



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

# **ELEMENTARY HANDBOOK**

RESOURCES FOR ALL WDMCS ELEMENTARY FAMILIES

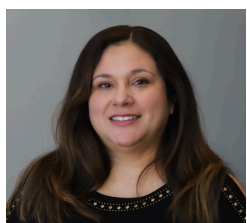
**2025-26**

## Handbook Language Statement

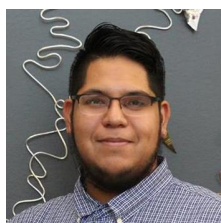
<b>English</b>	The handbook includes important information about your student's school. You can request oral translation or interpretation of this information. Contact Natalie French, WDMCS ESOL Director, at 515-633-5173 or <a href="mailto:frenchn@wdmcs.org">frenchn@wdmcs.org</a> .
<b>Arabic</b>	يتضمن الكتيب معلومات مهمة حول مدرسة الطالب. يمكنك طلب ترجمة شفوية أو كتابية. اتصل ب نطالي 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 thöŋgë käŋ anŋic thön/wël thiekiic në biäkke thukul ë menhdun-thukul. Yin lëu ba thiëc në wërë yic ë wël cike göt ci geriic ka/wälë wël ë thok ci luel cike wariic e thön kënë. Yuöpë/col Natalie French, Bëny ë WDMCS ESOL, në 515-633-5173 ic ka/wälë frenchn@wdmcs.org
<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> ርኽብዎ።
<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>



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## **Table of Contents**

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

- Mission
- Vision
- Core Values
- Strategic Directions
- Boundaries

### **About Our Elementary Schools**

- Elementary Schools' Contact Information
- Principals' Welcome
- Educational Non-Discrimination Statement

### **General School Information**

#### **Schedules**

- WDMCS Online Calendar
- Before/After-School Child Care
- Elementary Schedules (Regular and Collaboration Schedules)
- Students Arriving Early or Arriving Late
- Students Leaving Early or Staying Late

#### **Preschool/Kindergarten Enrollment**

#### **Attendance**

- Why Attendance is Important
- Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy
- Compulsory Attendance
- Notifying Your School

#### **Nutrition Services**

- Nine Schools Automatically Receive Free Meals for 2025-26
- Free/Reduced Meal Information for Non-Qualifying Schools
- Breakfast
- Lunch
- A La Carte Items
- Allergies
- Food Deliveries
- Eating Lunch with Students

#### **Activities**

- Classroom Treats
- Field Trips
- Football Games and Athletic Events
- Parties at School
- Recess

## **Miscellaneous Information**

- Fees
- Lost and Found
- Pets/Service Animals
- School Pictures
- School Supplies

## **Communication and Family Involvement**

### **1:1 Chromebook**

- Student Responsibilities and Helpful Tips
- Parent/Family Responsibilities and Helpful Tips
- Costs
- After School Activities
- Complaints Regarding School Personnel
- Infinite Campus
- Parent/Guardian-Teacher Organizations
- Pupil Progress Reporting/Conferences
- School Communication
- Social Media
- Staff Directory
- Translation and Interpretation Services
- Visitors and Volunteers

## **Student Conduct**

- Student Discipline
- Assessments
- Surveys
- Homework
- Student Dress and Appearance
- Cell Phones and Communication

## **Safety and Health**

### **Safety**

- Bicycles/Rollerblades/Roller Shoes/Scooters/Skateboards
- Communicating Student Safety Concerns
- Safety Drills
- Student Safety Tips
- Severe Weather Warnings
- Security

### **Health**

- Absences
- Services of the School Nurse
- Student Injuries
- Health Facts Sheet
- Health Records

Immunizations and Health Screenings  
Medication Guidelines  
Non-Prescription Medications  
Emergency Medication in Opioid Overdose  
Physical Education (P.E.)  
Student Assistance Program (SAP)

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

# West Des Moines Community Schools (WDMCS) Overview

## Mission

Educate, empower, and inspire lifelong learners.

