

West Muskingum High School

STUDENT HANDBOOK

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2025 - 2026 School Year



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Adopted by the West Muskingum Board of Education

WELCOME! “IT’S A GREAT DAY TO BE A TORNADO!”

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to West Muskingum High School. The faculty, staff and administration hope you have an amazing experience and are successful in your studies. This handbook has been compiled to give you the necessary information about our school. As a student at WMHS, it is important that you know and understand both the opportunities and the expectations that are in place to support and enhance the learning community. Each of you are responsible for knowing the contents of this handbook. Let’s have an amazing school year, Tornadoes!

West Muskingum High School Vision Statement

The vision of West Muskingum High School is to provide students an excellent and equitable opportunity to achieve their greatest potential, now and in the future, to meet the challenges they face in a diverse and ever-changing world. We believe that our school should provide students with the means to access the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to become contributing members of our society. Our school program should operate in a safe and caring environment which enhances student learning. We believe that the school shares all these responsibilities with both the home and the community. Given the appropriate learning conditions, we believe that all students can and will learn. We accept the responsibility as a learning community to make this vision a reality.

This Handbook replaces all prior handbooks and other written material on the same subjects. This Handbook reflects the current status of the Board’s policies and the School’s rules. If any of the policies or administrative guidelines referenced herein are revised, the language in the most current policy or administrative guideline prevails. Copies of current Board policies and administrative guidelines are available on the district website.

ALMA MATER

Poised upon a hill top proudly
Reaching toward the sky.
Stands our noble alma Mater,
West Muskingum High.

Hail to the dear Alma Mater
School so brave and true,
May you always be a symbol,
Of the gold and blue.

FIGHT SONG

Fight the team across the field,
Show them that West is here.
Set the earth reverberating,
With a mighty cheer,
(Rah! Rah! Rah!)
Hit them hard and see how they fall
Never let that team get the ball
Hail, Hail! The gang's all here,
For the victory of West M. High.

SCHOOL COLORS - Royal Blue and Gold

MASCOT - Tornado



ACADEMIC PROGRAM

West Muskingum High School is known for its commitment to academic excellence. Please refer to the Course Offerings Booklet (distributed in the spring) for a detailed description of the West Muskingum High School academic program.

GRADING

The following grading scale will be used by each teacher:

90-100	=	A
80-89	=	B
70-79	=	C
60-69	=	D
59-0	=	F

Teachers will use numerical grades through a given marking period and average them at the end of the grading period. The numerical average would then be converted to a letter grade on the above scale. There will be a minimum of 50% entered for each quarter grade. Semester grades would be the numerical average of the 2 grading periods. The yearly or final grade would be the average of the 4 grading periods. This would be converted to a letter grade on the above scale. Grades of 'Incomplete' must be made up within 30 calendar days.

COLLEGE CREDIT PLUS

College courses offered to students who have qualified to participate in the CCP program. Students must meet with their school counselor and meet program deadlines and requirements.

HONOR ROLL

A student must have a 3.0 grade point average with no grade below a C through the first 3 quarters.

PRINCIPAL'S LIST

A student must have a 3.5 grade point average with no grade below a B through the first 3 quarters.

ACADEMIC AWARDS

Formal recognition of academic achievement is done through the presentation of academic awards.

AWARDS AND CRITERIA

1. Must be a full-time student at West Muskingum High School.
2. Students who meet the criteria for Honor Roll or Principal's List will receive an academic award in May of each school year.

END OF COURSE EXAMS

End of course exams, or other assessments designed to measure student growth shall be administered when available, as required by Ohio Revised Code.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM

West Muskingum High School conducts an Advanced Placement Program with several course offerings. The Advanced Placement examinations are offered by the College Board, a non-profit membership organization that provides tests and other educational services for students, schools and colleges. The membership is composed of more than 2,600 colleges, schools, school systems and education associations.

Students who have completed college level work in the Advanced Placement class at West Muskingum High School are looking forward to the following benefits as a result of taking the examinations:

Exemption by their college or university from beginning courses and permission to take higher level courses in certain fields.

Tuition savings - up to a year of credit may be given for three or more qualifying AP grades.

Time to explore undergraduate subject areas that they wouldn't otherwise be able to study.

Eligibility for honors and other special programs open to students who have received AP recognition.

For further information on the AP program, see the AP Coordinator, your guidance counselor, or the current course description guide. In recognition that the Advanced Placement and College Credit Plus course requirements represent a much more rigorous curriculum than all other high school level coursework, grades in AP and CCP classes will be weighted on a 5 point scale, used in determining GPA and class rank as follows:

A= 5 quality points
B= 4 quality points
C= 3 quality points
D= 2 quality points
F= 0 quality points

The reasoning for this is to recognize and reward students for challenging themselves. It brings our high school more into line with other high schools that have well developed AP and CCP programs.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Complete Courses and Requirements

- English language arts 4 credits
- Health ½ credit
- Mathematics 4 credits
- Physical education ½ credit
- Science 3 credits
- Social studies 3 credits
- Electives 4.5 Credits
- Fine Arts 1 Credit
- Financial Literacy ½ credit

Demonstrating Competency - Students will demonstrate competency in the foundational areas of English language arts and mathematics or through alternative demonstrations, which include College Credit Plus, career-focused activities or military enlistment.

