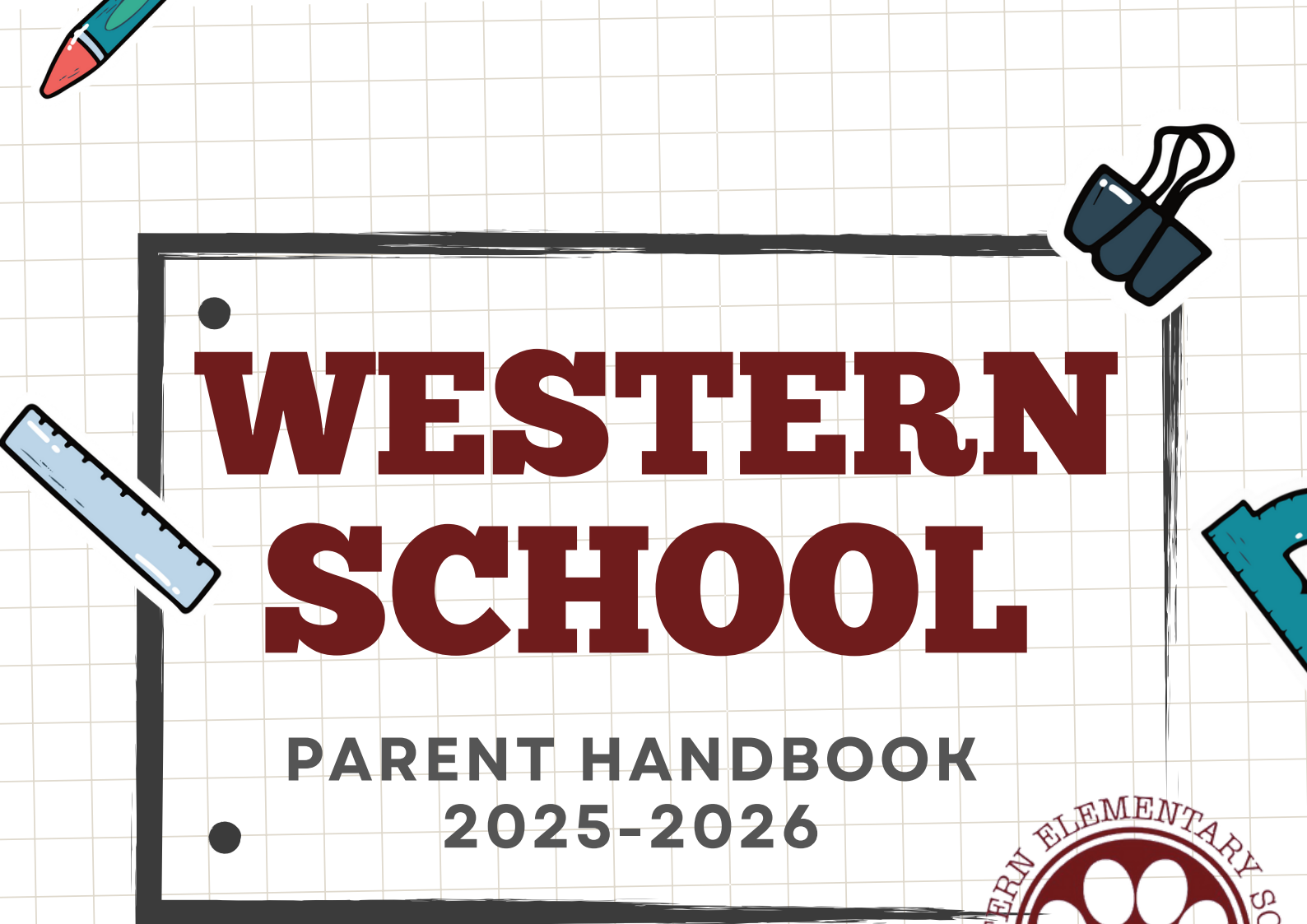
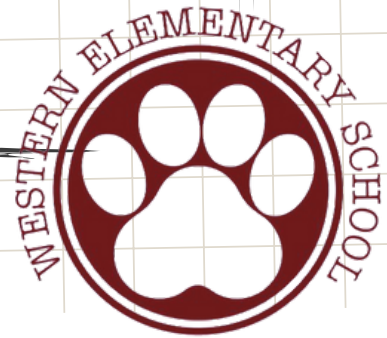




