerns when students are present. Young children and/or students must be accompanied by an adult when visiting.

Volunteers are often asked to help with a project at school. There are many choices for volunteers, including classroom assistance, participation in building and activity support groups, and service on districtwide or building committees. You may obtain more information about sharing your time and skills by calling your school office. Volunteers may be subject to additional screening processes.

Both visitors and volunteers enter the building through the front door and check in at the office to pick up a visitor badge every time they visit. Please bring your personal identification with you. Examples of personal identification include a state-issued ID, passport, military license, Mexico Consular ID card, and Permanent Resident card. Your ID will be run through a screening process called Raptor. They will also be asked where they will be in the building. This helps school staff understand where individuals are in the event of an emergency. Individuals who do not pass the Raptor screening process will not be allowed into the building.

Because WDMCS adheres to state and federal laws, all visitors and volunteers on school grounds must comply with the [State of Iowa's Senate File 482](#), which states individuals must use the restroom of their assigned gender at birth. All schools have multi-stall, gender-specific, and individual restrooms available.

## **Websites**

Indian Hills: <https://www.wdmcs.org/indian-hills>

Stilwell: <https://www.wdmcs.org/stilwell>

- View the newsletter and daily announcements.
- View the handbook.

## Student Conduct

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### Beverages

The only beverage students should consume in the hallways and classrooms is water. If students choose to carry a water bottle, it must be a water bottle that will not spill if it is tipped over in a classroom. Beverages other than water (juice, Gatorade, etc.) are only permitted in the cafeteria before school starts and during lunch.

### Cell Phones and Communication

- If there is a family emergency, please contact the school office, and they will reach your student. If there is an emergency at school, we will call the parent/guardian.
- Students may be asked to place their device in a caddy for the duration of the class.
- Cell phone/handheld electronic device usage is only allowed before or after school unless permitted by the teacher. This includes the use of earbuds.
- Smart watches can be worn as long as they are not a distraction.
- If a phone or other device becomes a distraction, a teacher or staff member may keep the device until the end of the day.
- WDMCS is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen cell phones or communication devices.
- To learn more about cell phone privacy, please read [Board Policy 502.09 - Search and Seizure](#)

### Cheating and Plagiarism

Students are expected to produce work to the best of their ability. Work submitted for credit or recognition is to be done by each individual student and must be their own work. Cheating and plagiarism will not be accepted. Students violating academic honesty will lead to parent/guardian communication, disciplinary consequences, and re-teaching of expected behaviors and use of resources. Students will be required to redo assessment evidence under supervision to gain an accurate evaluation of learning related to content standards.

### Student Dress and Appearance ([Board Policy 502](#))

Students and their parents/guardians hold the primary responsibility for what a student chooses to wear to school each day. When a student is comfortable in what they wear, including expressing their individuality and/or personal and family culture, they can better focus on learning. WDMCS expectations for student dress and appearance are based on safety and showing respect for others.

- Students are asked to dress appropriately for the weather, including coats, hats, gloves, and boots. Any family who needs support in obtaining clothing or shoes should contact the school office.
- Shoes must be worn at all times for student safety.
- Clothing or other apparel promoting products illegal for use by minors or displaying obscene material, profanity, or reference to prohibited conduct are not allowed. If worn, a student will be asked to change or be given something different to wear for the day.

School administration will work with the parent/guardian and student to address any concerns and

create a positive solution. Board Policy 502 gives administration final discretion regarding student dress and appearance.

### **Dropping a Course**

Students typically have only the first 10 days of a semester to drop a course without academic consequences. School counselors work with students during registration to find the best course schedule to meet student needs.

### **Homework**

Homework is an integral part of each student's daily agenda. It is expected that the student will spend time beyond the classroom working toward scholastic gains and will develop habits which value academic achievement. Teachers work with students to provide study and homework guides. In addition, After the Bell is an after-school study program available Monday-Thursday. Learn more about After the Bell on either junior high website under the Activities menu . ([Board Policy 606.02: Homework](#))

### **Identification Cards**

Students receive an ID with their photo at the beginning of the school year. They will be required to present their school ID upon request. Students will also need IDs when attending any WDMCS athletic or activity events. Replacement IDs will be made available, if necessary, at no cost.

If a student does not have their ID they may be asked to obtain a temporary ID through the school office. Replacement IDs will be made available, if necessary, at no cost.

In compliance with [Iowa House File 602](#), a crisis support phone number, text number, and website URL will be included on the back of every student ID.