Demonstrating Readiness - Students will demonstrate readiness for their post-high school paths by earning two seals that allow them to demonstrate important foundational and well-rounded academic and technical knowledge, professional skills, as well as develop key social and emotional competencies and leadership and reasoning skills.

Additional up to date information is also available at education.ohio.gov
(search: graduation requirements)

SENIOR INFORMATION

1. Students may have their pictures taken by the photographers of their choice.
2. Students must submit a picture to the yearbook advisor or designee by the established due date for their picture to be included in the yearbook.
3. Students must have completed the required 21 credits including the courses required by the State of Ohio to participate in the graduation ceremony.
4. Students having unpaid fees will NOT be permitted to go through the Graduation ceremony.
5. Students must complete a Mandatory State of Ohio Senior Exit Survey before receiving their diploma

* This is subject to change due to legislation regulations.

CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Archery Club	Art Club	Class Officers
FCA	F.B.L.A	Student Council
FFA	Film Club	Foreign Lang. Club
Key Club	Kindness Club	National Honor Society
H.S Yearbook		

All class and organization officers must be passing four (4) units of credit to be ELIGIBLE FOR ELECTION.

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

National Honor Society is a prestigious organization made up of selected juniors and seniors. This organization prides itself on the four pillars: Scholarship, Leadership, Service and Character. For selection into NHS a student must maintain a 3.5 GPA and participate in school activities and community service. Selection procedures will be given to eligible juniors and seniors. Those that choose to be considered will be evaluated by a five-member Faculty Council and invited to the induction ceremony, which is held in the fall each school year.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The rules and procedures of the School are designed to allow each student to obtain a safe, orderly, and appropriate education. Students can expect their rights to freedom of expression and association and to fair treatment as long as they respect those rights for their fellow students and the staff. Students will be expected to follow teacher directions and obey all school rules. Disciplinary procedures are designed to insure due process (a fair hearing) before a student is removed because of his/her behavior. Parents have the right to know how their child is succeeding in school and will be provided information on a regular basis and as needed, when concerns arise. Many times, it will be the responsibility of the student to deliver that information.

If necessary, the mail or hand delivery may be used to insure contact. Parents are encouraged to build a two-way link with their student's teachers and support staff by informing the staff of suggestions or concerns that may help their child better accomplish his/her educational goals.

The staff expects students to arrive at school prepared to learn. It is the student's responsibility to arrive on time and be prepared in the educational program.

Adult students (age 18 or older) are expected to follow all school rules. If residing at home, adult students should include their parents in their educational program.

STUDENT WELL - BEING

Student safety is a responsibility of the staff. All staff members are familiar with emergency procedures such as fire and tornado drills and accident reporting procedures. Should a student be aware of any dangerous situation or accident she/he must notify any staff person immediately.

State law requires that all students must have an emergency medical card completed, signed by a parent or guardian, and filed in the School office. A student may be excluded from school until this requirement has been fulfilled.

Students with specific health care needs should submit those needs, in writing and with proper documentation by a physician, to the School office. All medications, prescribed and non-prescribed, are to be delivered to the office and taken only with adult supervision. The administration is available to discuss the procedure for medications and treatments. No medications or medical treatments are to take place in school without his/her knowledge.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

Search of a student and his/her possessions, including vehicles, may be conducted at any time the student is under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education. Searches can take place if there is a reasonable suspicion that the student is in violation of law or school rules. A search may also be conducted to protect the safety of others. All searches may be conducted with or without a student's consent.

Students are provided lockers, desks and other equipment in which to store materials. It should be clearly understood that this equipment is the property of the school and may be searched at any time if there is reasonable suspicion that a student has violated the law or school rules. Locks are to prevent theft, not to prevent searches.

Anything that is found in the course of a search that may be evidence of a violation of school rules or the law may be taken and held or turned over to the police. The School reserves the right not to return items which have been confiscated.

LOCKERS

Each student is assigned a locker and corresponding combination at the beginning of the school year. **Students are responsible for keeping their locker locked at all times.**

The school **will not assume responsibility** for lost or stolen articles. The lockers are the property of the West Muskingum Local School District.

CARE OF PROPERTY

Students are responsible for the care of their own personal property. The school will not be responsible for personal property or cell phones. Valuables such as jewelry or irreplaceable items should not be brought to school. Damage to or loss of school equipment and facilities wastes taxpayers' money and undermines the school program. Therefore, if a student does damage to or loses school property, the student or his/her parents will be required to pay for the replacement or damage. If the damage or loss was intentional, the student will also be subject to discipline according to the Student Discipline Code.

DRESS CODE AND GROOMING

While fashion changes, the reason for being in school does not. Students are in school to learn. Any fashion (dress, accessory, or hair style) that disrupts the educational process or presents a safety risk will not be permitted.

The following dress regulations are to be followed:

1. Shoes are to be worn by all students.
2. Shorts may be worn, unreasonable short-skirts and shorts are not permitted. All dresses, skirts and shorts can not be any higher than the students' fists when their arms are extended down by their sides.
3. Strapless tops & halter tops, strapless dresses, spaghetti straps, midriff shirts are not permitted. All tops, shirts, and blouses must have two straps, one over each shoulder connected from the front to the back. Any top, shirt or blouse worn must have the bottom of it touch the top of the skirt, pants or shorts.
4. Head Coverings and sunglasses are not to be worn in the building.
5. Clothing with vulgar or obscene language and/or graphics are not to be worn.
6. Clothing that is offensive or discriminatory in nature is not to be worn.