WESTERN SCHOOL

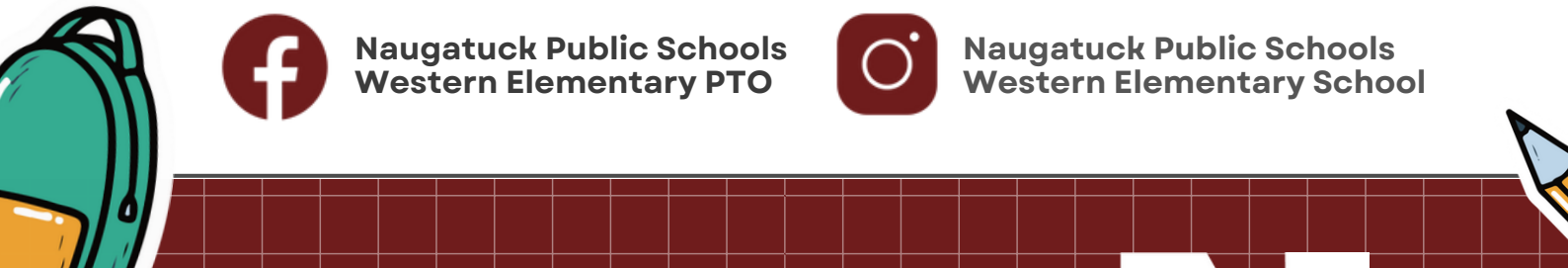
PARENT HANDBOOK
2025-2026



Naugatuck Public Schools
Western Elementary PTO



Naugatuck Public Schools
Western Elementary School



100 PINE STREET

Naugatuck, CT 06770

Principal

BRENDA M. GOODRICH

N
Naugatuck
Public Schools



More Info: ☎ 203-720-5244

🌐 western.naugatuck.k12.ct.us



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Letter to Parents / Guardians

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

Welcome to a new school year at Western Elementary School! At Western, we are committed to the belief that every student can thrive when provided with a supportive, engaging learning environment built on rigor, relevance, and strong relationships.

This handbook is designed to clearly outline the policies and procedures that help our school run smoothly and effectively. Our goal is to ensure all students have every opportunity to succeed both academically and socially. If you have questions that aren't addressed in the handbook, please don't hesitate to contact our main office at 203-720-5244. You can also access the district-wide handbook on the Naugatuck Public Schools website: naugatuck.k12.ct.us.

We encourage you to stay connected and involved throughout the year. If you have questions about your child's progress or educational experience, please contact their teacher. We also invite you to become an active member of our PTO, which plays a key role in organizing fundraisers, school events, and field trips for our students and families. Stay in touch with the PTO through their Facebook page: Western Elementary PTO or contact them via email at Western.PTO@yahoo.com.

As part of the Naugatuck community, our mission is to develop students who:

- Are responsible and engaged members of their communities
- Show initiative, persistence, and adaptability
- Embrace curiosity and see risk-taking as part of the learning journey
- Analyze information critically and form thoughtful opinions
- Communicate clearly and effectively
- Collaborate and problem-solve in real-world problems

We believe every student in Naugatuck should experience learning that is active, meaningful, and personal, fostering a lifelong excitement for growth and discovery. This happens through a responsive, evolving curriculum that values student voice, innovation, and high expectations.

Once again, welcome to Western Elementary! We are excited to partner with you and look forward to a year filled with learning, growth, and community.

Warm regards,
Ms. Brenda Goodrich & the Western School Faculty

Accidents

Every accidental injury in school or on the grounds, no matter how slight, should be reported immediately to the teacher or aide in charge, to the nurse, or to the main office. The School Nurse will determine the seriousness of the illness or injury, and upon her determination, a parent or legal guardian may be contacted. If neither parent nor legal guardian can be contacted, those persons listed on the emergency form will be contacted and, if warranted, the family physician. In emergencies, it may become necessary to transport your child by ambulance to an emergency care facility.

Accurate Records

If your contact information—such as your phone number, address, email, or place of employment—changes at any point during the school year, please let the school know by sending a quick note or message to your child's teacher. Keeping your information up to date is important, especially in the event of an emergency, so we can reach you quickly and ensure your child's safety.