### **Lockers**

Students will be assigned a locker for storing books, supplies, and coats and are responsible for keeping the locker neat and clean. Property should never be put in another student's locker. Lockers use combination locks. Please help remove the temptation of theft. Do not let others know the combination and keep the locker locked at all times.

Do not bring large sums of money or very valuable articles to school. Students should always keep anything of value (purses, calculators, etc.) in their personal possession.

The locker should receive good care so it will protect books and other personal belongings. Periodic locker checks and clean-outs will be conducted during the year. Students are to use the locker they have been assigned or face disciplinary consequences or loss of locker privileges.

### **Parking Regulations**

Students who are able to provide the following are eligible to park in the school parking lot or a nearby street:

- a valid driver's permit
- a current and valid vehicle registration for all vehicles (including mopeds) which may be parked on school property.

Students who wish to drive to school can complete a WDMCS form online. Parking spaces are based on availability. If the parking lot is full, students will need to find nearby street parking. Learn more:

- Indian Hills website: <https://indianhills.wdmcs.org>
- Stilwell website: <https://stilwell.wdmcs.org>

WDMCS seeks to cultivate a culture of belonging and inclusion. All students parking on school property are expected to adhere to [Board Policy 502.05 Freedom of Expression](#).

### **Permanent Markers**

Permanent markers are not required for any class. These items may be confiscated by staff members. Please do not bring them to school.

### **Student Behavior ([Board Policy 503.01 Discipline](#))**

District students are expected to be respectful of the rights of others and comply with school and district rules and policy regarding behavior. We believe each student deserves the right to a fair and appropriate education in which race, ethnicity, culture, religion, and abilities will be valued, celebrated, and used as a vehicle during academic instruction.

We are dedicated to being proactive and restorative in our efforts to implement practices that aim to keep our students in class, receiving access to instruction, and being provided the support to succeed. Practices that are restorative in nature (repairing the harm to the victim and the school community caused by a student's misconduct) will be given first consideration to remediate offenses.

Likewise, we will identify and correct practices that threaten to perpetuate gaps between discipline, achievement, and access to educational opportunities that benefit students. Students may be disciplined for conduct, acts, or behaviors which disrupts the orderly and efficient operation of the school or school activity and the rights of other students to learn and participate in school activities. Students are subject to this policy while on school premises, while using school-provided transportation, while attending or engaging in school-sponsored activities, and while away from school grounds.

Students are also expected to conduct themselves respectfully and responsibly regarding public displays of affection. Prolonged embraces, kissing, fondling, or other inappropriate physical contact is not allowed. Overt public displays of affection may result in school administration working with the parent/guardian and student to address any concerns and co-create a positive solution.

Each junior high school utilizes Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to set and maintain high standards of behavior for its students. PBIS includes instruction, common expectations, and reinforcement for demonstrating appropriate behaviors. Teachers also work with students to help them identify emotions so they can work on managing stress, impulse control, and

learn to develop and maintain positive relationships. We believe as students develop strong social and emotional skills, we will see growth in their positive behavior and connections with others.

## **Safety and Health**

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### **Bicycles/Rollerblades/Roller Shoes/Scooters/Skateboards**

- We recommend wearing bicycle helmets.
- Bicycles should be walked on school property and parked in the bike racks.
- Bicycle locks are encouraged.
- The school district is not responsible for students riding bicycles to and from school and assumes no responsibility for bicycles on the school grounds.

For safety reasons, rollerblades, roller shoes, scooters, and skateboards are not allowed on school property.

### **Communicating Student Safety Concerns**

WDMCS is committed to fostering an equitable and affirming learning environment in which each student and staff is treated with dignity, respect, and fairness. Because we prioritize creating a healthy learning environment for each student, we want to know if a student is or perceives bullying or harassment. Please reach out to your student's teacher, counselor or school administrator to express your concerns. If you do not believe these steps resolved the situation, a helpful next step is to submit a complaint form. This form can be found in [Board Policy 502.02, Anit-Bullying/Harassment](#).

If other safety concerns arise, please contact the school and ask to speak with an administrator or counselor. If the concern is urgent, call 911.

### **Safety Drills**

WDMCS conducts emergency drills throughout the school year so that students and staff are aware of emergency protocols and procedures. Each school in our district performs tornado, lockdown, evacuation, ELF (Evacuate, Lockdown, Fight), and fire drills. Special assistance will be provided for students needing specific supports.