7. Clothing with excessive rips, tears or holes cannot be any higher than the students' fists when their arms are extended down by their sides.
8. Chains or sharp pointed articles cannot be worn as a part of clothing or clothing ornaments.

Students in violation of the dress code will either be warned or sent home to change depending on the nature of the violation. If a student has multiple warnings, discipline may be assigned.

Students who are representing West Muskingum High School at an official function or public event may be required to follow specific dress requirements. This applies to athletic teams, cheerleaders, and other co-curricular groups.

Since fashions and designs constantly change and issues may arise which are not addressed by the above guidelines, it is the duty and responsibility of the building administrators to make individual decisions on each new situation so as to maintain the general philosophy stated within this policy.

ATHLETICS - SPORTSMANSHIP

West Muskingum High School is a member school of the Muskingum Valley League and competes interscholastically in a variety of sports. Students are encouraged to participate in athletics. The following is a list of sports.

West Muskingum High School participates in:

Baseball	Boys/Girls Golf	Boys/Girls Basketball
Boys/Girls Soccer	Boys/Girls Track	Football
Cross Country	Cheerleading	Volleyball
Softball	Boys/Girls Swimming	Wrestling

The WMHS Athletic department has also created a District Student Athlete Handbook. This handbook is a more comprehensive outline of our policies that guide our athletic programs. Please refer to the Athletic Policy Handbook below for more information regarding our athletic programs and the expectations placed on our student athletes.

[West Muskingum Athletic Policy](#)

NCAA REGULATIONS

Any student who is pursuing D1 or DII athletics at the collegiate level should make themselves familiar with NCAA guidelines. It is the responsibility of the student and parent to make sure the student is meeting all academic criteria set forth by the NCAA. More information can be found at:

<https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>

HOMECOMING QUEEN, ATTENDANTS AND OFFICERS

The Student Council and advisor will be in charge of the homecoming activities excluding the dance.

1. There will be 1 homecoming queen, 1 homecoming king, 2 senior attendants, 2 senior escorts, and 1 attendant and escort from the junior, sophomore, and freshman class.
2. Selected faculty members will count all ballots.
3. Student Council will be in charge of the pep assembly and ceremony held the Friday of the homecoming game
4. Student council will announce the winner of the Homecoming King and Queen.
5. All freshman and sophomore attendants and escorts are not eligible for homecoming court election again until their senior year.
6. The senior class will be in charge of the Homecoming dance.
7. Escorts will be chosen from the attendant's class and must be a student of WMHS.

PASSES

1. Students must have a valid hall pass if they are in the halls, rest rooms, or outside the building while classes are in session.
2. Passes are good for only the destination noted on them.
3. Students are also expected to use SmartPass, which is our electronic pass system that allows us to appropriately monitor our students throughout the building.

ATTENDANCE

The educational program offered at West Muskingum is predicated upon the presence of the student and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. Attendance shall be required of all students enrolled in the schools during the days and hours that the school is in session or during the attendance sessions to which she/he has been assigned.

A student in grades 9 through 12 may be considered a full-time equivalent student provided the student is enrolled in at least five (5) units of instruction, as defined by State law, per school year.

In accordance with statute, the Superintendent shall require, from the parent of each student of compulsory school age or from an adult student who has been absent from school or from class for any reason, a written statement of the cause for such absence. The Board of Education reserves the right to verify such statements and to investigate the cause of each single absence or prolonged absence.

The Board considers the following factors to be reasonable excuses for time missed at school:

- A. Personal illness (a written physician's statement verifying the illness may be required)
- B. Illness in the family necessitating the presence of the child
- C. Quarantine of the home
- D. Death in the family
- E. Necessary work at home due to absence or incapacity of parent(s)/guardian(s)
- F. Observation or celebration of a bona fide religious holiday
- G. Out-of-state travel (up to a maximum twenty-four (24) hours per school year that the student's school is open for instruction) to participate in a District-approved enrichment or extracurricular activity
 - **A parent note can be used 5 times a semester. After that, there must be a Dr. note to be considered an excused absence for medical reasons.**

EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

When a student of compulsory school age is absent from school with or without legitimate excuse for thirty-eight (38) or more hours in one school month, or sixty-five (65) or more hours in a school year, the attendance officer shall notify the child's parent or guardian of the child's absences, in writing, within seven (7) school days after the date of the absence that triggered the notice requirement. At the same time written notice is given, any appropriate intervention action listed herein may be taken.

A student will be considered habitually truant if the student is of compulsory school age and absent without a legitimate excuse for thirty (30) or more consecutive hours, for forty-two (42) or more hours in one (1) school month, or for seventy-two (72) or more hours in one (1) school year.

Legitimate excuses for the absence of a student who is otherwise habitually truant include but are not limited to:

- A. The student was enrolled in another school district
- B. The student was excused from attendance in accordance with R.C. 3321.04; or
- C. The student has received an age and schooling certificate

INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

In order to address the attendance practices of a student who is habitually truant, an intervention team may, as part of an intervention plan, take any of the following intervention actions:

- provide counseling to the student
- notify the Registrar of Motor Vehicles of the student's absences
- take appropriate legal action
- assignment to an alternative school (Note: If the District has established an alternative school, it must appear as an alternative intervention strategy.)