Appointments

If your child needs to leave school early for an appointment, please send a note to their teacher in advance. If your child will be arriving late due to a medical or dental appointment, be sure to follow our attendance procedures by calling the school at 203-720-5244 before 9:15 a.m. on the day of the appointment. Whenever possible, we kindly ask that you schedule appointments outside of school hours to minimize disruption to your child's learning.

Arrival/Dismissal

Student Arrival

Doors open for students at 8:40 a.m., and there is no adult supervision prior to that time. For your child's safety, please do not drop off your child before 8:40 a.m. Staff will be on duty beginning at that time, and students arriving excessively early will prompt a phone call home as a reminder of this policy. Children should not be left unattended outside the school building.

Morning Drop-Off

If you arrive after the doors have closed and school has started, you must park on Pine Street and walk your child down the stairs to the main entrance. All parents must check in at the office and sign their child in—please bring a photo ID. Ring the bell, and a staff member will assist you as soon as possible. Please note: do not pull into the main front circle, as it is a designated fire lane.

Afternoon Dismissal

At dismissal, parents should again park on Pine Street and walk down the stairs to the gymnasium (Grades 3 & 4) or cafeteria (Grades K–2). A staff member will check your ID, verify your child's name, and sign them out to ensure a safe and smooth dismissal process.

Attendance

Connecticut law under Connecticut General Statute 10-184 requires parents to make sure their children attend school regularly during the hours and terms the public school is in session. Students attending school who are under 7 and over sixteen years of age, and whose attendance is not required by law, but who are registered in a public school, also must maintain satisfactory attendance.

Parents are required to contact the school via phone prior to 9:15 a.m. on the day of your child's absence 203-720-5244 and send a written explanation of the absence to your school when your child returns. When you call,

please state your child's name, your name, your child's classroom teacher, the reason for the absence and any symptoms your child may be experiencing.

The Board of Education requires that accurate records be kept of the attendance of each child. An absence shall be excused when a child does not attend school due to illness or injury, death in the immediate family, religious obligation, an emergency, or other exceptional circumstances. Please note: that a child's first 9 absences can be excused by a parent/guardian by a phone call; however, all absences beyond absence number 9 require official written documentation (doctor's note, court papers...) in order to be considered excused. The Board policy, in accordance with state law, is that a child is considered "truant" when he/she has four unexcused absences in one month or ten unexcused absences in one year. The school will work with parents to improve attendance rather than impose punitive measures; however, when all options have been exhausted, a referral to state authorities is required. A habitual truant is any student who has twenty unexcused absences within a school year. Every effort will be made by the principal, the school counselor or the school nurse to notify the parent/guardian of attendance concerns and the potential of a state referral and to resolve the matter through cooperation between school and families. Parents will be requested to attend a meeting at the school to resolve any potential truancy concerns prior to a referral to state authorities.

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10 percent or more of school in an academic year. Research has found that missing that much school was associated with declining academic performance, starting as early as kindergarten. Monitored regularly, this 10 percent measure can be used early in the academic year to identify students before poor attendance adversely affects academic performance.

Birthdays

We love celebrating our students and understand how special birthdays are! However, to maintain a safe and inclusive environment for all children, we kindly ask that no food, goodie bags, or trinkets be sent in for classroom celebrations.

A wonderful alternative is to become a "Birthday Reader." You're invited to choose your child's favorite book and either visit the classroom (in person or virtually) to read it aloud. This is a meaningful way to celebrate your child while encouraging a love of reading! If you'd like, the book can also be donated to the classroom library in your child's honor.

To respect everyone's privacy and feelings, party invitations may not be handed out at school or on the bus. Due to confidentiality rules, we're also unable to share contact information for other students. If you're planning a party outside of school and would like to send invitations through the classroom, please speak with your child's teacher ahead of time. In some cases, the teacher may be able to discreetly distribute invitations to the whole class or to "all the girls" or "all the boys," if arrangements are made in advance.

Thank you for helping us create a positive and respectful school environment for all children!

