

WESTMAR MIDDLE SCHOOL



Where students...

R **O** **A** **R**
RESPECT
ORGANIZATION
ACHIEVEMENT
RESPONSIBILITY

TO EXCELLENCE...

Parent - Student Handbook 2016/17

Name: _____

Student's Schedule

Period	Subject	Teacher	Room
HB			
1A			
2A			
3A			
4A			
1B			
2B			
3B			
4B			

Lunch Time: A Day _____ B Day _____

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Welcome To Westmar Middle School

Welcome to the 2016-17 school year. It will be another exciting year at Westmar and with hard work and determination, your time with us will foster academic excellence and lead to positive choices in the future. The administration, faculty, and staff sincerely hope that your school year will be a pleasant and successful educational experience.

Vision/Mission Statement

Our mission is to educate and prepare all of our students to be successful and productive citizens in the 21st century global society. In today's world, all of our students will need a post-secondary education in order to work in a career/job that will earn a living wage. Our educational challenge is to be able to not only get our students to a functionally literate level but also to be able to think critically, problem solve, work in teams, use technology, be self-directed and to demonstrate good citizenship and community service. We are committed to developing a "College & Career Ready Culture" at Westmar in order to support each student's dreams and future goals.

Our Mission:

Every student will have access to the CCRS standards through high quality instruction aligned with the standards every day; and that all teachers are prepared and receive the support they need to implement the standards in their classrooms every day so that students are college and career ready.

A Vision of Excellence begins with a set of powerful beliefs:

We Believe In....

Wellness as a means to enhance individual's self-image as well as intellectual, social, physical and emotional growth
Individualizing educational experiences for all students that remove any barriers to their success and promote independence
Lifelong learning and professional growth as the basis for outstanding instruction and positive outcomes in student learning
Diversity as our strength and means of promoting civility and appreciation for the differences that exists in our learning community
Creating and maintaining a culture of excellence
Academic programs that focus on problem solving, critical thinking, instructional technology and innovation
Trust, respect and the acceptance of responsibility for actions as the foundation for character development in a democratic society
Shared responsibility for fostering a positive and productive school environment.

Courtesy & Consideration of Others

The rules and expectations at Westmar Middle School are centered on two basic principles: Our obligation to provide a safe, orderly environment and common courtesy. These rules affect academic and social success in school, so it is critical that each student and parent/guardian be familiar with them. The use of courtesy enables everyone to feel comfortable in the school and makes learning the main focus of the day. It is our responsibility to restrict behaviors that interfere with teaching and learning. Examples of discourteous behavior include blocking or interfering with the passage of others in the hallways, articles of clothing that may be offensive to others, loud or abusive language and rude comments to staff or other students. Courtesy requires self-control and judgment. Discourtesy - misbehavior - results from making poor choices. Students are held responsible for these poor decisions and will be subject to disciplinary action.

School Motto – ROAR to Excellence

The motto suggests that if our world is to be made better, each of us must begin improving it by taking responsibility for improving ourselves. No matter what we face in life, we have control over our thoughts and actions. We must learn not to blame other people or circumstances for the situation in which we find ourselves. In order to ROAR you must stay focused on the importance of Respect, Organization, Achievement, and Responsibility.

Care Of School Property

In order to maintain a safe and clean environment, we must keep our school and its surroundings in tip-top shape at all times. Defacement or destruction of school property is punishable by suspension and full restitution of damages. It is everyone's

responsibility to report vandalism and to maintain cleanliness in our building. Keep desks, tables, lockers, floors, walls, cabinets, and fixtures clean and free of paper or litter. Do not write, scratch or mark on furniture, walls, doors, or floors. Help keep our school clean, neat, and attractive.

Student Agenda Books:

Every student is required to carry a student agenda book provided to you by the school. The Student Agenda Book is designed to help you R.O.A. R. to success. It is primarily used for communication between your home and our school. As a student, you will record your assignments in it. The agenda book is a vital communication tool for the student, the parent/guardian and the school. Your teachers and parents may write notes to each other in it as well. We ask that you do not tear out or fold pages in the agenda. We hope that you will willingly accept your responsibilities and then enjoy your privileges as a student at one of Maryland's finest middle schools.

Email/Voice Mail Parent Newsletters

Allegany County Public Schools provides email and voice mail to each system employee. Parents wishing to contact teachers via email or voicemail should go to our school Website at <http://acpsmd.org/wm> and select the Staff Directory. The Staff Directory lists each Westmar teacher with the teacher's voice mail number and email. Of course, you may also call the school at (301) 463-5751. To further the lines of communication, our monthly newsletter which includes student highlights, details about upcoming events, schedules, and the cafeteria menus will be posted on our web site.

ASPEN

Allegany County Public Schools (ACPS) uses ASPEN, a secure Internet-based resource that allows teachers to share course materials with students and parents, and lets parents check grades, student records and attendance. Parents can connect to ASPEN through each individual school's Web site. Student reports are private, so only parents or guardians who have obtained an access code can see their child's information.

Accessing Grades/Assignments/Course Schedules

1. Click on the icon for the Aspen Portal (ACPS Website)
2. You will now be at a login screen asking for a Username and Password
 - * The student's username will be last name. first name all in lowercase letters
 - * Each student should have received a 4 digit password
3. At this point, a screen should pop up with the student's name at the top
4. Then click on Academics and this should show the student's grades for the current term.

School Closings & Delays

Please listen to the local radio stations (94.1, GO106.1, WFRB 105.3) or go to the board web page at www.acpsmd.org to determine whether or not school will be delayed or closed during inclement weather. ALL emergency notifications, whether school-based or district-wide, will go out on School Messenger as voice messages from the Central Office. Text message default settings will be turned off; parents and staff will need to activate SMS if interested as normal text messaging rates apply. *DO NOT call radio stations or the school, as this will serve only to slow down communications*

SECTION 1 SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Optional Activities

Westmar Middle School is proud to offer a several extracurricular activities for all students. Each student is encouraged to participate in one or more activities to be a "doer" rather than a "watcher." Your best education is accumulated through experiences beyond the classroom.