### **Severe Weather Warnings**

In the event of a severe weather warning, students will be retained in the building and moved to places of greatest safety until the danger is passed. It is important that all school telephone lines be kept open at this time.

### **Security**

Electronic locks have been installed on all school exit doors. The purpose of the security system is to allow controlled access to the building. Visitors and late-arriving students will need to come to the front doors and use the intercom system to gain entrance. Under no circumstances should anyone allow an unknown or unauthorized person to enter through any other door.

## Health

### Absences (Reasons)

Regular attendance is a very important part of your student's education. **If your student is ill, please call the school office before the start of the school day.**

If you have any of these symptoms, it's best to stay home:

- A fever over 100.4 in the last day
- New loss of taste or smell
- Vomiting two or more times in the past day, unless it's not from something contagious
- Signs of a more serious illness like fever, rash, sluggishness, persistent crying, irritability, difficulty breathing, or diarrhea (you must be free of diarrhea for 24 hours before coming back to school)
- If you have Impetigo, stay home until 24 hours after you start treatment. Impetigo is a skin infection with sores usually under the nose or by the lips, and it looks like a "golden crust."

You can help prevent the spread of infectious diseases by keeping your student home from school until the illness is no longer infectious.

### Services of the School Nurse

If a student becomes ill during the school day, permission or a pass from class will be requested, and evaluation will occur from the school nurse. The nurse will use professional judgment and follow the WDMCS Illness Guidelines online at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/health-resources> to determine if it is necessary for the student to go home. To ensure student safety, under no circumstances are students allowed to go home or leave student grounds without contacting the school nurse or the office. In cases when parents/guardians cannot be contacted, the school will contact the listed emergency contact. In the event of an emergency and no one can be reached, emergency services will be called and the student will be transported to the nearest hospital if necessary.

### Student Injuries

Students who suffer injuries should be brought to the nurse's office. The school nurse maintains a record of all accidents resulting in injuries to students. Any change in the student's condition occurring throughout the day should also be made known to the nurse. Injury to a student shall be promptly reported by the building administrator or designee to Administrative Services on the WDMCS Student Incident Report.

### Health Fact Sheets

The district website has a variety of health-related resources, including fact sheets on:

- COVID-19
- Bed Bugs
- Fifth Disease
- Head Lice
- Influenza



- Meningitis
- Mono
- MRSA
- Pink Eye
- Ringworm
- Strep Throat

To learn more, visit <https://discover.wdmcs.org/health-resources>

### **Health Records**

By keeping adequate health histories, we are better able to evaluate, understand, and be responsive to your child's individual needs. Please send a note or call the school nurse regarding any developments concerning your child's health. This would include hospitalizations, all medications (type, amount, and time given), fractures, all recent diagnoses of medical conditions, and any other medical information that would be pertinent to the student's performance and attendance.

Student's medical information is collected within a Health section of their record in Infinite Campus. Confidentiality of this information is a priority. This tab is only visible to nursing staff and a very small number of other district employees who help support nurses.

- [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#)
- [506.03 Student Records, Use Of Records And Student Rosters](#)

### **Immunizations and Health Screenings**

Iowa Law requires all students, grades PK-12, to have evidence of a valid Iowa Immunization Certificate, Provisional Certificate of Immunization, or Iowa Certificate of Immunization Exemption on file to be enrolled in the WDMCS. This certificate may be obtained from your provider's office or from the school nurse. Students with immunizations partially completed will be issued a Provisional Certificate allowing for a maximum of 60 days to complete the remaining immunizations. Communication will be provided to parents/guardians regarding immunization requirements and timelines, and further assistance will be provided from the school nurse. If the student hasn't met the requirements at the end of the provisional period, it is necessary by law to exclude the student from school. Student's transferring from another school system within the United States may be granted a Provisional Certificate until documentation of current immunizations are obtained and validated.

To support healthy students, Iowa's health screening programs are regulated by the state and are implemented by the schools. These screenings include: immunizations, dental, vision, and lead. Hearing screenings are also conducted by audiologists from the Heartland Area Education Agency (AEA) annually for students in grades K-2 and grade 5. Please notify your school nurse prior to the communicated screening dates if you would not like your student to participate. Further information regarding school screenings can be found on our website and will be provided by your school nurse.



- [Learn more online from Iowa Department of Education: Student Health Requirements.](#)
- Learn more online about immunizations, health screenings, including dental, hearing, and vision screenings online at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/health-resources>.