In the event that a student becomes habitually truant within twenty-one (21) school days prior to the last day of instruction of a school year, the Principal or designee may, work with the child's parent/guardian/custodian, guardian ad litem, or temporary custodian to develop an absence intervention plan during the summer.

The absence intervention process shall commence upon the first day of instruction of the next school year.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The attendance officer shall file a complaint in the juvenile court against a student on the sixty-first (61st) day after the implementation of an absence intervention plan or other intervention strategies, provided that all the following apply:

- The student is habitually truant
- The school district or school has made meaningful attempts to re engage the student through the absence intervention plan, other intervention strategies, and any offered alternatives to adjudication, if applicable
- The student has refused to participate in or failed to make satisfactory progress on the plan as determined by the absence intervention team, or any offered intervention strategies or alternative to adjudication.

ATTENDANCE (CONT.)

The District shall report to the Ohio Department of Education, as soon as practicable, and in a format and manner determined by the Department any of the following occurrences:

- When a notice that a student has been absent with or without legitimate excuse for thirty-eight (38) or more hours in one (1) school month, or sixty-five (65) or more hours in a school year is submitted to a child's parent/guardian/custodian, guardian ad litem, or temporary custodian.
- When a child of compulsory school age has been absent without legitimate excuse from the public school the child is supposed to attend for thirty (30) or more consecutive hours, forty-two (42) or more hours in one school month, or seventy-two (72) or more hours in a school year.
- When a child of compulsory school age who has been adjudicated an unruly child for being a habitual truant violates the court order regarding that adjudication.
- When an absence intervention plan has been implemented for a child under this policy.
- This policy was developed after consultation with the judge of the juvenile court of Muskingum County with child's parent/guardian/custodian, guardian ad litem, or temporary custodian or other persons having care of the students attending school in the district, and with the appropriate State and local agencies.

REPORTING ABSENCES

A parent or guardian should contact the school by 8:30 A.M. on the day of the absence to report the student's absence. The student will remain unexcused until their guardian communicates the reason for the absence with the school.

SIGNING IN & OUT OF SCHOOL

Students arriving late or leaving early must sign in or out in the main office. In order for a tardy to be excused, a note or phone call from a parent or guardian must be submitted. Students leaving early are expected to bring a note to school prior to dismissal or an adult must come in and sign the student out. Notes for early dismissals are required to be submitted to the office by 10 a.m. It is expected that students will enter and exit the building through the main lobby area.

Students who are 18 years old and older and still live with a parent or guardian must have parent permission to leave and are not permitted to return until the next day of school.

LATE ARRIVALS/EARLY DEPARTURE

School begins at 8:00 A.M. and dismisses at 2:30 P.M. Students arriving after 9:30 A.M. are counted absent for a partial day. Students departing before 1:10 P.M. are counted absent for a partial day.

ATTENDANCE (CONT.)

TARDY TO SCHOOL

A student who is not in their first period class before the tardy bell rings is tardy and must report to the office before being admitted to their first period class.

Students will not be counted unexcused tardy if they have a medical reason, legal reason or a family emergency as determined by a school official.

If you go beyond 4 unexcused tardies during a semester, progressive discipline can be used to address the situation. This includes the use of after school detention, Friday School, and School Probation (loss of attending extracurricular events, dances, pep rallies, etc.).

TARDY TO CLASS

The teacher and the administration shall make every effort to prevent tardy behavior. Students will be considered tardy when they are not present at the designated beginning time for class. Tardiness will result in a progressive disciplinary action developed by the school; the more tardies a student accrues, the more severe the punishment.

TRUANCY/CUT CLASS

Truancy is defined as being out of school or class for a reason other than the reasons listed under the Ohio Revised Code (ORC). A student who is truant from school or class may not be permitted to make up missed work in the class(s) for the truancy date(s). Truancy from school or class will result in disciplinary action.

AFTER SCHOOL HOURS

No student is permitted in the building thirty minutes after school is dismissed unless they are participating in a regularly scheduled activity with a teacher/coach in charge.

MAKE-UP POLICY (PLANNED ABSENCE)

According to Ohio Law, days missed for family vacation, college visitation, and educational activities sponsored by organizations other than the school are not legal absences. However, it is recognized that circumstances may cause a parent to request that a student be out of school for one of the above reasons and a planned absence policy has been adopted by the Board of Education.

HIGH SCHOOL AND MIDDLE SCHOOL

There is no adequate way to make up for a class that is missed. When a pupil has been absent, it is the pupil's responsibility to contact his/her teacher on the day he/she returns to school and arranges to make up his/her assignments and tests. The time limit for make-up work shall be one day for each day of absence, but may not exceed two (2) weeks after the re-entry to school unless an extension is granted, in writing by the principal. Where the absence is anticipated in advance, such as an operation, the student should arrange a procedure in advance for making up assignments and tests.

*** Work missed because of suspension is to be made up during suspension or when the student returns to school. Students are to make up work missed as directed by the teacher.

Note: School field trips or school-sponsored activities do not count as class absences.

WORK PERMIT

Students working part-time or during vacation are required to have a special type of working permit. Arrangements for part-time working permits will be made through the office.