## Vision

WDMCS cultivates belonging, engagement, and mutual respect for our diverse cultures, lived experiences, and values. We strive to ensure:

- Inclusive and safe learning and work environments.
- Academic excellence.
- Robust growth opportunities and pathways for students and staff.
- Fiscal responsibility and sustainability.

## Core Values

**Equitable Access:** We celebrate and culturally affirm the human diversity of our community. We strive to have transformative policies, practices, and procedures that meet the needs of each student, family, and staff.

**Evidence-Based and Personalized Instruction:** We adapt to meet each student's needs. We have high expectations, culturally relevant instruction, and a strengths-based approach.

**Meaningful Collaborative Relationships:** We foster authentic relationships, collaborations, and partnerships with students, families, staff, and community. We hold all relationships in high regard, including adult to adult; adult to student; and student to student.

**Systemic Implementation and Accountability:** We continuously measure, assess, and improve our effectiveness and the quality of our programs and services.

## Strategic Directions

1. Improve our practices in teaching, learning, assessment, and cultural responsiveness to increase student learning outcomes.
2. Provide equitable structures, processes, and supports that meet each student's needs.
3. Foster a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace that nurtures a healthy and accountable culture.
4. Create authentic family-community partnerships with sustained systems of communication and engagement.
5. Empower staff to leverage data to improve operations, decision-making, and organizational effectiveness.

## **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 elementary school boundaries or a map of the district, please visit <https://discover.wdmcs.org/boundaries>.

## About Our Elementary Schools\*

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### **Clive Learning Academy** (grades PK-6)

1600 73rd St.  
Windsor Heights, IA 50324  
515-633-5800

**Principal:** Shelly Pospeshil,  
[pospeshilp@wdmcs.org](mailto:pospeshilp@wdmcs.org)

**Assistant Principal:** Dana Allen,  
[allend@wdmcs.org](mailto:allend@wdmcs.org)

### **Crestview School of Inquiry** (grades PK-6)

8355 Franklin Ave.  
Clive, IA 50325  
515-633-5700

**Principal:** Jon Mendoza,  
[mendozajo@wdmcs.org](mailto:mendozajo@wdmcs.org)

**Assistant Principal:** Sue Lawler,  
[lawlers@wdmcs.org](mailto:lawlers@wdmcs.org)

### **Crossroads Park Elementary** (grades PK-6)

1050 50th St.  
West Des Moines, IA 50265  
515-633-5600

**Principal:** Tricia Kurtt,  
[kurttt@wdmcs.org](mailto:kurttt@wdmcs.org)

**Assistant Principal:** Tyler Denton,  
[dentont@wdmcs.org](mailto:dentont@wdmcs.org)

### **Fairmeadows Elementary** (grades PK-6)

807 23rd St.  
West Des Moines, IA 50265  
515-633-6500

**Principal:** Brandon Pierce,  
[pierceb@wdmcs.org](mailto:pierceb@wdmcs.org)

**Assistant Principal:** Leah Holcomb,  
[holcombl@wdmcs.org](mailto:holcombl@wdmcs.org)

### **Hillside Elementary** (grades PK-6)

713 Eighth St.  
West Des Moines, IA 50265  
515-633-6200

**Principal:** Kelley Harrison,  
[harrisonk@wdmcs.org](mailto:harrisonk@wdmcs.org)

**Assistant Principal:** Jackson Anderson,  
[andersonjac@wdmcs.org](mailto:andersonjac@wdmcs.org)

### **Jordan Creek Elementary** (grades PK-6)

4105 Fuller Rd.  
West Des Moines, IA 50265  
515-633-5200

**Principal:** Annie Orsini,  
[orsinia@wdmcs.org](mailto:orsinia@wdmcs.org)

**Assistant Principal:** TBA

### **Western Hills Elementary** (grades PK-6)

600 39th St.  
West Des Moines, IA 50265  
515-633-5900

**Principal:** Jenna Pressley,  
[pressleyj@wdmcs.org](mailto:pressleyj@wdmcs.org)

**Assistant Principal:** Erin Willoughby,  
[willoughbye@wdmcs.org](mailto:willoughbye@wdmcs.org)

### **Westridge Elementary** (grades PK-6)

5500 E.P. True Pkwy.  
West Des Moines, IA 50266  
515-633-5400

**Principal:** Jody Kerchal, [kerchalj@wdmcs.org](mailto:kerchalj@wdmcs.org)  
**Assistant Principal:** Tyson Heuton,  
[heutont@wdmcs.org](mailto:heutont@wdmcs.org)