Student Government

Principals' Advisory Council

Morning Announcement Crew

Girls and Boys: Volleyball and Basketball

Yearbook Staff

Band/Chorus/Orchestra

Afterschool Program

Co-Curricular Clubs

Value the opportunities Westmar offers, but be sensible in your scheduling. Commitment to academics takes priority over activities. To be eligible to participate in any of the activities or groups representing the school, students must have no more

than one failing subject **and must maintain a 2.0 grade point average (C Average) or higher for the nine-weeks preceding participation**. Also, excessive school absences or school suspensions will prevent participation in activities. The coach or sponsor of the activity will review all expectations for participants as the group meets. Practices and meetings will be scheduled at times convenient to the organization. Students may not miss an individual class or school day to attend an extra-curricular activity if they currently have a D or F in any class that they would miss. Students who are academically at risk need to be in the classroom to receive direct instruction from the teacher and to participate in the class activities, as absences most definitely impact student performances.

Assemblies/Dances/Field Trips

Assemblies are held throughout the school year. At all times the student's behavior should be refined and courteous. An indication of the climate of the school is the conduct of its student body at an assembly. Whether guests are present or not, each student is personally responsible for the impression made by the school as a whole. Unacceptable conduct would include whistling, uncalled-for clapping, making loud noises, and talking during the program. Inappropriate behavior may prevent a student from attending future assemblies.

Approximately once a month, Westmar Middle School will sponsor a school dance. Dances will be scheduled for immediately after school during the week or in the evenings. Cost for the dances will be \$3.00 and will take place in the school gym. Snacks will be available for purchase as well. Parents are required to pick students up promptly at the conclusion of the dance. Students may not leave the gym for any reason and will not be allowed to leave early unless requested by a parent in person or in writing. All school rules for behavior apply during the dances. *Students who are absent the day of a dance, suspended, or have an office referral in the week prior to the dance will not be permitted to attend dances. Recently, we have had problems with students having no transportation home following dances; therefore, any student who is not picked up within 10 minutes after a dance is over will not be permitted to attend the next dance.

The use of field trips as an instructional tool is encouraged. It is the responsibility of the student to exhibit appropriate behavior at all times. Students must be able to follow directions and adhere to school rules and regulations. Students who fail to meet minimum behavior standards in the classroom on a daily basis **may be prohibited** from going on a field trip without parental supervision.

SECTION 2 STUDENT EXPECTATIONS AND GENERAL SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Note To Parents

Good discipline originates in the home. A parent is the first teacher of their child and should develop good behavior habits and proper attitudes toward school. Do you:

- ✓ recognize that the teacher takes the place of the parent while the child is at school?
- ✓ teach the child respect for law, authority, the rights of others, and for public and private property?
- ✓ arrange for prompt and regular attendance and comply with attendance rules and procedures?
- ✓ work with the school in carrying out recommendations made in the best interests of the child, including discipline?
- ✓ talk with the child about school activities; show active interest in report cards and progress?
- ✓ suggest reading magazines, newspapers, and/or books; review class notes and help with long-term research projects?
- ✓ check and approve your child's school attire before he/she leaves the house to make sure they are dressed appropriately?
- ✓ check your child's agenda on a regular basis for assignments/communication to and from the teacher.

Your interest and support at home are important to your child and are greatly appreciated by his/her teachers and the school administration.

Arrival At School

You must stay on school grounds from the time you arrive until dismissal. Students transported by car or walk should arrive no earlier than 7:15 am. Students are not permitted to leave the Barton Lobby/Auditorium until released by the bell. At 7:40 am, you should report to homeroom. Anyone being dismissed during school hours must check out at the office.

Walkers - Establish a "buddy system" with friends with whom you walk home. Always walk with at least one other person and walk directly to and from school. Be safe and watch out for each other.

**Leaving school grounds without permission is NOT permitted under any circumstances. A violation of this rule will result in disciplinary consequences.

Attendance/Tardiness

Regular attendance is essential in order to learn. If you are absent or tardy, you must bring a signed and dated note for the day of your absence or tardiness. Emails are not acceptable. Parents, please make sure that the student's first and last name is clearly legible on the note. The note must include: student's full name, date(s) of absence, reason for absence and parent/guardian signature. The note should be given to your homeroom teacher. If your teacher has not received a note within three (3) days of your absence, the absence will become unexcused. Teachers are not required to provide or accept make-up work for unexcused absences.

Excused reasons for absence from school are as follows: a death in the immediate family; personal illness of the student; quarantine of a household; a court summons; violent storms which could endanger the safety of a student when in transit to and from school; work done because of a national, state, or local emergency; work accepted by school authorities as a reason for excusing the absence; observance of a religious holiday; and educational trips (not to exceed 5 days). *For an educational trip, parents must notify the school two weeks prior to the trip.* If approved, the school will provide make-up work which must be completed and submitted to the school within three days after the student returns to school.

When a student has a medical or professional appointment, a note from that appointment should be supplied within two days. ALL NOTES FROM A PHYSICIAN OR OTHER PROFESSIONAL MUST BE ORIGINAL – COPIES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Upon returning to school, PLEASE GIVE ALL NOTES TO THE ATTENDANCE OFFICE. Parents are encouraged to call school in the morning on a day his/her child is absent. The attendance office staff will make daily phone calls to parents to verify a student's absence.

Vacation A written excuse for vacation must be made at least one week prior to the absence. These notes are to be taken to the Attendance Office and then will be taken to the Principal for approval and then to the student's teachers so that sufficient arrangements can be made for assignments.