### **Medication Guidelines**

- The Health Office must have written authorization from the parent/guardian. Please include the student's name, name of medication, amount to be given, time of medication is to be given, reason for the medication, and parent/guardian signature.
- The medication must be in the original current container (**NO** plastic bags or envelopes with loose pills).
- The directions on the medication container must match the parent/guardian authorization.
- **ALL** medications (prescription and over-the-counter) must be kept in the Health Office at all times. The only exception to this policy is if a student has provided a completed Self-Administration Consent form that is signed by a healthcare provider. This provides a student authorization to self-administer asthma/other airway constricting disease medication or Epinephrine auto-injector medications.

### **Non-Prescription Medications**

The WDMCS health offices stock non-prescription medications including Tylenol, ibuprofen, and Tums.

- All elementary school students (grades PK-6) will be provided a maximum of 4 doses of stock non-prescription medications during the school year.
- All junior high and high school students (grades 7-12) will be provided a maximum of 8 doses of stock non-prescription medications.
- Cough drops may be supplied by the parent/guardian but will not be provided as a stock medication.
- If further doses are necessary after the maximum number has been reached, the parent/guardian will be responsible for providing the medication to the health office and a doctor's note may be requested by the school nurse.

### **Emergency Response in Opioid Overdose**

WDMCS maintains a stock opioid antagonist (Naloxone) available at all times during emergency responses. There has been a substantial increase in the number of opioid overdoses nationwide and across Iowa and this change will allow us to provide a safe environment for our students, staff, and visitors. In order to provide an emergency response to those that are at risk of a potentially life-threatening opioid overdose, all buildings (with students present) will have the medication available, and it will be stored/maintained by the school nurse. School nurses and trained personnel are authorized to administer the opioid antagonist to a student or individual if the school nurse and/or authorized personnel reasonably and in good faith believe the student or individual is having signs and symptoms of an acute opioid overdose. More information is available through [Board Policy 507.06: Stock Prescription Medication Supply - Naloxone](#).

### **Counseling**

The general purpose of the counseling program is to help students gain a better understanding of their abilities, interests, and personal relationships, and how these can be used to their best advantage in school and in the community. The counselors will try to help students individually with school or personal concerns and will assist in every way possible.

### **Student Assistance Program (SAP)**

WDMCS contracts the services of Employee and Family Resources for our Student Assistance Program (SAP). If you need assistance with family or school issues, call 515-244-6090 to speak to a counselor or schedule an appointment. The phone line is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Counselor sessions to assess problems are provided at no cost to you. When additional services are needed, the student assistance counselor will refer you to an appropriate, beneficial, and affordable resource.

School-based therapy services are available in each school building. Students have access to a licensed therapist in the building for appointments while minimizing travel time off campus. Families enroll students for services and are responsible for the cost. Contact the school counselor or principal for information about school-based therapy.

### **Physical Education (P.E.)**

Everyone takes physical education unless a request, signed by a doctor and/or approved by administration excuses the student. This request must state a specific reason and be presented to the school nurse before the excuse will be granted.

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## **West Des Moines Community Schools Board of Education & Learning Resource Center**

### **West Des Moines Community Schools Board of Education**

The West Des Moines Community Schools Board of Education holds regular meetings usually at 7 p.m. on the second and fourth Mondays of each month. Most meetings are conducted in the Community Room at the Learning Resource Center, 3550 Mills Civic Parkway, West Des Moines. All meetings are open to the public unless the Board calls for a closed session. For an item to be considered for placement on the agenda, interested citizens must submit the item in writing to the Superintendent's Office by noon on the Wednesday preceding the regular meeting. Most meetings are streamed on the district's YouTube channel – <https://www.youtube.com/@wdmcs>.

During each meeting, an open forum time is conducted when citizens may speak to the Board. Individuals have up to five minutes to speak.

Seven elected members serve four-year terms without pay on the School Board. Elections are held in odd-numbered years. A new president and vice president are elected every September. In addition, up to three high school students are elected each spring to serve their senior year as non-voting members. View current Board of Education information online at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/board>.