\*Elementary school principals are supervised by:  
Michelle Lettington, Executive Director of Elementary Education

[lettingtonm@wdmcs.org](mailto:lettingtonm@wdmcs.org)  
515-633-5057



## Principals' Welcome

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Dear Families:

Welcome to West Des Moines Community Schools!

Elementary school is the foundation of a child's education. With research-based strategies, teachers introduce students to new skills and ideas, help them gain experience and master concepts, and then build on this knowledge as students grow and develop. We are committed to meeting the social and emotional needs of each student and providing culturally affirming learning spaces for every child. A positive connection between school and home is essential, and we look forward to collaborating with you this year.

This handbook serves as a resource to share important information that is consistent across all elementary schools. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's school with your ideas, questions, or concerns. Thank you for allowing us to be part of your child's educational journey.

Elementary Principal Team

### **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](#); 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.)

## 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

#### WDMCS Online 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.

#### Before-/After-School Child Care

Our before- and after-school child care program, Kids West, is coordinated through WDMCS Community Education. Child care is offered on a daily basis to those students enrolled. If you are interested in enrolling your child in Kids West child care, please contact Kids West at 515-633-5018 for details. There is limited space available.

If school is dismissed early due to severe weather, Kids West begins at time of dismissal. Parents/guardians are asked to pick up their child(ren) as soon as possible so that they and the staff may travel home safely. Kids West will announce closure time based on anticipated weather conditions.

#### Elementary Schedules

*Schedules may change to ensure student and staff safety.*

##### **Regular Schedule (except Crestview)** — Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday

- 8:35 a.m. Breakfast starts 30 minutes prior to the bell.
- 8:55 a.m. Students not participating in breakfast or other activities scheduled before school may enter the building.
- 9:05 a.m. Classes begin.
- 3:55 p.m. Students dismissed.

##### **Collaboration Schedule (except Crestview)** — Wednesday

- 8:35 a.m. Breakfast starts 30 minutes prior to the bell.
- 8:55 a.m. Students not participating in breakfast or other activities scheduled before school may enter the building.
- 9:05 a.m. Classes begin.
- 3:10 p.m. Students dismissed.

##### **Crestview Schedule** — Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday

- 7:50 a.m. Breakfast starts 30 minutes prior to the bell.
- 8:05 a.m. Students not participating in breakfast or other activities scheduled before school may enter the building.
- 8:20 a.m. Classes begin.
- 3:10 p.m. Students dismissed.

### **Crestview Collaboration Schedule — Wednesday**

7:50 a.m.	Breakfast starts 30 minutes prior to the bell.
8:05 a.m.	Students not participating in breakfast or other activities scheduled before school may enter the building.
8:20 a.m.	Classes begin.
2:25 p.m.	Students dismissed.

### **Students Arriving Early**

Unless students need to arrive early for a school-sponsored event or breakfast, students should not arrive on the school grounds prior to the designated time for entrance into the building. Kids West before-school child care is available for students who arrive prior to the designated entrance time into the building. Please contact Kids West at 515-633-5018 for details.

### **Students Arriving Late**

If a student will be arriving late to school, please call the school or send a note with your student explaining the reason. All late-arriving students go through the office to obtain a pass.

### **Students Leaving Early**

Students leaving the school before dismissal time check out through the office. Please call the office or send a note with your student if they need to leave early. We cannot dismiss your student unless we have received communication from a parent/guardian. If someone other than a parent/guardian will be picking the student up, the note or phone call should tell us who that person will be. Proper identification is required. Students will wait for the parent/guardian(s) in the office by the main entrance to the building. Parents/guardians must sign children out at the office before leaving early.