STUDENT WITHDRAWAL

When a student wishes to withdraw from West Muskingum High School, he/she must obtain a **Student Withdrawal** form from the Guidance Office and follow the procedure described in it. Absolutely no records will be released until the student has completed the withdrawal process.

FEES

The amount of fees for the various courses will be given to the student by each teacher. These fees must be paid in the office to the secretary. Diplomas and transcripts will not be distributed unless fees are paid in full.

VISITORS

1. All visitors must register at the office.
2. All visitors are subject to approval by administration and must have official or appropriate business at the school.

FOOD SERVICES

We utilize a pre-pay system in the Cafeteria. All students will be issued a PIN number which they enter before approaching the cashier. Their purchase amount will either be deducted from their account or the student will pay at that time.

Payschools Central, an online resource to assist in monitoring meal balances, viewing transactions, making payments and setting up low balance alerts, is available through our website. You will need your student's ID number to register.

OR

You may choose to remit a check or cash with your child to their building of attendance.

Parents can limit their child's purchases, and/or request a record of purchases, by contacting the cafeteria staff, or online via Payschools Central.

It is the policy of West Muskingum Schools that no student will miss lunch because lunch money is forgotten. Students may secure two lunch charges under the following guidelines:

- * The regular price lunch charge will entitle the student to a type A lunch.
- * The lunch charge may not exceed \$30.
- * Students will not be permitted to buy "extras" if they have an unpaid charge.

Parents will receive notice of unpaid lunch charges either by written notice or by an automated notification system.

For menus and pricing, please, visit the school's website. Other extras such as pizza, salad, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches are available.

***CLOSED LUNCH - No student is permitted to leave the school grounds during the lunch period.
- Food is not to be ordered in and delivered to the school by outside vendors.**

DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

It is the desire of the faculty and staff at West Muskingum High School to provide each student with the best education and high school experience possible. In order to insure this, a student conduct code is in effect and will be enforced. Please read the code carefully.

CHEATING POLICY

All forms of cheating and plagiarism are wrong and, therefore, prohibited. Behavior that is unacceptable includes but is not limited to:

- Copying another student's homework
- Looking at or copying another student's test or quiz answers
- Taking a test in whole or part to use or give to others
- Providing or receiving tests, quizzes or assignment answers using any method (including use of any electronic or data storage/retrieval device)
- Copying information from a source without proper attribution
- Taking papers from other students, publications, or the internet

Violators of this policy will be disciplined depending on the seriousness of the violation, prior violations, and other factors. Disciplinary measures may include, but are not limited to, notification of parent/guardian by the teacher, receiving a failing grade, detention, Friday School, in-school suspension, out of school suspension or expulsion.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

1. Students are not permitted to use a cell phone during any instructional period throughout the school day. During these periods, students are not permitted to text, make calls, take pictures, view or post on social media, play games, or listen to music from a cell phone or another ED.
2. The use of ED in locker rooms, classrooms, hallways and restrooms is prohibited.
3. Possession of an ED by a student is a privilege, which may be forfeited by any student who fails to abide by the terms of this policy, or otherwise engages in misuse of this privilege.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action and/or confiscation of the ED. If the ED is confiscated, it will be released/returned to the student's parent/guardian after the student complies with any other disciplinary consequences that are imposed. The building principal may also refer the matter to law enforcement if the violation involves an illegal activity.

CONSEQUENCES FOR MISUSE OF AN ELECTRONIC DEVICE

Misuse of a cell phone or another ED will result in progressive discipline, which includes:

1. Teacher retaining the device until the end of class
2. Teacher sending the device to the office for the remainder of the day
3. Office requiring parent pick-up of the electronic device
4. Loss of privilege

DISCIPLINARY POLICIES (CONT.)

PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

WMHS is not the appropriate place for PDA. Repeated violations will result in consequences.

STUDENT SALES & ADVERTISING

- No student is permitted to sell any item or service in school without the approval of the administration.
- No student is permitted to hang signs on school property without first receiving approval from administration.

DETENTION PROCEDURE

1. After school detentions will be served as assigned and will be assigned for up to one hour.
2. Detentions must be served the day they are assigned unless prior arrangements to reschedule are made with the associate principal.
3. Students failing to serve detention will result in further Disciplinary Action.

FRIDAY SCHOOL REGULATIONS

Students assigned to Friday School during the school year will report directly to the Office at 2:35 P.M. on the date assigned. They will be dismissed at 5:35 P.M. At no time will the students be permitted to leave the building or talk. If a student is removed from or fails to serve Friday School for a violation of the rules he/she will receive additional consequences that may include Out of School Suspension.

Students are expected to follow all rules and expectations provided by the Friday School Monitor or they will be subject to further disciplinary action as stated above.

***** Please carefully review our WMHS Student Code of Conduct on the next several pages of this handbook. It is extremely important that all of our students and their guardians understand the behavior expectations for all of our students. Our Student Code of Conduct has been created to make sure that we are able to maintain a safe and comfortable learning environment for all of our students. Violations of our Student Code of Conduct may result in consequences that include detentions, suspensions, and even expulsion for the most serious of violations.**

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

PART 1

Rights and Responsibilities- Students attend West Muskingum Schools under the direction of state law and with the full benefits of constitutional protection for their rights as citizens. They therefore can act, speak, or behave as young citizens within a large scope of options. This code, published in conformity with O.R.C.3313.661, specifies the school expectations. Pupils have a right to reasonable treatment from the school and its employees. The school, in turn, has a right to expect reasonable behavior from students. Freedom carries with it responsibilities for all concerned.

