



WESTGATE

COMMUNITY SCHOOL

K-12 Gifted Education for the Whole Child

Student/Community Handbook

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Important Notice

This student/community handbook is designed to introduce you to Westgate Community School (WCS) and provide you with information about your school. This handbook is not all inclusive but is intended to provide you with a summary of some of the school's guidelines, policies, and expectations.

WCS was approved and is authorized by the Adams 12 Board of Education. In addition to significant elements in our original application that we must honor, we are subject to requirements defined in our contract with Adams 12. While we operate with much fiscal, administrative, and curricular autonomy, there are district, state, and federal policies and laws that we are required to follow.

No handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question. If you have questions after reading the handbook, please follow the communications pathway to guide you to the best person to answer your questions.

The complete set of Adams 12 Five Star Schools [District Policies](#) can be found on the district website.



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Part 1 – Mission & Vision

1.1 Mission Statement

At Westgate Community School, gifted education is provided to all students in a community that nurtures the whole child, empowers students to be authentic, supports individuals in reaching their own academic goals, develops stewardship for the environment, and inspires passion for serving the global community.

1.2 Vision Statement

Westgate Community School is a community-centered, gifted K-12 school that embraces whole-child learning and serves all students by encouraging creativity, authenticity, inclusivity, collaboration, and academic excellence.

1.3 Guiding Principles

Westgate Community School will:

1. Create a small community school designed to meet the intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted learners.
2. Establish a program that includes research-based practices in gifted education, including acceleration, enrichment, curriculum compacting, and flexible grouping so that each student is challenged to perform to his or her potential.
3. Promote learning experiences that allow students to authentically and meaningfully apply their knowledge, interests, and skills through community involvement, in-depth study, and problem-based inquiry.
4. Foster an environment that allows students to recognize and accept their own capabilities, interests, and needs while also recognizing, accepting, and appreciating the needs and achievements of others.



5. Provide a learning environment that is both structured and flexible enough to match the strengths and needs of individual students.
6. Promote a culture that values open communication, critical thinking skills, transparent decision-making, and active goal setting for all.
7. Create and maintain a safe and respectful learning community for students, parents, and staff.
8. Define and measure success in a variety of ways that may include self-assessment, performance assessments, criterion-referenced assessments, and standardized measurement instruments.
9. Invest in ongoing adult and professional education opportunities to enable our staff, board, parents, and community to enhance their ability to meet the needs of our gifted students.

1.4 Organizational Structure

WCS is a small school with a simple organizational structure. One employee, the Executive Director (ED), reports directly to the Westgate Community School Board of Directors (please see website for current members). All other employees report to the Executive Director and will be evaluated by the administration staff.

Shared decision-making is an important value in the school. The Leadership Team is a sub- group of staff from different teams (administrative, certified, and classified employees) that meets twice a month to share team perspectives and work together to address our challenges and opportunities. Team Leaders are not supervisors of their teammates. The goal for our school is to raise the leadership capacity so that as many staff members as possible understand the administrative and support functions that support student learning “behind the scenes,” and that as many staff members as possible have a leadership position of some sort.+

Authoritarian top-down management is not what WCS desires. We prefer a community of professionals who truly see themselves as invested stakeholders in our small business.



Part 2 - Calendars and Schedules

2.1 Master Calendar

As a charter school, WCS has flexibility over its master calendar and schedules. While the state dictates in-common windows for the October Count and State Assessments every year, we are permitted to have different start and end dates, scheduled breaks, and professional days.

The most current master calendar and master schedule in PDF format can be found on the school website on the [Parent page](#).

Additionally, Westgate events and activities can be found on our [live Events calendar](#).

2.2 School Hours

- School starts promptly at 8:00 AM
- Supervision begins at 7:45 AM
- Doors open at 7:50 AM
- School ends at 3:30 PM
- The office is open 7:50-3:45
-

When to Drop Students Off in the Morning

We request that students not be dropped off earlier than 7:45, as there will be no supervision until that time. The doors will open at 7:50 for the students to get inside and get ready for the start of the day. On mornings with inclement weather, the doors will open at 7:45. Please be aware that we consider the wind chill and if it is below 20 degrees they will be let in early. Please have your children dress for the ever-changing Colorado weather, as we will be outside most mornings and lunch recesses.