## **Preschool/Kindergarten Enrollment**

### **Preschool Programs**

The WDMCS receives funding from the Iowa Department of Education for approximately 350 4-year-old children to attend preschool. This program is for children who will be age 4 on or before Sept. 15 of the school year for which they are enrolling. Programs are located at seven district buildings and four community partner preschool sites.

Tiger Cubs Preschool is coordinated through the WDMCS. Programs are located at Clive Learning Academy, Crestview School of Inquiry, Fairmeadows, Hillside, Jordan Creek, Western Hills, and Westridge elementary schools. Tiger Cubs Preschool will provide an opportunity for your child to develop readiness skills for future learning through age-appropriate activities and experiences.

Learn more about preschool opportunities online at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/preschool-programs>.

### **Kindergarten Enrollment**

In Iowa, a child must be age 5 on or before Sept. 15 in order to begin school. Parents/guardians may register their child any time after Sept. 1 of the preceding school year at the Registrar's Office. Learn more about kindergarten enrollment online at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/kindergarten-enrollment>.

## 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.

### Why Attendance is Important

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.

### Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy

A student is considered chronically absent if they miss 10% of school days in a grading period, which is 18 or more days in a year. This equals only two days a month, nine days per semester or six days per trimester. A student is considered truant if they miss 20% of school days in a grading period, which is 17 days in a semester and 12 days in a trimester.

### Compulsory Attendance

Children over age six and under age 16 by Sept. 15, in proper physical and mental condition to attend school are subject to compulsory attendance at WDMCS ([Board Policy 501.03: Compulsory Attendance](#)). Those students must also comply with Iowa Senate File 2435, which outlines intervention measures school districts must take in response to chronic absenteeism. This includes:

- Notifying the county attorney and sending a notice to parents when a student misses 10% of school days in a grading period
- Initiating a school engagement meeting between the student, parent/guardian and school official when a student misses 15% of school days in a grading period. The purpose of the meeting is to create a prevention plan. The school will monitor compliance with the plan and contact the parent/guardian once per week.
- Refer to the county attorney if the plan is violated or the student's absences surpass 20% of school days in a grading period.

Truancy determinations and required actions are not applied to a student who meets one of the following exemptions:

- Completed requirement for graduation or obtained a high school equivalency diploma
- Excused for sufficient reason by a court of record or judge
- Attending religious services or receiving religious instructions
- Unable to attend school due to legitimate medical reasons(s)
- Individualized Education Program (IEP) that affects attendance
- Section 504 plan under the Federal Rehabilitation Act that affects attendance

### Notifying Your School

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 your 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>

## **Nutrition Services**

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

Healthy meals are important to student success. Each school will provide breakfast and lunch to students.

### **Nine Schools Automatically Receive Free Meals for 2025-26**

All students who attend the nine schools listed below (elementary schools in **bold**) will receive free meals for the 2025-26 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

### **Free/Reduced Meal Information for Non-Qualifying Schools**

Even though the four schools listed below (elementary schools in **bold**) do not qualify to receive free meals through the Community Eligibility Program (CEP), your family may still qualify for free or reduced meals. You can apply online at <https://lingconnect.com/public/meal-application/new>.

- **Fairmeadows Elementary**
- **Jordan Creek Elementary**
- **Westridge Elementary**
- Valley High School

There are two ways to make a payment or view your account balance. To view those options, visit [www.wdmcs.org/our-district/departments/nutrition/prices-and-payments](http://www.wdmcs.org/our-district/departments/nutrition/prices-and-payments).

If you qualify for free and reduced-price meals, you may also be eligible to have student fees waived or partially waived. When you complete online enrollment, select "YES" when asked about fee waivers.

## **Breakfast**

Offered daily 30 minutes prior to the bell.

**PK-6 Cost:** \$2.35 (\$.30 reduced rate)

**Adults:** \$2.75 (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**

**PK-6 Cost:** \$3.45 (\$.40 reduced rate)

**Adults:** \$5.10 (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 a "complete lunch."

If you would like to restrict your child from being able to purchase these items, please create a restriction on your student's account in the family portal at

<https://www.schoolcafe.com/WESTDESMOINESCOMMUNITYSD> 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 at

<https://discover.wdmcs.org/nutrition-services>. .