BOE Policies

The Naugatuck Board of Education maintains policies that address: student discipline, non-discrimination, sexual harassment and alcohol, tobacco and drugs, bullying, cell phones / wearable technology and attendance. These policies and all Board of Education Policies are available in the school office, at the Board of Education and on the Naugatuck Public Schools website.

Policy

In accordance with state law, it is the policy of the Naugatuck Board of Education that any form of bullying behavior is expressly forbidden. Under the policy: students are able to report acts of bullying to teachers and administrators; parents/guardians may file written reports of suspected bullying; school faculty and staff are required to report to administrators witnessed acts or student reported acts; administrators must investigate alleged acts; language addressing bullying acts must be included in student codes of conduct; administrators must, with a verified act of bullying, notify both the parent/guardian of the student committing the act and the victim of the act; schools must track such acts and maintain records as required by applicable law(s).

Overt acts, which occur off campus (and not at a school-sponsored activity), may also constitute bullying if it is determined that they have a direct and negative impact on a student's academic performance or safety at school. Cyberbullying, defined as the use of computer systems, including email, instant messaging, text messaging, blogging or the use of social networking websites, or other forms of electronic communications, to commit acts of bullying"

Cell Phones and Wearable Technology

Students may bring cell phones and wearable technology to school but must have devices on silent mode. Phones and wearable technology should remain completely out of view -in the student's backpack for the entire day, including the bus ride.

Bus Rules

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:

- Parents are responsible for the conduct of their children while they are waiting for the bus and once they leave the bus.
- It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that the student is waiting at his/her designated stop on time. Should a student miss the bus, the parent must find alternate means of transporting the child to school.
- During inclement weather, a bus driver may determine that a hill or street cannot be negotiated safely. It is the parents' responsibility to make alternate arrangements to ensure that their child arrives at school or home.
- The Naugatuck Schools respect the right of parents to keep their child home from school when the parent feels unsafe conditions exist. Announcements of school closings, delays in school opening, or early closings are made on local radio stations.
- If special transportation needs are required, an application form can be obtained from the school office. Applications must be received by July 1 of each school year.

School Bus Expectations for Students:

- The bus driver is the adult in charge and is responsible for keeping everyone safe. Please follow their instructions at all times.
- Find your seat quickly after boarding and remain seated while the bus is moving.
- Please use respectful language and quiet voices. Loud talking or inappropriate behavior is not allowed.
- Food and drinks should be kept in backpacks—eating on the bus is not permitted.
- Only open windows with the driver's permission, and keep all belongings and body parts safely inside the bus.

- Help keep the bus clean and safe by not throwing anything inside or outside the vehicle.
- Keep personal items, including cell phones, in your backpack until you get home.
- For your safety, do not lean or hang out of the windows at any time.
- Students must use the front door to get on and off the bus, unless there is an emergency.
- Be on time to your bus stop and help the bus stay on schedule by being ready to board promptly.
- Always wait for the driver's signal before crossing the street, and be sure to look both ways before stepping onto the road.
- While waiting for the bus, stay safely off the roadway and stand back from the curb or street edge.
- Sit only in your assigned seat and remain there for the entire ride unless directed otherwise by the driver.

Penalties for Violations:

- Parents will be responsible for any damages or defacing of the bus caused by their child.
- If a student does not follow the bus rules, the driver will report the behavior to the school principal promptly.
- Suspension from bus riding is considered a last resort and will be determined by the principal after parents have been informed. This decision can be reviewed by the Superintendent.
- Visible cell phones on the bus will be collected and held in the school office until a parent can pick them up.

Important Reminder

If your child will be picked up by a parent or another adult instead of riding the bus, please send a note to school. The adult picking up your child must follow dismissal procedures and present proper identification. If a student insists on going home with another student or on a different bus without prior notice, we will contact parents to confirm. If we are unable to reach anyone, your child will be sent home their usual way.

For everyone's safety and to help prevent vandalism, our school buses are equipped with video cameras.

Western School's Approach to Behavior and Discipline

At Western School, we believe in teaching and encouraging positive behavior. Through Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, we aim to help all students succeed both academically and socially. Our school-wide expectations, known as the "5 Bees," provide a shared language and consistent expectations across all areas of the school. These are:

- Be(e) Safe
- Be(e) Peaceful
- Be(e) Respectful
- Be(e) Kind
- Be(e) Cooperative

These expectations are taught explicitly, practiced regularly, and reinforced by all staff. Students are expected to follow them throughout the school day—including on the bus, during school-related events, and in emergency situations.