2.3 Before or After School Supervision - Champions

Champions provides for the before and after school program for our students that are between 5 and 12 years old. They operate from 6:30-8:00 a.m. and from 3:30-6:00 p.m. each day. Parents pay for this service and formal paperwork is required. They also offer care during the breaks. To enroll in Champions, go to their website www.discoverchampions.com or call 800-246- 2154.

2.4 Car Line Procedures

Details on the Car Line and other transportation options can be found on the [Westgate Transportation webpage](#).





You will receive a number that will allow you to pick up your student. This number tag can be displayed inside your windshield and Westgate staff will communicate your arrival to your student's classroom.

Rules for CAR LINE Pick-up or Drop-off

- Stay in your car at all times.
- Car line times are 7:45-8:00 am & 3:30-3:45 pm.
- **Grade K-4 pick-up** - proceed around exterior of lot to east line. If you must assist your child at, drop off, plan to park in the north lot and walk them to the entrance. Students should exit on right side of car for safety.
- **Grades 5-11 pick-up** - proceed around exterior lot to middle pick-up line.
- Be patient.
- Use signals.
- Avoid cell phone use in car line – no use while line is moving.
- **Please turn RIGHT out of the lot** to ensure car line continues to move smoothly.

Authorized Pick-Up:

Students can be signed out by anyone authorized to pick them up. Every student has emergency contacts listed in Infinite Campus for this purpose. If someone other than a parent/guardian listed in IC is picking up your student, **written authorization is required from a legal guardian** before that student is allowed to leave the building with someone that is not a parent/guardian listed. Identification will also be required from the person authorized to pick up your student.

Dismissal and After School

Westgate Community School students will be dismissed from school at **3:30 p.m.** Parents/Guardians will use carline after 3:15 p.m. There are no early releases between 3:15 and 3:30 p.m.



It is critical that parents/guardians are consistently on time for dismissal. If a student is not picked up by 4:00 (end of car line) and is not partaking in the after-school program, the school will take the following actions:

Middle School and High School Students will be asked to leave campus at 4:00. Please set up a meeting place with your child.

Elementary School Students:

- First time – a written reminder, call from school administration, and a \$15 drop-in fee charge per child
- Second time – a written reminder and a mandatory meeting with the Assistant Principal and a \$30 drop-in fee charge per child
- All subsequent offenses – a mandatory meeting with the K-12 Principal and/or school administrators, and a \$45 drop-in fee charge per child

If students are not picked up by 4:15 pm then the School may notify Human Services or law enforcement that the child has been abandoned.

Timely pick-up of students is critical so that our already hard-working and highly dedicated teachers and staff members do not have to stay after their normal working hours.

High School Parking/Driving

You can find the [High School Handbook](#) online, which has information on High School students driving and parking on campus.



Part 3 – The School Day

3.1 Advocacy & Morning Routines

Students will meet in a circle at 8:00am and greet one another by name. There is great joy from hearing your name every day. Following the circle, Advocates and Teams have prepared Social/ Emotional or College and Career Readiness lessons based on relevant and student driven topics.

Each Advocate plays a key role. If you have questions or concerns about your student throughout the year, please reach out to your child's Advocate. This person is not just a teacher; e or she is a true advocate for your student.

Pledge of Allegiance (C.R.S. 22-1-106, SPC 6116)

All schools in Colorado must recognize the statutory mandate to provide an opportunity each school day for willing students to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

The recitation of the Pledge shall be a school-wide activity. Individuals who choose not to participate shall not be disciplined regardless of the basis for their objection. Retaliation, harassment, or discipline of any individual based upon his/her participation or non- participation shall not be tolerated. However, all individuals shall observe ordinary standards of classroom decorum and may be disciplined if they engage in disruptive behavior.

3.2 Community Space (Pod) Use

Community space has several different functions. Students who work the in the community space must use only quiet, indoor voices typical of a library setting.

Community space can also be used for a student to take a short, quiet, focus break before returning to the classroom, but not for free time.



3.3 School-wide “Take a Break”

One of the simplest, yet most important innovations that WCS employs is a school-wide value on self-regulation without shame that allows all students and teachers to use time and space to help calm potentially volatile situations.

All students and staff are allowed to “Take a Break” when needed to regain composure or focus when their ability to teach or learn is compromised. Teachers, of course, should call for coverage.