PART 2

Conduct Code- *A violation of any rule may result in disciplinary action, including detention, suspension, emergency removal, expulsion and arrest.*

Rule 1 - Disruption of School - A student shall not, by the use of violence, force, coercion, threat, profanity, lying or by any other method cause disruption, obstruction, or any other interference with the educational process.

Rule 2 - Damage or Destruction of Property

1. School Property: A student shall not intentionally cause or attempt to cause damage or to vandalize school property. Students and/or their parents or guardians will be held fiscally responsible for any property damage caused by the student.
2. Property of Others: A student shall not intentionally cause or attempt to cause damage to property of others.

Rule 3 - Assault - A student shall not cause physical injury or behave in such a way which could threaten to cause physical injury to school staff, other students, or visitors while under the jurisdiction of the school, including inciting other students to fight.

Rule 4 - Dangerous Weapons and Instruments - **A STUDENT SHALL NOT POSSESS, HANDLE, TRANSMIT, OR CONCEAL ANY WEAPON OR INSTRUMENT CAPABLE OF HARMING ANOTHER PERSON, SUCH AS GUNS, KNIVES, ICE PICKS, SWITCHBLADES, BRASS KNUCKLES, ETC. INCLUDED IN THIS PROHIBITION WOULD BE THE USE OF CHEMICALS AND GASSES, INCLUDING MACE. VIOLATION OF THIS RULE COULD RESULT IN SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION FROM SCHOOL.**

Rule 5 - Tobacco - A student shall not possess, use, transmit, or conceal tobacco while on school grounds or facilities, at school sponsored events, in other situations under the authority of the school or in school-controlled vehicles. Tobacco products, for purposes of this provision, encompass counterfeit or “look alike” items or paraphernalia. Substances and paraphernalia includes but is not limited to smokeless tobacco products, e-cigarettes, vapor pens or any other device. “Smoking of electronic cigarettes, “vapor devices”, and other substitute forms of cigarettes whether they contain nicotine or not, are also prohibited.”

Rule 6 - Use or Possession of Alcoholic Beverages or Drugs (Substance Violations)

A student shall not possess, use, sell, offer to sell, buy, attempt to buy, manufacture, be under the influence of, or aid any other student in these actions relating to any substance containing any form of a drug, controlled substance, alcohol, or any other dangerous substance.

Medications and prescription drugs that are authorized for possession or consumption during school should be registered with the school nurse prior to their consumption.

Over the counter drugs are also prohibited from school, without the proper registrations of the medication to the front office.

The possession of, use of, sale of, or purchase of any prohibited substances is prohibited by this rule. Possession of smoking devices or other drug paraphernalia typically used in the consumption of dangerous drugs or controlled substances is also prohibited.

* Substance violations will result in serious consequences, including Out of School Suspensions, Expulsion, and notifying the police. These consequences may differ based on the severity of each situation.

Rule 7 - Insubordination - A student shall not fail to comply with directions of teachers, student teachers, substitute teachers, teacher aides, principal, assistant principal or any other authorized school personnel under the authority of the school personnel. Repeated violations of any minor rule, directive, or discipline procedure shall also constitute insubordination.

Rule 8 - Degrading or Disgraceful Acts - A student shall not engage in any act which degrades, disgraces or tends to degrade, or disgrace himself/herself, a teacher or fellow student, school administrator or visitor, by written, verbal, or gestural means. Included in this prohibition would be use of profanity, obscene gestures, signs, pictures, publications or social media.

Rule 9 - Threats and Intimidation - A student shall not intimidate or threaten physical violence toward any student, teacher, or other school employee or visitor. A student shall not urge or persuade another student to intimidate or threaten anyone with physical violence.

Rule 10 - Theft - A student shall not cause or attempt to take into possession the public property or equipment of school district or the personal property of another student, teacher, visitor, or employee of the school district.

Rule 11 - Disrespect or Misconduct Toward Staff - A student shall not use any form of abusive, profane, offensive, obscene, or disrespectful language or gestures toward any staff member.

Rule 12 - Gambling - No student shall gamble or assist others in gambling.

Rule 13 - Fighting and/or Causing Physical Injury - A student shall not cause or attempt to cause physical injury through fighting or any type of altercation. Additionally, a student shall not behave in such a way as could reasonably cause physical injury to themselves or others.

Rule 14 - Failure to Identify - All students must promptly, upon request, correctly identify themselves to authorized personnel in school buildings, on grounds, on school buses, or at school-sponsored events.

Rule 15 - Repeated Violations of School Rules - A student shall not repeatedly fail to comply with school rules and regulations or directions of any school personnel during any period of time when he/she is properly under the authority of school personnel.

Rule 16 - Transportation - Students must ride only their assigned bus unless approved by their building principal. All students must also comply with all of the regulations and expectations set by their bus driver and the transportation department.

Rule 17 - Harassment - No one, including all students, staff, and visitors shall be subjected to harassment in any form or by any means of communications or actions. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances or any form of improper physical contact, sexual remarks or sexual acts. Harassment shall also include stalking of another person, or any speech or action that creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive environment.

Rule 18 - Inappropriate Use of Computers or Technology - Students may not use any school computers in an unauthorized and/or inappropriate manner.