In addition to Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, our classrooms use strategies from the Responsive Classroom approach. This student-centered, social-emotional learning model helps build a safe and welcoming environment where every child feels valued. You may hear about strategies such as class charters (shared classroom agreements), Morning and Closing Circles, team-building activities, and logical consequences. These practices promote accountability, empathy, and community.

When a student makes a mistake or breaks a rule, we respond with logical consequences that are respectful, relevant, and help repair relationships. Consequences might include a break from the activity, an apology, a loss of privilege, an assigned seat, or, in more serious cases, after-school detention or suspension. Parents will be contacted for any significant consequence such as detention or suspension. Every situation is handled individually with care and consideration.

If a student consistently struggles with behavior, the teacher, school counselor, or behavior support assistant will reach out to parents to discuss support strategies and possible next steps through our tiered intervention system.

Serious Behavior Concerns

Some behaviors are considered serious and require immediate attention. These include:

- Physical aggression or fighting
- Threatening, intimidation, or harassment
- Dangerous actions or possession of harmful objects
- Theft or vandalism
- Use or possession of alcohol, tobacco, or controlled substances
- Sexual harassment or bullying
- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Verbal or physical threats to students or staff

Serious infractions will result in parent contact, an investigation, and appropriate consequences, including possible suspension. Criminal behavior will be referred to the police, and all Board of Education policies will be followed.

We take behavior and safety seriously—not as punishment, but as part of creating a school where every child can thrive. Our goal is always to teach, support, and help students grow into responsible, caring community members.

Dress Code

Students are encouraged to wear clothing and shoes that keep them safe, especially on the stairs, and to choose attire that supports a positive and respectful learning environment for everyone. Sneakers are required for Physical Education to ensure safety during activities. To help maintain this environment, we kindly ask that students avoid wearing shorts or skirts above mid-thigh, strapless tops, low-cut or midriff-baring shirts, hats inside the building, slippers, shoes with heels, high heels, slides, and flip-flops. Thank you for helping us keep our school safe and welcoming for all.

Homework

Homework is an important part of learning that helps students build responsibility and reinforce skills. We believe in meaningful assignments that support our children's growth without overwhelming them. Students are expected to read at least 20 minutes each night as part of our school-wide literacy program (American Reading Company–ARC CORE), and to engage in math practice regularly throughout the week. Teachers provide guidance and strategies to help every student succeed.

Homework serves to supplement classroom learning, offer extra practice, make up for absences, and develop independence and good study habits. Parents play a vital role by staying informed about homework expectations, providing a quiet space and time for work, encouraging independence, and communicating with teachers if challenges arise.

Medical Information

Allergies

- Please notify the nurse if your child has or develops an allergy because a student plan will need to be developed by the nurse, you and your child's doctor.
- Children with a food allergy should only eat food items provided by their parent. Parents should stress to their child not to *share* food in school or on the bus. Our nurse and staff will work with students to reinforce this practice.

Communicable Diseases

- Please notify the nurse if your child has a communicable disease, such as strep throat, chicken pox, German measles, whooping cough, scarlet fever, conjunctivitis (pink eye), impetigo, scabies, ringworm, head lice, etc. This will help protect all children.

Immunization Requirements

- There are immunization requirements for children who attend CT public schools. Please contact your child's pediatrician or the school nurse for a list of these requirements.

Medication

- Because we care deeply about the health and safety of all our students, we ask that any prescription or over-the-counter medicines be brought to school by an adult and delivered directly to the nurse. Prescription medications should be in their original pharmacy container, and over-the-counter items must be in their original packaging. To ensure proper care, school staff can only administer medication with a written doctor's order. Until then, parents are welcome to come to school to give medication as needed.

- For the safety and well-being of all students, cough drops should be brought to the nurse's office when your child arrives, and your child will be asked to stay in the nurse's office while using them. Similarly, "Chapstick" may only be applied in the nurse's office. If you have any questions about medications or health concerns, please don't hesitate to contact our school nurse at 203-720-5245.
- To keep everyone safe, please remember to pick up any medications before the last day of school, as any remaining medications will be properly discarded after that day.