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 sack lunch or school materials when needed at the school office.

Please do not deliver restaurant food (including UberEats, GrubHub, etc.), balloon bouquets, flowers, etc. to school for your child. This causes disruption to the class and disappointment to those never receiving the same. If they are delivered, they will be held in the office and given to your child at dismissal. We appreciate your cooperation in these matters.

## **Eating Lunch with Students**

Families are invited to eat lunch with their child throughout the school year.

- Bring a sack lunch or pay for your lunch as you go through the lunch line using your child's nutrition account or in cash with exact change or small bills.
- Please call the school office by 9:15 a.m. of the morning you will be joining us.
- We may limit the number of families who may eat lunch on a particular day based on space and/or meal availability.

For a special occasion, such as a child's birthday, we invite you to bring lunch from a restaurant for you and/or your child. However, we will find a quiet area in the building or on school grounds separate from the lunchroom for you to eat. Families are welcome to take their child out for lunch during their specific lunch/recess time.

## **Activities**

### **Classroom Treats**

Student health and wellness is a top priority. The district's wellness policy provides more information ([Policy 608.01](#): Student Wellness). Homemade treats are not allowed. If you select from one of the items listed on the store-bought snack list, you can bring a classroom treat that was purchased from a store. All treats must be store-bought and meet the USDA guidelines for snacks.

### **Can I bring homemade treats from home for a classroom party to share with others?**

Homemade treats cannot be sold or shared with multiple students during the school day.

### **What about pre-packed treats from a store?**

Please select one of the items listed on the store-bought snack list.

### **Can I still pack whatever I want in my student's sack lunch from home?**

Yes. Packing a healthy school lunch is encouraged under the student wellness policy, but there are no restrictions as to what you must pack in a student's lunch brought from home.

### **Do I have to purchase a snack for my student that is on the approved snack list?**

No. Students can bring their own individual snack.

Approved Snacks can be found online at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/classroom-snacks>.

## **Field Trips**

There may be times when the curriculum is enhanced by a field trip. Families have two options to grant their student permission to participate:

- Give general permission to participate in all school day field trips for the year during online enrollment
- Give permission via email prior to each field trip

Families choosing to grant permission for the year can still opt out for specific trips via email. Detailed information about field trips will be shared prior to each event. These forms provide authority for your child to travel away from school premises. If written permission is not received, students may be required to remain in the building. Parents/guardians are often invited to assist with supervision on field trips and must complete the district volunteer form before chaperoning.

### **Football Games and Athletic Events**

Families are invited to cheer on the Valley Tigers during athletic events throughout the year. Elementary students can only attend home football games at Valley Stadium with an adult (no drop-offs). The adult is responsible for the students they bring to the game. This guideline is in place to support student safety and provide a positive experience for all fans.

### **Fostering Communities**

Each elementary school has three community-building events throughout the school year to cultivate a sense of belonging for each student. Each building will share out dates to families at the beginning of the school year.

Teachers will communicate with families if treats for birthdays or other special occasions can be distributed, and treats distributed at school to the entire class must follow the nutrition guidelines in the section above. In addition, home party invitations will not be distributed at school unless a whole class is invited. This practice helps cultivate inclusion of all students.

### **Recess ([Board Policy 608.01: Student Wellness](#))**

Recess provides children opportunities for physical exercise, release of energies, relaxation with friends, and social skill development. Outdoor recess is held except during inclement weather. During inclement or extreme weather (RealFeel® of at/below 0 degrees and at/above 100 degrees), a supervised, indoor recess occurs.

A written request, email, or phone call to the teacher or school nurse from a parent/guardian is needed for a child to be excused from recess if it is for three days or less. Please include the reason that prevents the child from participating in recess. If a child needs to be excused from recess for more than three days, communication with building administration or a physician's note is required. Employees will not withhold physical activity or use opportunities for physical activity as punishment. Alternative opportunities for physical activity will be at the principal's discretion.