### **West Des Moines Community Schools Learning Resource Center**

3550 Mills Civic Parkway  
West Des Moines, Iowa 50265-5556  
Phone: 515-633-5000

### **Superintendency**

Superintendent Dr. Matt Adams  
Chief Human Resources Officer Nora Ryan  
Associate Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Services Michelle Lettington  
Chief Financial Officer Kurt Subra

## **General Information**

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### **Area Education Agency (AEA) Services**

Heartland Area Education Agency (AEA) 11 supports educators, families, and the community to improve student learning. Heartland is one of nine area education agencies in Iowa created to ensure educational opportunities for children from birth to age 21. Support to local schools is provided in three areas: educational services, media services, and special education services (assessment, consultation, speech-language, hearing screenings, and others). Visit the Heartland AEA website at <http://www.heartlandaea.org> for more information.

### **West Des Moines Community Schools Foundation**

The West Des Moines Community Schools Foundation benefits the students, teachers, and school district by offering quality fundraising resources for WDMCS.

The Foundation began in 1988 as an independent, nonprofit organization that works closely with the school administration, staff, and community to provide resources for students. They strive to encourage student participation, creative teaching, and community-school partnerships by making funds available to all 13 schools in the district. Learn more about the WDMCS Foundation online at <http://www.wdmcsfoundation.org>.

## Departments

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### Administrative Services

Administrative Services oversees the Business Services, Nutrition Services, Operations, and Transportation departments. The WDMCS Chief Financial Officer (CFO) leads a talented group of individuals who support Business Services, Nutrition Services, Operations, and Transportation.

### Business Services

The learning that occurs in our classrooms is supported by quality facilities and sound financial management. The department works with representatives in the community and staff to ensure our buildings and funding support student learning. The department oversees the District's budget, manages accounting, and generates financial reporting to provide transparency to its stakeholders. Learn more about WDMCS budgets online at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/business-office>.

### Nutrition Services

Nutrition Services participates in the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Nutrition Programs. Meals and snacks must meet the standards set forth by the USDA. The department oversees breakfasts and lunches throughout the school year and helps provide a summer food service program to ensure children continue to receive nutritious meals. Learn more about nutrition services, free and reduced meal qualifications, and meal pricing online at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/nutrition-services>.

### Operations

Operations provides maintenance and custodial services for more than 1.5 million square feet of space, including more than 500 classrooms. It also provides services that support the delivery of education to our students. Learn more about Operations online at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/operations>.

### Transportation

Transportation strives to serve the needs of our students by providing safe, efficient transportation to school and school-related activities. Free transportation is provided to the following groups meeting the listed criteria (Iowa Code Section 285.1):

- Grades K-8 students living more than two miles from their assigned schools as determined by their primary residence.
- Grades 9-12 students living more than three miles away from their assigned schools as determined by their primary residence.
- Involuntary Transfers, who are students transferred by the district to a school other than their designated attendance center.

Students who do not qualify for free transportation and live outside the walk zone for their assigned school are eligible for paid transportation. Transportation is not available for families who live inside the walk zone.

Any student who lives in the paid transportation area and qualifies for the free and reduced-priced meal program may also apply for free and reduced-priced bus pass fees. Please contact your school's office to apply.

A voluntary transfer is a student who attends a school other than the assigned school within the district due to a family request granted by the district. Voluntary transfer students may ride a district school bus if they meet the established criteria.

For more detailed information on transportation, including registration and payments, visit the 2024-25 WDMCS District Handbook | [wdmcs.org](http://wdmcs.org)

transportation section of the WDMCS website at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/transportation>.

## **Communications**

The Communications Department supports WDMCS districtwide and school-specific communication. From weather alerts and crisis notifications to event reminders and sharing student success stories, the Communications Department provides timely, relevant information to district staff, students, families, and the broader community. This department also manages the academic and activities brand.

When school must be canceled, delayed, or dismissed early because of weather conditions or other emergencies, the Communications Department works to inform district families and staff in a timely manner. Learn more about the Communications Department online at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/communications>.

## **Community Education**

Community Education supports and serves students, families, and community through classes, before and after school care, intercultural outreach, service opportunities, and facility rentals. Learn more about the opportunities available through Community Education online at <https://communityed.wdmcs.org>.

## **Human Resources**

Human Resources oversees one of our district's greatest resources — its employees. The department strives to provide students and parents with a talented, knowledgeable, and dedicated workforce by:

- recruit quality and diverse staff members
- support professional development and training
- foster an engaging and caring work environment

Human Resources leads a talented group of individuals who support more than 1,900 employees, district substitutes, and a retiree recognition program. Learn more about the Human Resources Department online at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/human-resources>. View career opportunities online at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/careers>.