Homework During An Absence

A written excuse must be presented in the attendance office following an absence. This is to be done when students arrive and before going to homeroom. Students are responsible for any assignments that may have been missed. All students are expected to make up all work missed when an absence occurs. Students tardy or late to class for lawful reasons will be given the same opportunity to make up work. Teachers will work with students to allow them time to do work missed because of a lawful absence. If a student is going to be absent *THREE OR MORE DAYS*, the parent/guardian may call the school *before 9:00 a.m.* and request that homework be collected. It will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to pick up the homework assignments and any books that may be needed.

Unexcused reasons for missing school include missing the bus, oversleeping, baby-sitting, vacations, uncertified illness of the student, illness in the family, employment, truancy, and lack of transportation.

Excessive Absences

Any student who is absent more than 20 days during the school year with the exception of medical certification of illness, court appearance, or the victim of special circumstances will not be eligible for promotion. The student may be required to attend summer school to meet the requirements for promotion.

- A. When a student accumulates five (5) days of absences regardless of the reason, parents/students will be notified by written communication from the school system. The case will be referred to the school attendance/discipline committee which shall be composed of the principal or his/her designee, the school's pupil personnel worker and other staff members assigned by the principal. The committee may invite the student's parents to come to the school for a conference and to determine available courses of action to improve attendance.
- B. Should absences continue, the parent will be notified by written communication from the school system, no later than the ninth (9) day of absence. Within this written communication, the parent will be asked to schedule a conference with the school administration and or the school pupil services team.

- C. Should absences continue, the parent will be notified again by the school system in writing, no later than immediately after the twelfth (12th) day of absence. The school system will send written communication, by mail. A conference with the parent and/or the student will be held.

At the conference, the principal or designee may indicate one or more of the following outcomes as a result of the conference:

1. Establishing a probationary period with verbal agreement
 2. Developing a written contract (to be signed by the parent)
 3. Assigning to after school detention
 4. Assigning additional days of attendance
 5. Removing school privileges
 6. Restricting extracurricular activities
 7. Explanation given to the parent of the criteria for, and the services provided to, a student who may qualify for Home and Hospital Services, if appropriate, given the situation surrounding the student's absences.
 8. Written notification to the parent will be immediately mailed to the parent, confirming the above action(s) taken.
- D. When a student accumulates a total of twenty absences, with at least five (5) of those absences being unlawful, or ten (10) consecutive unlawful absences, the school's PPW will file charges with the State's Attorney's Office against the parent/guardian and/or the student for non-attendance. This action will be confirmed in a letter written by the PPW to the parent/guardian. The letter will also indicate additional consequences issued by the school which may include retention in the grade (grades K through 8). The student/parent may appeal the school decision by contacting the Supervisor of Pupil Personnel in writing within 10 days.

Late Arrival

If students are late to school, parents must bring the child into the office and sign him/her in. If the student is absent, parents must call the school to verify his/her absence. Students must pick up an "Admit to Class" slip before going to class. Excessive tardiness will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Board of Education of Allegany County Discipline Policy.

You are expected to be in school and in homeroom by 7:40 a.m. Most tardiness can be avoided. If you arrive late, your parent/guardian must sign you in and give a reason for your tardiness to school. Anyone who arrives before 10:00 are marked tardy, but considered present for the entire day. After you have signed in, the main office will issue you an admit slip. You should immediately report to your assigned class. Tardiness to class without a legitimate written pass is unexcused. Students who are tardy to class will be disciplined. Students who are out of class without teacher permission are cutting class and are subject to disciplinary actions.

Early Dismissal

Any student desiring to be excused during the school day must have a parent call and notify the main office or bring a written excuse from home stating the reason and present it to the attendance officer upon his/her arrival to school. If acceptable, permission will be granted and the pupil's name and time to be excused will be placed on the daily absentee bulletin. **Doctor notes should be turned in the following day so that absence can be coded as lawful** If you must leave school during the day, the person picking you up must sign you out at the main office. You are to remain in your assigned class until your parent or guardian arrives. Any person picking you up from school must be on your emergency card or approved by your parent/guardian. Anyone who leaves prior to an hour and one-half before dismissal time will also be counted as one-half day absent.

Students on Property After Hours

It is school policy that students leave the building and grounds after dismissal unless they are participating in a school-sponsored activity. Students may remain with permission of the Administration or a staff member, provided that they have proper supervision by a staff member. If a situation arises that requires the student to remain on school premises for any reason other than those stated, the student or the parent must notify the office.

Emergency Cards

Emergency cards will be distributed at the beginning of the school year. It is very important to fill out the entire card including emergency numbers of relatives, friends or neighbors. *If your address, telephone number, or emergency contacts change during the year, please immediately inform the school in writing.* It is extremely important for the school personnel to be able to

contact parents/guardians or the designated emergency contacts in case of an emergency situation. To ensure the safety of our students, students will only be permitted to leave with individuals listed on their emergency card. Adults checking students out must present photo identification each time the student is picked up.

Transportation

The school principal is responsible for the discipline of students within his/her attendance areas who ride a school bus.

Students who cannot comply with the school bus regulations may be denied the privilege of riding the school bus. When this happens school attendance is still required and parents must make other arrangements for their child to get to school.

Students who cannot comply with the school bus rules and regulations, or who show little regard for the safety and comfort of others may be denied the privilege of riding the school bus.