Parent Square Communications App

This service will provide notification services for emergency broadcasts, weather-related notices, and parental outreach. Please make sure to keep your email address, emergency phone number and general notification number up-to-date. You can easily download the Parent Square App for free on your phone.

What to do if I have a concern about my child?

If you have any questions or concerns about your child, please start by contacting your child's teacher via email, ParentSquare, or phone. If the issue isn't fully resolved, you are encouraged to schedule a meeting with the principal for additional support. Both teachers and the principal can be reached through the Western School website (naugatuck.k12.ct.us), and we strive to respond to all communications within 24 hours.

Peanut Safe School

At Western School, we have several students with severe food allergies, including allergies to all nuts and nut products. Because these allergies can cause serious reactions even from touch, we have created a "nut-safe" environment to help keep everyone safe. We kindly ask families to avoid sending snacks containing nuts or peanut butter to school. To protect all students, holidays and celebrations at school are observed without food.

Hand washing is an important part of keeping our community safe. If your child has eaten nut products before school, please remind them to wash their hands thoroughly, as peanut butter residue can easily transfer to shared items. Some great alternatives to peanut butter include soy or sunflower butter, cheese and crackers, cream cheese and jelly sandwiches, and tortilla rolls.

Thank you for helping us create a safe and welcoming environment for all our students.

Safety Drills

Under Connecticut law, each school is required to conduct certain safety drills in school each year. We will educate students about these codes and review them on a regular basis. We do not want to alarm children, only prepare them to act safely in all instances, and we will use discretion and tactfulness at all times. Parents who have questions or concerns about the drills may contact the principal or the Director of Security.

Hours

Regular Day Schedule

8:40 – Students arrive and go to their classrooms

8:55 – Academic day begins

3:25 – Parent Pick Up /Dismissal

Early Dismissal Schedule

8:40 – Students arrive and go to their classrooms

8:55 – Academic day begins

1:00 – Dismissal

2-Hour Delayed Opening (no breakfast)

10:40 - Students arrive and go to their classrooms

10:55 – Academic day begins

3:25 – Parent Pick Up /Dismissal

3-Hour Delayed Opening (no breakfast)

11:40 - Students arrive and go to their classrooms

11:55 – Academic day begins

3:25 – Parent Pick Up /Dismissal

School Records

We are required to follow the law with regard to student records. For further information, please refer to the Board of Education policy #5125. Please contact the school office for the appropriate forms so we may assist you.

Temporary Changes in Student Transportation

Due to concerns regarding student safety, Western School personnel cannot accept messages over the telephone requesting that the child's mode of transportation to go home be changed.

Arrangements will need to be made in advance, with the normal mode of transportation only being altered under the following two conditions:

- The child comes to school with a signed and dated note from the parent (see attached blue form). The note would be given to the classroom teacher, who would then forward it to the office.
- The parent personally comes into the school office and makes the request. The office will call the child so the message can be relayed to him/her. The parent will also be asked to put the request in writing.

If the above arrangements have not been made, the child will be sent home according to their usual mode of transportation.

Parent Signature Return Slip

Each teacher has reviewed the school rules with their students. We ask that parents also take time to review the school policies and procedures with their child(ren) at home to help reinforce these important expectations. After this discussion, please sign and return this page of the handbook. We encourage you to keep the remaining information for future reference and to revisit the handbook periodically with your child throughout the year. Thank you for your partnership.

I have received a copy of the 2025-2026 Western School Handbook and have reviewed its contents.

Parent Signature: _____ Date _____

Student's Name: _____



Bus Safety Student Agreement

I understand my child must follow all bus safety rules. I will ensure they are on time, respectful, and safe on the bus. I know the driver is in charge, and unsafe behavior may lead to consequences, including suspension from riding the bus. Parents may also be held responsible for any damage caused.

Details about bus expectations and consequences can be found in the Student Handbook on pages **6 & 7**.

Students agree to:

- Stay seated
- Use kind words
- Keep hands, feet, and items inside
- Keep personal items in backpacks
- No throwing objects

I understand the rules for riding the school bus to and from school, as well as on Field Trips (all students should return this slip signed), and have reviewed them with my child.

Parent Signature: _____ Date _____

Student's Name: _____