Rule 19 - Inappropriate Use of Cell Phones or Electronic Devices - Students may not use any electronic communications device in an unauthorized manner.

Rule 20 - Falsification, Forgery, and Cheating

Falsifying Information - No student shall attempt to change, alter or modify any record, document or form required to be submitted or used in the operation of the schools. Falsification also shall include any verbal mis-representation of the information mentioned previously.

Forgery of school or school related documents - No student shall knowingly forge any writing of another or forge any writing so that it purports to be genuine when it is actually false. No student shall submit or attempt to use a forged record, document, or form of identification.

Cheating or plagiarizing - No student shall copy or plagiarize any record or document of another or use a record or document as their own when it is actually someone else's.

Rule 21 - Excessive and/or Physical Horseplay - This includes physical interactions, such as pushing, shoving, wrestling, and tripping. This also includes inappropriate pranks that may cause harm, discomfort, or embarrassment.

Rule 22 - Other - Since all such acts cannot be stated here, it must be understood that a student may be suspended or expelled for these and similar acts which are considered misbehavior, and /or inappropriate conduct.

ADDITIONAL POLICY INFORMATION FROM OUR BOARD OF EDUCATION

ANTI-BULLYING

It is the policy of the West Muskingum Board of Education and School District that acts of bullying are prohibited on school property, at school events or on school buses.

Bullying is considered to include harassment and intimidation, and includes conduct carried out by electronic means, or cyber-bullying.

Students engaged in bullying, including cyber-bullying, face possible suspension. Students who report bullying may request to remain anonymous. Students who make false reports face disciplinary procedures. Threats of harassment or retaliation against reporters will be treated as serious discipline infractions.

Students will be educated about this policy. Students and parents will have made available to them an explanation of the seriousness of cyber-bullying and receive a written policy statement.

Custodial parents or guardians will be notified of and have access to reports of a bullying incident. (This meets the requirement of HB 116)

ANTI-HAZING

It is the policy of the West Muskingum Board of Education and School District that hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational process and shall be prohibited at all times. No administrator, faculty member, or other employee of the school district shall encourage, permit, condone, or tolerate any hazing activities. No student, including leaders of student organizations, shall plan, encourage, or engage in any hazing.

Hazing is defined as doing any act or coercing another, including the victim to do any act of initiation into any student or other organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm to any person. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing does NOT lessen the prohibition contained in this policy.

Administrators, faculty members, and all other employees of the school district shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances or events which might include hazing. If hazing or planned hazing is discovered, involved students shall be informed by the discovering school employee of the prohibition contained in this policy and shall be required to end all hazing activities immediately. All hazing incidents shall be reported immediately to the Superintendent.

Administrators, faculty members, students, and all other employees who fail to abide by this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, and may be liable for civil and criminal penalties in accordance with Ohio law.

The contents of this policy shall be distributed in writing to all students and school district employees following its official adoption by the Board of Education. In addition, this policy shall be incorporated into building, staff, and student handbooks.

SEXUAL AND OTHER FORMS OF HARASSMENT

The Board of Education recognizes that every student has the right to participate and function in school without fear of demeaning remarks or actions. The harassment of students, other staff members, or any other individual is not permitted. This includes any speech or action that creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive environment. Any student who is found to have harassed a staff member or student will be subject to discipline in accordance with law and the Student Code of Conduct. Such an environment is not conducive to the educational, career, personal, and social development of any student. Conduct constituting harassment may take different forms, including but not limited to the following:

Sexual Harassment

A. VERBAL: The making of written or spoken sexual innuendos, suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions, or threats to a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the District.

B. NONVERBAL: Causing the placement of offensive sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or graphic commentaries in the school environment or the making of offensive sexually suggestive or insulting gestures, sounds, leering, whistling, and the like to a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the District.

C. PHYSICAL CONTACT: Threatening or causing unwanted touching, contact, or attempts at same, including patting, pinching, pushing the body, or coerced sexual acts that include but not limited to sexual intercourse with a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the District.

SEXUAL AND OTHER FORMS OF HARASSMENT (CONT.)

Racial/Ethnic/National Origin Harassment

A. VERBAL: Written or oral innuendoes, comments, jokes, insults, threats, or disparaging remarks concerning a person's race, ethnicity, or national origin, etc. toward a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the District.

B. NONVERBAL: Placing objects, pictures, or graphic commentaries in the school environment concerning a person's race, ethnicity, or national origin or making insulting or threatening gestures toward a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the District.

Intentionally conducting a "campaign of silence" toward a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the District by refusing to have any form of social interaction with the person.

C. PHYSICAL: Intimidating or disparaging actions such as hitting, hissing, or spitting on a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the District.

Other actions that are life-threatening such as beating, burning, or shooting, or a threat to do such to a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the District.

Gender/Religious/Disability/Height/Weight Harassment

A. Verbal: Written or oral innuendoes, comments, jokes, insults, threats, or disparaging remarks concerning a person's gender, religious beliefs, disability, height, weight, etc. that are offensive to a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the District.

B. NONVERBAL: Placing objects, pictures, or graphic commentaries in the school environment concerning a person's gender, religious beliefs, disability, height, weight, etc. or making insulting or threatening gestures toward a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the District. Intentionally conducting a "Campaign of silence" toward a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the District by refusing to have any form of social interaction with the person.