3 Basic Rules

- ✓ **Be Seated**
- ✓ **Be Respectful/Demonstrate ROAR**
- ✓ **Don't Forget 1 & 2.**

Bus Discipline Referral Guidelines are as follows:

In order to be provided with bus transportation to and from school, students must:

- Be at the assigned bus stop five minutes prior to the arrival of the bus.
- Be seated in an assigned seat facing forward when the bus is in route.
- Keep all parts of their body inside the bus and to themselves.
- Do not throw objects in the bus or out the windows.
- Speak quietly and avoid excessive noise which distracts the driver's attention.
- Refrain from using inappropriate language, including profanity, and avoid speaking in a way that teases, hurts or harasses others.
- Avoid eating, drinking, chewing gum without the permission of the driver.
- Tobacco in any form and vapor products are prohibited.
- Cell phone use, including the camera function, is prohibited.
- Follow the bus driver's directions at all times as soon as they are issued.
- Do not block aisle. Musical instruments must be placed on the lap or under the seat.

Parents are liable for damage caused by their children to the property of others, including the school bus. When children walk to school or to the school bus stop, while they are waiting for the school bus, and when they are on the school bus, they must show consideration and respect for the school bus and the homes and business located along their routes.

Bus Passes

Students are not to change their assigned bus or bus stop, except in cases of emergency. Parents should not request permission for students to ride a bus other than the assigned one, for such an arrangement often results in overcrowding and/or a disruption of the normal seating order. Students will not be permitted to ride a different bus except for emergency childcare. Students may be given permission to ride a different bus depending on the circumstances and nature of the emergency. If there should be an emergency, a written request signed by the affected parent(s) requesting such a change may be accepted. All such requests must be submitted to, and approved by, the office no later than 8:10 a.m. Please be aware that space for additional passengers is limited on several of our buses. Therefore, mass changes to a particular bus may not be possible. A note signed by the principal or vice principal will be issued to the student to ride a different bus or to get off at a different stop. Bus Drivers will not accept a note from a parent to ride a different bus. Special arrangements may be made if the emergency occurs during the school day.

School Breakfast & Lunch

Grab and Go Breakfast is available for all students at no charge every morning from 7:40-7:56. School lunch menus are included in the parent newsletter each month. It will also be posted on our website. The cost of a student lunch is \$2.75. *The main office will not loan students lunch money.* Please plan ahead by bringing in a week's or month's worth of lunch money to be that can be added to student lunch accounts. Students will be given a PIN number that they will be required to remember. Student behavior during lunch is expected to be exemplary. Students who choose to behave in a manner that does not conform

to cafeteria rules will be subject to assigned seating and/or disciplinary action. Westmar Middle School prohibits the consumption of high energy drinks (i.e. Red Bull) during the school day, including at lunch.

Free & Reduced Meals

All students will receive applications for free and reduced-price meals. Those students whose applications have been approved by the Food Service office will be notified in writing. **ALL applications must be turned in to the main office before the deadline listed on the application.** If an application is not received after this deadline, the student will be charged and it is the parent or guardian's responsibility to pay for charges or balances. On a regular schedule, Westmar Middle School will have a breakfast and a lunch program. During half (1/2) days, breakfast will not be served. All financial questions should be directed to the Cafeteria Manager at (301) 463-2651 or Food Service at (301) 722-0637.

Lockers

Students will be assigned their own locker. For security and safety reasons, all students are REQUIRED to keep their lockers locked at all times. Homeroom teachers assign lockers to students during the first week of school. The physical education teachers will assign gym lockers. Students will be issued a gym lock, which they will return at the end of the year. Students should not place money or valuables in lockers and should keep their lockers locked. *No students are to share lockers or leave their books or possessions in another student's locker.* These lockers are public property under the control of the Board of Education and, as such, are liable for search in an emergency or for just cause. You are responsible for any items found in your locker. It is very important that you do not give your combination to anyone. The only way someone can have access to your locker is by giving out your combination. If you have any problems with your locker, contact the assistant principal. Locker clean-outs will be conducted periodically throughout the school year.

Building Evacuations/Emergency Drills

Periodically there will be building planned practice drills (fire, severe weather, and lockdown) and bus evacuations to ensure that you are aware of emergency procedures. During a drill, you must follow the directions of your teacher, line up immediately, and walk quickly and quietly to the designated area for your classroom. Once you have evacuated the classroom, building, or bus, you must continue to listen to the adult in charge for instructions and roll call. No talking is permitted during these drills and evacuations.

Textbooks

Textbooks you are issued are to be cared for properly. Nothing should be written in or on the textbooks except for your name and teacher's name in the proper places. **You must cover all textbooks.** Students are expected to bring covered textbooks to class daily. If you should misplace a book or damage a book, you will be responsible for paying for a replacement copy. If a textbook is lost, a new book will not be issued until the lost book has been paid for. Payment for a book should be brought to the office where you will be given a receipt of payment. The receipt should then be given to the teacher and he/she will issue you a new book.

If a textbook is lost, or if the teacher deems the textbook unuseable, it is to be paid for according to the following schedule:

First year (new book)	100% of the cost
Second year	80% of the cost
Third year	70% of the cost
Fourth year	60% of the cost
Fifth and over years	50% of the cost

A cost of \$5.00 will be charged for minor damage.

Accidents/Accident Insurance

A brochure describing the various types of insurance will be included in student packets that are sent home the first day of school. Types of policies available and the cost of each may vary slightly from year to year.

Health Services

Westmar Middle School is fortunate to have a health nurse. Students who become ill or injured are to go to the health room for medical attention. The parent/guardian will be contacted by the nurse to provide transportation home for his/her child, if necessary. If a parent/guardian or his/her designee cannot be reached, we then must decide if the situation warrants contacting the Rescue Squad for assistance. Any student who is admitted to the health room must either return to class or be transported

home within a reasonable length of time. At no time should a student directly contact a parent to pick him/her up for sickness/health reasons unless he or she has been evaluated by the health nurse.