*Students are asked to dress appropriately for the weather.* Weather changes occur quickly, so children need to be dressed in a manner to reflect any seasonal change in weather.

## **Miscellaneous Information**

### **Fees**

Fee payments will be accepted online. View current fees at <https://discover.wdmcs.org/school-fees>. Students who qualify for free and reduced meals may also qualify for student fee waivers. IMPORTANT: Fee waiver forms must be filled out every year. Please visit [discover.wdmcs.org/feewaivers](https://discover.wdmcs.org/feewaivers). Families can contact the building principal if financial assistance is needed.



### **Lost and Found**

Each elementary school has lost and found boxes located throughout the building. Families and students are encouraged to check these boxes as needed. Items that are not claimed are donated to area charitable institutions periodically and at the end of the year.

### **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. Pets are not allowed in WDMCS facilities without prior written consent by a building administrator. 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 or staff 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 Pictures**

School pictures take place each year. Information will be sent home with students prior to the day pictures are taken.

### **School Supplies**

Teachers at each grade level have prepared a list of supplies for the year. The elementary school supply list is posted on each elementary website. Please contact the school office if you did not receive a supply list or need assistance with obtaining school supplies. 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](#)

Students in grades PK-12 receive a Chromebook for educational purposes. Students in grades PK-6 may take the Chromebook home. Students in grades 7-12 are expected to take the Chromebook home on a

daily basis.

Parents/guardians with an email on file within Infinite Campus will receive a weekly email from Securly, a company that provides web filtering for all student Chromebooks. Parents can view the web history of their student's Chromebooks and set additional restrictions and limitations, including the ability to turn the Chromebook off at a certain time of night and restrict specific websites. Securly also employs a self-harm notification service, which can alert parents/guardians on their cell phone 24 hours a day if their child is searching for self-harm information.

Email [parent-support@securly.com](mailto:parent-support@securly.com) to request help from Securly regarding any web filtering needs for your student. Learn more about Securly at:

<https://www.wdmcs.org/our-district/departments/technology/securly-chromebook-web-filtering>.

WDMCS uses Google services including Gmail, YouTube, Google Earth, and Google Maps. Access is also granted to ChatGPT. If you would like to restrict your student's internet access to not include services like YouTube and ChatGPT, please email your building principal to make the request.

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>.

### **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:

- 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)

## After-School Activities

Elementary schools in the West Des Moines Community Schools sponsor a variety of after-school activities involving students and their families. Please check your school information and calendar for further information.

## Complaints Regarding School Personnel

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

## 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 follow the protocol outlined in the Visitors and Volunteers section of this handbook.

## **Pupil Progress Reporting/Conferences**

Scheduled conferences are held near the end of the first and second trimesters, and progress reports are sent home with students at the end of each trimester. Progress reports can also be found online in Infinite Campus. Purposes of the conferences are for teachers and families to share information about the child and for the teacher to report the student's school progress. Additional conferences may be arranged by either the teacher or families.

## **School Communication**

Elementary schools regularly communicate with families through email, social media, e-newsletters, the WDMCS website, and more. Each will contain informational items pertaining to activities at your school.

## **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/)
- **X:** <https://x.com/WDMCS>

## **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 from participating in a public meeting in the West Des Moines Community Schools on the basis of a disability. 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 child, or visit their child'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. Learn more about volunteer background check requirements at <https://www.wdmcs.org/engage/volunteer>.

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.

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## **Student Conduct**

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

We strive to support student development as life-long learners in pursuit of their desired dimensions of identity. Students are expected to be respectful of the rights of others and comply with school and district rules and policies intended to foster learning and growth. We believe each student deserves the right to a fair and appropriate education in which their identities are valued, celebrated, and used as a lever to teach.

Each elementary 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. Schools proactively 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.

Major behaviors in the classroom or on the playground, such as fighting or vandalism, are addressed by the principal or designee(s). Interventions or consequences are imposed based upon professional judgment and the facts and circumstances of each situation. The goal of all discipline response is to ensure students understand the school's behavior expectations, repair the harm caused by their choice of behavior, and identify how to prevent the problem in the future.