C. PHYSICAL: Intimidating or disparaging actions such as hitting, hissing or spitting on a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the District.

Other actions that are life-threatening such as beating, burning, or shooting, or a threat to do such to a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the District.

The Superintendent shall establish administrative guidelines which address the conduct prohibited by this policy and describe a reporting procedure. The Superintendent shall ensure that the prohibited conduct and reporting procedures are available to all students and are posted in appropriate places throughout the District.

REMOVAL, SUSPENSION, EXPULSION AND PERMANENT EXCLUSION OF STUDENTS

The Board of Education recognizes that exclusion from the educational program of the schools, whether by emergency removal, suspension, expulsion, or permanent exclusion, is the most severe sanction that can be imposed on a student in his district, and one that cannot be imposed without due process.

No student is to be removed, suspended, expelled, or excluded from an activity, program, or a school unless his/her behavior represents misconduct as specified in the Student Code of Conduct approved by the Board. In addition to the procedural safeguards and definitions set forth in this policy and the student/parent handbook, the procedures set forth in Policy 2465 shall apply to students identified as disabled under the IDEA and/Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

For purposes of this policy and the Superintendent's administrative guidelines, the following shall apply:

A. "Emergency removal" shall be the exclusion of a student who poses a continuing danger to District property or persons in the District or whose behavior presents an on-going threat of disrupting the educational process provided by the District.

B. "Suspension" shall be the temporary exclusion of a student by the school principal from the District's program for a period not to exceed ten (10) school days.

C. "Expulsion" shall be the exclusion of a student from the schools of this District for a period not to exceed the greater of eighty (80) school days or the number of school days remaining in a semester or term in which the incident that gives rise to the expulsion takes place, unless the incident involves a firearm. If a student brings a firearm on school property, in a school vehicle, or to any school sponsored activities she/he shall be expelled for one (1) year unless the Superintendent reduces the punishment for reasons related to specific circumstances. The Superintendent may expel a student for up to one (1) year if the student brings a knife onto school property, in a school vehicle, or to any school sponsored activity. In compliance with Federal law, the Superintendent shall also refer any student expelled for possession of a firearm to the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system serving the District.

A firearm is defined as any weapon, including a starter gun, which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive, the frame or receiver of any such weapon, any firearm muffler or silencer, or any destructive device. A destructive device, includes, but is not limited to any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four (4) ounces, missal having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, mine, or other similar device. A knife is defined as any cutting instrument consisting of at least one sharp blade.

The specific circumstances under which a Superintendent may modify a one (1) year expulsion could include:

1. A recommendation from the group of persons knowledgeable of the student's educational needs in accordance with Policy 2465 - Suspension/Expulsion of Disabled Students;
2. The student was unaware that she/he was possessing a firearm or knife;
3. The student did not understand that the item she/he possessed was considered a firearm or knife;
4. The student brought the item to school as part of an educational activity and did not realize it would be considered a firearm or knife;

REMOVAL, SUSPENSION, EXPULSION AND PERMANENT EXCLUSION OF STUDENTS (CONT.)

If at any time of a suspension or expulsion, there are fewer days remaining in the school year than the number of days of the suspension or expulsion, the Superintendent may apply any or all of the remaining period to the following school.

D. “Permanent exclusion” shall mean the student is banned forever from attending a public school in the State of Ohio. (See policy 5610.01)

If a student is expelled for more than twenty (20) school days or for any period of time that extends into the next school year, the Superintendent shall provide the student his/her parents with the names, address, and telephone numbers of those public or private agencies in the community which offer programs or services that help to rectify the student’s behaviors and attitudes that contributed to the incident(s) that caused the expulsion.

The Board authorizes the superintendent to provide for options to suspensions/expulsion of a student from school which may include alternative educational options and which shall include a program whereby a student performs community service either in lieu of or a part of a suspension or an expulsion. The Superintendent shall develop guidelines that describe the conditions under which a student may participate in community service and define the types of services considered “service to the community”.

A student that has been expelled by another district temporarily may be denied admission to the district’s schools during the period of expulsion even if that student would otherwise be entitled to attend school with the District. Prior to denying admission, however, the Superintendent shall offer the student an opportunity for a hearing to review the circumstances of the expulsion and any other factors the Superintendent determines to be relevant.

The Board designates the Superintendent as its representative at all hearings regarding the appeal of a suspension. The Board will hear the appeal of an expulsion.

The Superintendent shall develop administrative guidelines which provide appropriate procedures for implementing this policy and ensure compliance with applicable statutes.

VIDEOTAPES ON SCHOOL BUSES

The board of Education has authorized the installation of video cameras on school buses for purposes of monitoring student behavior.

If a student is reported to have misbehaved on a bus and his/her actions were recorded on a videotape, the tape will be submitted to the principal and may be used as evidence of the misbehavior. Since these tapes are considered part of a student’s record, they can be viewed only in accordance with Federal Law.

NOTICE

THE WEST MUSKINGUM LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT AFFIRMS THAT NO PERSON SHALL ON THE BASIS OF RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEX OR DISABILITY BE EXCLUDED FROM PARTICIPATION IN, BE DENIED THE BENEFITS OF, OR BE SUBJECTED TO DISCRIMINATION UNDER ANY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OR ACTIVITY CONDUCTED UNDER ITS AUSPICES.