Medication

The State of Maryland and the Board of Education of Allegany County prohibit the dispensing of medication without a written consent from a physician. Forms are available at most physicians' offices and at all school offices. All medication must be in the properly labeled bottle from the pharmacy. Medication brought to school that is not accompanied by the permission form and signed by both the physician and the parent will not be dispensed to your child. We urge parents/guardians to schedule dosage of medication in such a manner that it may be taken at home when possible.

PARENT/GUARDIAN(S) must bring all medications to school and deliver them to the nurse. Students will not be permitted to transport medications including over-the-counter medicines, cough drops, and cough syrup. Likewise, parent/guardian(s) are responsible for picking up unused portions of medications at the end of the school year or whenever the time period ends for which the medications are prescribed.

All medicine, including over the counter, such as Tylenol, as well as prescriptions, is to be brought to school by an adult, not the student, with a medication form signed by your doctor. The administration of all medications will be by the school nurse. The medication may not be transported on the school bus.

The medication must be brought to school in the original pharmacy container with your name, name of medication, dosage, time of administration, name of prescriber, date of medication order, expiration date of drug and how the drug is to be administered (topical, oral or injection). Medication forms are available in the health room or the main office.

School Debts

All financial payments by pupils will be made at the time of purchase, prior to the deadline date, or at whatever time a financial obligation must be met. There should be no charging of any financial matters. Students who have outstanding debts may not be able to participate in extra school activities (i.e. school dances, field trips, end-of-year activities).

School Telephones

School telephones are not to be used by pupils unless permission has been obtained from the Administration. When ill, students are not to call home and ask parents to pick them up. Administration or the health nurse must make all early dismissals because of illness. Failing to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Flowers & Balloons

Please do not send flowers or balloons to students at school. They have no place to store them, they create disruption, and they are safety hazards on school buses. Send them directly to the student's home.

SECTION 3 **STUDENT DISCIPLINE AND POLICY REGULATIONS**

Student Code of Conduct

Information concerning the following prohibited items are included in The Allegany County Public Schools System-wide Code of Student Conduct Smoking; Alcohol and Drugs; Knives, Weapons, and Explosive Devices.

Disruption of the normal school environment. – According to the Annotated Code of Maryland, a person may not willfully disturb or otherwise willfully prevent the orderly conduct of the activities, administration, or classes of any educational institution. A person may not molest or threaten with bodily harm any student, employee, administrator, agent, or any other individual who is lawfully: (i) on the grounds or in the immediate vicinity of any educational institution, (ii) on a school vehicle, or (iii) at an activity sponsored by a school. Any person who violates any provision of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to a fine not exceeding \$2,500, imprisonment not exceeding 6 months, or both.

Progressive Discipline Policy

Westmar Middle School has a progressive discipline policy for minor infractions. Minor infractions consist of tardiness, minor class disruptions and/or disrespect, being unprepared for class, not following classroom or school procedures. Teachers will

complete three of the following steps before sending a written referral to the Administration: warning and conference with the student; phone call home; parent conference; teacher detention; guidance conference; parent notification form.

When the student has been referred to the office, the Administration will implement the county discipline policy. Students who receive three referrals may begin with the suspension process. Students who receive five suspensions while in middle school may be referred to the Board of Education with a request for an alternative placement. Students who commit major infractions will be referred immediately to the Administration. **PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT STUDENTS WHO ARE INVOLVED IN REPORTABLE OFFENSES WILL BE REFERRED TO LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT.**

Dress Code

You are expected to dress in a manner that is neat, sensible, and not disruptive to the learning environment at Westmar. When you come to school well-groomed and wearing clothing that is neat, clean, and in good taste, you reflect the training you have received at home. Students are expected to take pride in their personal appearance. We take pride in the appearance of our students. Your dress reflects the quality of the school, of your conduct, and of your schoolwork. Please keep the following expectations in mind when shopping for school clothes:

- **Pants:** Pants must be worn/secured at or above the hips at the waistline. They must not cover the front of the shoe when walking as they pose a safety hazard. Undergarments must not be visible at any time.
- **Shorts:** From the standing position, shorts must not be shorter than mid-thigh (defined as arms down straight along side the body where fingertips touch on the thigh). Biker or spandex-type shorts, as well as boxer shorts, are not acceptable. Undergarments must not be visible at any time.
- **Skirts and dresses:** From the standing position, skirts and dresses must have a length not shorter than mid-thigh (defined as arms down straight along side the body where fingertips touch on the thigh). *Cleavage must not be visible at any time.*
- **Shirts:** No shirts allowed that would show the midriff area (front or back), even while seated. Sleeveless shirts and shells are permitted as long as undergarments are not visible, at least two inches width of fabric cover the shoulder area, and the underarm area is not exposed. Spaghetti straps and off the shoulder shirts are prohibited. Cleavage must not be visible at any time.
- **Shoes:** Shoes involve safety concerns. Shoelaces will be either tied or worn in such a way that they do not interfere with normal footsteps. Backless and open-toe shoes with solid sole are permitted as long as they do not pose a safety hazard. Heeleys are prohibited.
- **Headgear:** Headwear is not permitted. This includes, but is not limited to, hats, visors, scarves, bandanas, and hoods. (Exceptions may be granted based on religious and medical reasons with proper verification.)

- **Other:** Attire that can be used as a weapon (e.g., chains, dog collars, hats with spikes). Sleepwear, slippers and sleepwear-type clothing are not permitted. Jewelry that poses a safety hazard to the student or other students is not permitted. Sunglasses are not permitted.

*Articles of clothing may not contain language or statements that might be disruptive or distracting to others. It also cannot promote drugs, alcohol, gangs, cults, profanity, obscenity, racism, and/or violence. Coats and heavy jackets are not permitted in the classroom areas. These should be stored in the students' lockers during the school day.