## **Teaching and Learning Services**

WDMCS offers a comprehensive education with variety, depth, and rigor. The associate superintendent of Teaching and Learning Services leads a talent group of individuals who oversee the following areas:

### **Curriculum**

WDMCS curriculum is based on proven, research-based ideas.

Teachers endeavor to implement the ideas and skills that reflect the ever-changing technology and cultural changes of our society and needs of our learners.

### **English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)**

The WDMCS English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program supports multilingual learners K-12 and authentic school-family partnerships. The staff works collaboratively to prioritize English Learners' cultural wisdom and provide comprehensive opportunities to support their academic, social-emotional, and post-secondary success.

All students are required to fill out a Home Language Survey when enrolling in school in the state of Iowa. If a student's primary, most-used, or first-learned language is something other than English, the student will be screened for possible language services. Learn more about ESOL services online at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/ESOL>.

## **Gifted/Talented (GT) Program**

The West Des Moines Gifted/Talented Program is a comprehensive K-12 program designed to identify and serve students who possess outstanding abilities, talents, and potential for high performance when compared with same-aged peers such that they require special provisions to meet their educational programming needs. In addition to differentiated classroom experiences, students meet in small groups in their own buildings with specially trained teachers to work on group and individual projects according to their needs, abilities, and interests. Learn more about GT online at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/gifted-talented>.

## **Youth Who Are Experiencing Homelessness (Board Policy 501.16)**

West Des Moines Community Schools (WDMCS) believes all students should have access to a free, appropriate public education. WDMCS will ensure that youth who are experiencing homelessness and youth have equitable access to the same free, appropriate public education as other children and youth.

“Youth who are experiencing homelessness” means an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes:

- Children and youth who are:
  - Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (sometimes referred to as “doubled up”);
  - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
  - Living in emergency or transitional shelters; or
  - Abandoned in hospitals.
- Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- Migratory children may qualify if they are living in circumstances described above.

Learn more about enrollment procedures and support services available online at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/homelessness-resources>.

## **Home Schooling**

The WDMCS Home School Assistance Program (HSAP) has been offering support to families who wish to educate their children at home since the early 1990s. Today, more than 125 home-schooled students are enrolled in grades K-12. Teacher assistance and enrichment classes like writing, science, physical education, Spanish, drama, and art are provided to supplement parents’ home schooling efforts. Additionally, a wide array of field trips are provided throughout the year. Learn more about home schooling opportunities online at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/HSAP>. Visit the [HSAP website](#).

## Special Education

The goals for our Special Education program are aligned with state law and the federal Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA) law, which:

- Assures all children with disabilities are provided a free, appropriate, public education designed to meet their unique needs.
- Protects children’s rights and the rights of their parents or guardians.
- Assists state and local districts in providing education that assesses students’ strengths and weaknesses and assures the effectiveness of the educational efforts.

Families who move to the West Des Moines Community Schools and have a child with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will find similar student-focused programming and services at each of our schools. Learn more about Special Education support services online at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/special-education>.

## Technology

West Des Moines Community Schools strives to create a technology-rich environment for its entire learning community. It has been a state and national leader in making a wide range of technologies available to students, staff, and other learners.

In order to provide cost effective and reliable services, the district utilizes a fiber optic wide area network that connects all district facilities. The creation of this network was created through WestNET, a cooperative partnership between the West Des Moines Community Schools, City of West Des Moines, City of Clive, City of Urbandale, and the Iowa Communications Network.

Learn more about WDMCS technology services online at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/technology-department>.

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## Annual Notices and Board Policies

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### Annual Notices

State and federal regulations, as well as some district policies, require the district to annually post certain notifications to the public. Please reference the list of annual notices on the WDMCS website at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/annual-notices>.

**Board Policies** — <https://discover.wdmcs.org/board-policies>

- [502.02 Anti-Bullying/Harassment](#)
- [503.01 Discipline](#)





**3550 Mills Civic Parkway | West Des Moines, IA 50265**  
**515-633-5000 | [www.wdmcs.org](http://www.wdmcs.org)**

*The West Des Moines Community School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, and socioeconomic status in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy, please contact the district's Equal Opportunity Coordinator, Dr. Dau Jok, Executive Director of Culture and Access, 3550 Mills Civic Parkway, West Des Moines, IA 50265; Phone: 515-633-5040; Email [jokd@wdmcs.org](mailto:jokd@wdmcs.org). (Adherence to bona fide occupational/educational qualifications will not be interpreted as discriminatory.)*