WDMCS is committed to fostering an equitable and affirming learning environment in which each student and staff member 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 experiences or perceives bullying or harassment. Please reach out to your child'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 to the school administrator. This form can be found in [Board Policy 502.02: Anti-Bullying/Harassment](#).

## **Assessments**

### **First Trimester**

- Grades K-6: Literacy Screening (earlyReading, CBMReading)\*
- Grades K-6: Math Screening (earlyMath, aMath)
- Grades K-6: Social-Emotional Learning Survey
- Grade 6: Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)

### **Second Trimester**

- Grades K-6: Literacy Screening (earlyReading, CBMReading)\*
- Grades K-6: Math Screening (earlyMath, aMath)
- English Language Learners: ELPA21 (English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century)\*

### **Third Trimester**

- Grades K-6: Literacy Screening (earlyReading, CBMReading)\*
- Grades K-6: Math Screening (earlyMath, aMath)
- Grades K-6: Social-Emotional Learning Survey
- Grades 3-6: ISASP (Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress)\*
- 
- Grade 2: Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT)

\*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](#).

## **Homework**

Homework may be assigned by the teacher for enrichment or reinforcement that is consistent with student ability and developmental level. The amount of time necessary to complete homework will vary according to the assignment and the student's ability. ([Board Policy 606.02: Homework](#))

### **THE TEACHER WILL:**

- relate assignments to the classroom objectives.
- coordinate assignments with other teachers, if necessary.
- give clear directions.
- maintain contact between home and school regarding homework.
- modify or enhance homework assignments according to individual student ability and need.
- provide all materials necessary to do homework beyond everyday resources.

### **THE STUDENTS SHOULD:**

- ask for clarification, if needed.
- have necessary materials before leaving school.
- plan ahead by estimating the amount of time it will take to complete assignments.
- complete and return assignments as directed.

### **FAMILIES CAN HELP BY:**

- providing a quiet, comfortable environment and adequate time to complete homework.
- providing motivation, guidance, and resources, but insisting upon the child independently doing homework.
- conferring with the teacher if there are any questions about the purpose or procedures of the homework.

## **Student Dress and Appearance ([Board Policy 502.01 Student Appearance](#))**

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.



## **Cell Phones and Communication**

- If there is a family emergency, please contact the school office, and they will reach your child. If there is an emergency at school, we will call the parent/guardian.
- Cell phone usage is only allowed before or after school.
- 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 502.08: Search and Seizure](#)

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## **Safety and Health**

### **Safety**

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

We recommend that only students in grades 4-6 ride their bicycles to school.

- Wearing bicycle helmets is encouraged.
- Bicycles should be walked on school property and parked in the bike racks.
- Bicycle locks are encouraged.
- Damage or theft of bicycles should be reported to the local police department.

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

#### **Communicating Student Safety Concerns**

Student safety is a top priority. A parent/guardian, student, staff, or community member who becomes aware of a student safety issue within a school day should 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 severe weather, active threat, evacuation, ELF (Evacuate, Lockdown, Fight), and fire drills. Special assistance will be provided for students needing specific supports.

#### **Student Safety Tips**

Staff in each building stress to our students that they have responsibilities when walking to school in the same way that drivers have responsibilities. Please go over the safest route to school with your children and stress to them that they are to use that route. Please review with your child how important it is to be aware of their surroundings and to reject rides from strangers. Notify law enforcement officials and school officials immediately if your child has been enticed by a stranger. Early notification can help law enforcement investigate any concerns.

#### **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. Students should never open an exterior door for anyone, even if they know the person.

## Health

### Absences (Reasons)

Regular attendance is a very important part of your child's education. **If your child 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
- 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 child home from school or child care 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 to Administrative Services by the building administrator or designee 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
- Chickenpox
- Bed Bugs
- Fifth Disease

- Head Lice
- Influenza
- Measles
- 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 \(FERPA\)](#)
- [Board Policy 506.01: Student Records](#)

### **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 pre-K, 1 and 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 under Health Screenings 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.](#)

### **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 four 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 eight 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](#).