If the principal or his/her designee determines that a student has violated the dress code policy, the principal or his/her designee will allow the student to remove or change the attire. Attire worn for medical or religious reasons shall be given special consideration under this policy. Additionally, students may be required to make changes to their dress depending on the activity with the exception of medical alert bracelets (e.g., earrings may have to be removed during physical education or intramural sports, hair may have to be worn in a net during labs).

Pride in your School

Any vandalism in our school is considered the concern of the total school population. It is your duty and responsibility to report all acts of vandalism that you observe to the office or a teacher. Students are not to have gum or other food. It takes the custodians many hours to remove the gum from desks, floors, walls, etc. Students are also not to have permanent markers! Teachers will be asked to enforce these rules. Keep our school clean. Always put trash in wastebaskets; pick up any paper on the floor. No marking or writing should be done in bathrooms, on walls, on lockers or on desks. At the conclusion of class, be certain to leave the desk and area clean. Treat our school as you would your home! Respect it and be proud of it!

Bicycles

If you ride a bicycle to school, you must secure it in the designated areas. It is expected that you will obey all rules of the road for your own personal safety. Do not ride your bike on the sidewalks on school property. The school will not accept responsibility for damaged or stolen bicycles.

Harassment

The Allegany County School System will not tolerate harassment toward any student. Harassment is repeated and unwanted, inappropriate, verbal, written, or physical conduct toward others. No one is to be threatened or intimidated by anyone in our school. We want to maintain a safe and orderly environment. Report any harassment to a school official.

Sexual Harassment

Everyone in this building has the unquestionable right to personal body safety. This means your body belongs to you, and no one else has the right to touch you or speak to you in a way that makes you uncomfortable. If you ever feel as if someone has violated your right to personal body safety with an inappropriate touch or comment, you should tell some authority in the school, such as a teacher, counselor, or administrator immediately. Never hesitate to make this report.

Displays of Affection

Inappropriate displays of affection between students are not to occur during the school day, at school activities, or on school property. This includes touching, kissing, hugging, holding hands, and other actions. Such behavior is not appropriate public behavior in school and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Book Bags/Tote Bags/Purses

Book bags and similar large bags are to be kept in student lockers during school hours. At the discretion of an administrator a bag or purse may be no larger than 8,5 x 11 inches (the approximate size of the agenda book). Students carrying book bags, tote bags, or purses larger than the noted size will be told to return the bag to their locker. Upon repeated offenses, the bag will be confiscated and the parent/guardian will be contacted.

Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

Allegany County Public Schools prohibits student use (not possession) of portable pagers, cell phones, and other portable communication devices, and/or messaging software including personal digital assistant systems during scheduled instructional time unless authorized by school-based administration. If approved for use, students will use portable electronic communication devices for educational purposes only, such as accessing curriculum-related and/or educational resources. Students may only access resources which have been approved by the administration. Westmar Middle School discourages students from

bringing cell phones to school. If brought to school, all cell phones must be off and stored in the locker. When students bring a portable communication device to school, they assume the responsibility for the loss, theft, damage or use of that device by others. With regard to use of all portable electronic devices, students may not take photographs or record audio and/or video on the school bus, within the school, or during any school sponsored activity without the permission of the administration. Students will be disciplined according to the Allegany County Schools Discipline Policy for failure to comply.

Consequences Of Disciplinary Problems

It is impossible for teaching or learning to take place in a classroom unless good order is maintained. There are few levels of action the school can take toward pupils who misbehave or break the school, county, state, or federal laws and rules. They are:

- **Warning:** Verbally given by teacher or administrator
- **Detention:** To include lunch or after school
- **Loss of Privilege:** To include extracurricular activities such as dances, clubs, assemblies, field trips, etc.
- **In-School Suspension:** Supervised isolation from peers to complete assignments
- **Suspension:** Which would require a parent/guardian conference in order to readmit the pupil to school. Suspension days vary from 1 to 10 days depending on the offense. Students who are suspended may not participate in any extracurricular activities for at least nine weeks following the suspension. Two or more suspensions will result in forfeiture of these privileges for the remainder of the school year.
- **Suspension to the Superintendent:** Requires a parent-pupil conference with the superintendent.
- **Expulsion:** Recommendation that the pupil be removed from, and denied privileges of, attending school.

Criminal Charges can be filed by our Juvenile Intervention Officer when disciplinary infractions also violate federal and state laws (theft, vandalism, physical assaults, disorderly conduct, and disruption of school activities).

**The information in this guide is not all-inclusive. School Board or school policy may change throughout the school year, and every effort will be made to inform students of these changes.

SECTION 4 ACADEMIC POLICY AND PROGRAMS

The Library/Media Center

The Westmar Media Center is the focal point of all academic disciplines. The center is equipped with fine electronic learning equipment, in addition to many print resources. Students and classes may use the library for special projects and research. Students with a pass may use the Center during off-class time to read, research, or check out books. Students entering are required to sign in and turn in the hall pass. When returning to class, students sign-out with the time noted and the pass signed. Students may check out materials for specific lengths of time depending on the material. The Library/Media Technician will designate your return date when you check out the materials. Please be sure to return your borrowed materials by the due date or have them renewed. Overdue materials will cause restriction of library usage. Additionally, students with overdue materials will be restricted from dances and other activities until the materials are returned. Students must pay for lost or damaged materials. These fine facilities are for your benefit. Value your Library/Media Center by exhibiting excellent behavior and respect at all times.

Computer/Internet Terms And Conditions Of Use

Several computer labs, wireless laptop labs, a multimedia center, classroom computers and media center computers are part of the instructional program at Westmar Middle School. Students use computers for word processing, skill enhancement, data analysis, research, etc. Allegany County Public Schools provides students with access from home and school to several comprehensive, reputable online databases. The Internet, offering vast, diverse and unique educational resources, is available on all computers. With access to computers and people all over the world comes the availability of material that may not be of educational value. Allegany County Public Schools has taken precautions to restrict access to inappropriate materials, but all such information cannot be weeded out. It must be clearly understood by all students that access to such material in any form is strictly forbidden. The network is designed to achieve and support instructional goals, and any information that does not support classroom learning is to be avoided.

Computer use at Westmar is a privilege. Students must abide by guidelines:

- Print only with the teacher's permission.
- Use of someone else's number, file, etc. is unacceptable.
- Access only those computer resources to which you have been assigned by a staff member.
- Use the computer only for school-related, academic activities.
- Use of a computer while under the direction of a substitute teacher is forbidden.
- Never tamper with the desktop, printer, speakers, headphones, mouse or mousepad.
- Never touch the classroom computer without direct teacher permission.

Internet/network use is a privilege. Students must abide by guidelines:

- Students will access only materials in support of educational, school-related topics.
- Students will access only those Internet resources to which they have been guided by a staff member.
- Students will respect that all communications and information via the network are assumed to be private property. Tampering with others' files, copying others' work without acknowledgment, and transmitting copyrighted material are forbidden.
- For safety reasons, students will never reveal a last name, an address, or phone number in Internet communications.
- Students will follow the same code of conduct as required by Allegany County Public Schools System Code of Conduct. They will be responsible for their behavior and will not use material that is threatening, obscene, libelous, etc.
- Students will never attempt to disrupt network performance, gain unauthorized access to the network or utilize the equipment for unauthorized purposes.

School Counseling Department

The school guidance program is a planned, systematic program of counseling, consulting, appraisal, information, and placement services for the students in Westmar Middle School. Services are provided to assist students in their personal and academic growths, to make appropriate educational and career decisions, and to learn to productively interact with others. A student can see the counselor immediately upon receiving permission from the teacher to leave the classroom, though students are encouraged to make appointments with the counselor at the beginning of the school day.

Conferences

Conferences are a good opportunity for parents, teachers, and students to discuss student progress and any situations that need attention. Conferences may be scheduled at the request of your parent or teacher. You are encouraged to handle any concerns with parents, teachers, and counselors before they become major problems. Many times a short communication can eliminate concerns. Your parents can arrange individual conferences by calling the teacher. The guidance counselor can arrange team conferences. All parent conferences regarding academics, scheduling, testing, and other related topics must be made through the guidance office. Other parent conferences relating to attendance, discipline, or other school policies may be made through the Administration office. **NO APPOINTMENT IS NEEDED ON PARENT CONFERENCE DAY.**

Specific Academic Policies

HOMEWORK - Homework has an important function in a student's learning process, and students should generally expect to receive homework assignments each day. These assignments should be recorded in this Westmar Middle School agenda, which must be brought to each class on a daily basis. If the agenda is lost, it must be replaced. Parents should review the agendas on a regular basis to keep abreast of their child's completion of assignments. Teachers may use a "stamp" to mark assignments inadequately prepared or not turned in. The agenda provides a direct line of communication between parents and teachers. Teachers use homework in evaluating student progress and achievement. Teacher teams discuss homework expectations with students at the beginning of the school year. The length of time that it takes to complete homework may vary depending on the student's individual pace. It is important that students remember that homework does not only mean written work; reading and reviewing material covered in class and looking ahead to new material are parts of homework that are often overlooked by students. Long-term assignments help students to learn the planning and pacing skills needed to complete these projects.

Homework And Makeup Work During Absence - Any student who is absent for at least three days in a row may obtain homework through the attendance secretary. Teachers will give the assignments within a twenty-four hour period, and then the assignments may be sent home or picked up by a parent or guardian. If assignments are requested, the assignments should be

completed by the time the student returns to school. Parents should request assignments far enough in advance of the student's return to school to allow the student sufficient time to complete the requested assignments.

Any student who has a legal excuse for being absent may make up work missed during that absence. Make up work is due one class period after receiving the work from the teacher, unless other arrangements are made with the teacher. Students who are absent from school for valid reasons are entitled to the opportunity to make up classwork. It is the responsibility of the student to take the initiative in getting makeup work. Arrangements for getting assignments missed should be made on the day a student returns to school from an absence. No student, however, is to miss the same class more than once in a two-week period because of participation in extra-curricular activities. If a student is absent from class because of in-school retention or suspension, the student is allowed to make up the work without penalty. The student, however, should take the initiative in finding out what work was missed.

Report Cards - Report cards are issued four (4) times during the year to inform you and your parents of your academic progress, citizenship, and attendance. All report cards will be mailed home to the parent/guardian. Interim reports will be distributed at the mid-point of each marking period or when necessary to inform parents if the student is not doing satisfactory work. In addition, grade reports/print-outs may be accessed on ASPEN at any time.

Withdrawal – Any student who is planning to withdraw from Westmar and go to another school must have his/her parent/guardian come into the main office to complete a withdrawal form. An official government ID is required (such as a driver's license). The withdrawal form should be completed at least one day prior to the student's last day. Withdrawal takes the entire day so books can be turned in and grades calculated by each teacher.

Academic Honors - Students can achieve recognition on the quarterly Honor Roll in the following areas: Principal's Honors (GPA 4.0), Honors (GPA 3.99-3.0). To achieve an academic honor is a great accomplishment, and you should be proud of your achievement. In addition to these awards, students can work toward individual subject honors as well as team awards. "Student of the Quarter Awards" are given for outstanding work or outstanding improvement in a particular subject. These awards are issued from your grade-level team of teachers.

Character Education – Allegany County Public Schools is committed to the development of responsible citizenship skills in all students. Character Education is one avenue in which personal and civic virtues are examined, modeled, taught, practiced, and self-reflected. Westmar has adopted a monthly character trait that is highlighted each month through school activities. The character traits have been designed to foster positive student attitudes of responsibility, respect, honesty, fairness, compassion, cooperation, perseverance, self-discipline, and pride. These character traits define a common theme and focus for instructional activities.