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

Everyone takes physical education unless a request signed by a doctor excuses the student. This request must state a specific reason and be presented to the school nurse before the excuse will be granted. Notes to the teacher from parents/guardians will be honored excusing a student for one class period only. Absences for more than one class at a time will require a doctor's excuse or communication with building administration.

**Student Assistance Program (SAP)**

WDMCS contracts the services of Employee and Family Resources (EFR) 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.

**Table of Contents**

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

**General Information**

Area Education Agency (AEA) Services  
West Des Moines Community Schools Foundation

**Departments**

Business Services  
Nutrition Services  
Operations  
Transportation  
Communications  
Community Education  
Human Resources  
Teaching and Learning Services  
    Curriculum  
    Multilingual Program  
    Gifted/Talented (GT) Program  
    Youth Who Are Experiencing Homelessness  
    Home Schooling  
    Special Education  
    Technology

**Annual Notices and Board Policies**

## **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 November. 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

### **Superintendent's Cabinet**

Dr. Matt Adams, Superintendent  
Kurt Subra, Chief Financial Officer  
Dr. Nora Ryan, Chief Human Resources Officer  
Brian Abeling, Executive Director of Information and Technology  
Bryan Geelan, Executive Director of Communication  
Michelle Lettington, Executive Director of Elementary Education  
Dr. Dau Jok, Executive Director of Culture and Access  
TBA, Executive Director of Secondary Education

## 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. It strives 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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### 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. This may occur due to extenuating circumstances (e.g., part of a safety plan).

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

### **Communications**

Communications supports WDMCS district-wide 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, the Kids West before-and-after school child care program, intercultural outreach, service opportunities, and facility rentals. Learn more about the opportunities available through Community Education online at <https://communityed.wdmcs.org>.

### **Culture and Access**

The WDMCS Culture and Access department seeks to co-create communities of care and ensure each individual in our system has access to the necessary resources and opportunities to realize their potential. Culture and Access advocates for a thriving work environment for each staff, authentic school-family-community partnerships, and equitable learning environment, experiences, and outcomes for each student.

### **Human Resources**

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

- recruiting quality and diverse staff members
- supporting professional development and training
- fostering 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 in the following areas:

### Curriculum

WDMCS curricula is based on proven, research-based strategies. Teachers endeavor to implement these strategies and skills that reflect the ever-changing technology and cultural changes of our society and needs of our learners. The Director of K-12 Curriculum and their team provide critical leadership, expertise and curricula guidance in WDMCS.

### Multilingual Program

The WDMCS Multilingual 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 WDMCS 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](#))

WDMCS ensures children and youth experiencing homelessness have equitable access to the same free, appropriate public education.

"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, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative 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 500 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 the WDMCS 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/ 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 district and enroll 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**

WDMCS 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.

Students in grades PK-12 receive a Chromebook for educational purposes. Students in grades PK-6 may take the Chromebook home. Students in grades 7-12 are expected to take the Chromebook home on a daily basis.

Parents/guardians with an email on file within Infinite Campus will receive a weekly email from Securly, a company that provides web filtering for all student Chromebooks. Parents can view the web history of their student's Chromebooks and set additional restrictions and limitations, including the ability to turn the Chromebook off at a certain time of night and restrict specific websites. Securly also employs a self-harm notification service, which can alert parents/guardians on their cell phone 24 hours a day if their child is searching for self-harm information.

Email [parent-support@securly.com](mailto:parent-support@securly.com) to request help from Securly regarding any web filtering needs for your student. Learn more about Securly at: <https://www.wdmcs.org/our-district/departments/technology/securly-chromebook-web-filtering>.

WDMCS uses Google services including Gmail, YouTube, Google Earth, and Google Maps. Access is also granted to ChatGPT. If you would like to restrict your student's internet access to not include services like YouTube and ChatGPT, please email your building principal to make the request.

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

## 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.)*