Homework

Following are suggestions for parents to help students with homework:

- Help set up a consistent organized place for homework to be done.
- Help your child establish either a consistent schedule for completing homework or help your child create a schedule each Sunday night that reflects that particular week's activities.
- Encourage, motivate, and prompt your child, but do not sit with him/her and do the homework. The purpose of the homework is for your child to practice and use what they have learned. If your child is consistently not able to do the homework by themselves, please contact the teacher.
- If your child is practicing a skill, ask them to tell you which steps are easy for them, which are difficult, or how they are going to improve. If your child is doing a project, ask them what knowledge they are applying in the project. If your child is consistently unable to talk about the knowledge they are practicing or using, please call the teacher.
- When bedtime comes, please stop your child, even if they are not done.

Academic Dishonesty

Students should maintain only the highest level of ethical standards in regards to academic achievement. The principles of integrity, honesty and commitment to personal achievement must be adhered to at all times. In addition, academic dishonesty

(including cheating, plagiarism, photocopying and or stealing another's work) will not be tolerated. Consequences of such behavior will be addressed as deemed necessary and appropriate by the classroom teacher or administration.

Physical Education

All students are required to take physical education. You will need to purchase a school gym uniform. You will also be assigned a locker. Students are asked to provide their own socks and tennis shoes to wear with the uniform. You should plan to bring these items in a gym bag. The physical education staff will explain further expectations at the beginning of the course. All valuables need to be locked up while you are in physical education class.

Creative Arts

All students are required to take a creative arts course every semester. Creative Arts are rotating semester courses such as art, music, technology education, consumer economics and computer skills.

Student Service Learning

The Service-Learning Coordinator provides leadership in planning, developing, implementing, evaluating and strengthening the service learning program for students in grades 6 through 9. The coordinator also serve as a resource for students, administrators, faculties, and community organizations, while acting as liaisons between MSDE and Allegany County Public Schools.

Service-learning has been infused into the 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th grade subject areas. Students will have the opportunity to receive hours in Creative Arts, English, Math, Physical Education/ Health, Science and/or Social Studies. The 75 hours of service-learning required for high school graduation will be counted when students successfully complete 9th grade. High school students are given a full credit on their high school transcript for service-learning hours if they exceed 132 hours above the required 75 hours. They are also provided recognition at graduation for their service-learning achievements. Service-learning is in-context learning that connects specific educational goals with meaningful community service. Service-learning projects include a dual focus: the goals of academic learning and the goals of authentic volunteer projects.



Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) Westmar Middle School

Home of the R.O.A.R.ing WILDCATS

There is one basic rule at WMMS and that is RESPECT!!!

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Respect for Individuals | Being aware of your actions toward others and how they may be offensive. Strive to be honest, cooperative, positive, and pro-active toward school and bus safety. |
| Respect for Self | The image you project through adherence to the dress code, use of appropriate language, positive interactions, and meeting your potential by doing your very best!!! |
| Respect for Environment | Taking good care of school property. This includes text books, school equipment, lockers, the cafeteria, bathrooms, locker rooms, and the campus. The environment also includes the promotion of school spirit and efforts to maintain a safe learning atmosphere. |

Students can earn ROAR Paws by exhibiting positive behaviors and their name is submitted to a drawing for each additional ticket earned. Teachers are designated supervision duties throughout the day and will issue Paws to any student who is demonstrating above and beyond characteristics of positive behaviors. Every week, drawings take place during morning announcements and students who are eligible once their name is drawn may pick a prize from our treasure chest. The more tickets you earn, the better chance you have of winning. Students may also use their Paws to purchase items from the school store, cafeteria snacks and dance tickets.

Students can earn the privilege of attending the Wildcat Celebration each quarter if they are “referral free” and have no more than 4.5 unexcused absences from the day it begins until the day it concludes.





WESTMAR MIDDLE SCHOOL BELL SCHEDULES

DAILY SCHEDULE		2 HOUR DELAY SCHEDULE	
7:40 – 7:56	Breakfast/Homeroom	9:40 – 9:56	Homeroom
7:59 - 8:44	Co-Curricular	9:59 - 10:39	Co-curricular
8:48 – 10:02	Block 1	10:43 – 11:31	Block 1
10:06 – 11:20	Block 2		
		11:35 – 1:06	Block 3
11:24 – 1:32	Block 3	11:39 – 12:09	Lunch 8th & 7th grade
11:28–12:08	Lunch 8 & 7th grade	12:13 – 12:43	Lunch 7th & 6th grade
12:12–12:52	Lunch 6 & 7th grade	12:47 – 1:06	All students in class
12:56–1:32	All students in class		
1:36 – 2:50	Block 4	1:10 – 1:58	Block 2
		2:02 – 2:50	Block 4
3:05	Teacher Dismissal	3:05	Teacher Dismissal
3 HOUR DELAY SCHEDULE		3 HOUR EARLY DISMISSAL	
10:40 – 10:56	Homeroom	7:40 – 7:56	Homeroom
		7:59 - 8:29	Co-curricular
10:59 - 12:23	Block 3	8:33 – 9:08	Block 1
11:03–11:3	Lunch 8th & 7th	9:12 – 9:47	Block 2
11:36–12:06	Lunch 7th & 6th	9:51 – 10:26	Block 4
12:09–12:23	All students in class		
12:27 – 1:12	Block 1	10:31 – 11:39	Block 3
1:16 – 2:01	Block 2	10:35 – 11:05	Lunch 8th & 7th grade
2:05 – 2:50	Block 4	11:09 – 11:39	Lunch 7th & 6th grade
		11:44	Return to Block 3
3:05	Teacher Dismissal	11:50	Dismissal
		3:05	Teacher Dismissal