Reasons you may send a student to Community Space for a break:

- Emotional/Focus Need. Give 5-10 minutes to regroup.
- Unable to focus in learning environment. Work until finished in quiet area.

3.4 Morning Breaks and Snack

K-2 has a designated 15-minute snack time and 15-minute morning break recess. During these breaks students are not engaged in academics and take the time to play and nourish their bodies. Students oversee their own snacks. Snacks should be healthy, microwave-free, and easily consumable during this time frame.

3rd-4th grade students have a designated morning break each day. This is a 15-minute extra recess and break for the students in between language arts and math classes.

3rd-8th grade students can bring in a snack. This snack will be consumed sometime during the morning period, but the students will not have a designated snack time. Academic time must continue for these grades and cannot be interrupted by a formal snack break.

Water is the only permitted beverage in the classroom outside of lunch time. Students may not have food and drink with computers out!



3.5 Student Lunch

WCS has no central cafeteria. We have 20+ eating spaces instead of one, and all students can enjoy their meals in a quiet space within a 30-minute period. We have a food service provider, My Kid's Lunch, which delivers fresh, healthy hot lunches each day. Students ordering hot lunch will have their lunch delivered to their classroom.

In general, students should not bring food that requires refrigeration or significant heating requirements. Meals should be ready to eat. Heating should not take more than 30-60 seconds. Three minutes of preparation is not reasonable in a class of 20 students with one microwave and 30 minutes to eat.

Microwave Guidelines

USED ONLY AT LUNCH, NEVER DURING CLASS

Kindergarten students are NOT allowed to use microwaves.

- 1-2 Students should NOT use microwaves on new items without DIRECT teacher or volunteer supervision.
- 3-6 Grade students may use microwaves after demonstrating understanding of proper usage. Unwise use of any microwave will result in a suspension of privileges on a case-by-case basis.
- 7-12 Grade students may use microwaves without supervision but will lose privileges for misuse.

After all lunch procedures are well understood and practiced, teachers may decide to allow students to visit other rooms for lunch. Visiting privileges can be revoked and we will discuss the expectations to enforce for consistent mealtime as a staff.

How to Order Hot Lunch

Instructions and weekly lunch ordering links are on the [Lunch Program](#) page of the Westgate website. From there:

1. Click on the links for each week you would like to order lunch.



2. Complete the form by entering your student's information and choosing if your student would like a hot lunch for each day. If you do not want to order a lunch for a certain day, please select "No Lunch Today."
3. Print a copy for your records before submitting.
4. Click "Submit" at the bottom of the form. Once you have submitted, you cannot print or edit. Westgate also cannot print or edit your order.
5. Fill out and submit a form for each student who would like to order each week.
6. Orders are due by 5:00 p.m. on Monday for the following week.
7. School lunches are currently free for all students.

Westgate Community School Lunch Account Payment Policy

Lunches are currently free for all students. However, families must order a lunch for their student to receive a free lunch. Please see our Lunch Program page for links to the menus and order pages.

Lunch Cleanup

Students are expected to clean up after themselves all day long, but lunch time is especially important because we use the same tables for workspaces. As students finish, clean up should begin. Students are expected to clean up after themselves.

3.6 K – 8 Work at Home Policy

Typically, Westgate students do not have schoolwork to complete at home. Westgate wants them to have time to be kids, spend time with family, and pursue other passions.

While there is no daily homework assigned in any grades, middle school teachers may send homework at the start of the school week to be completed over the course of that week and returned by Friday. We believe this is developmentally appropriate and helps prepare students for high school.

We also encourage all students at Westgate to read or be read to every day and encourage 10 minutes of math skills practice daily for late elementary and middle school students. Teachers sometimes will suggest activities for this practice that they will post on their [online classroom page](#). Please ask your child's teacher for suggestions if you would like to have your child begin this practice at home.

Exceptions to this homework norm are:



- When a student has make-up work from absences,
- When extra practice is needed to become proficient in a skill,
- When a student has been unproductive during their class time,
- When there is a special “at home project.”

If the student does have homework for any of these reasons, the teacher will email you by the end of the day to inform you of the homework. The teacher will also provide the deadline of when the work needs to be completed and turned in so, the student can receive a grade. If you need further explanation, please reach out to the teacher as soon as possible.

**Westgate students should never be assigned homework over a break from school (Fall, Thanksgiving, Winter, Spring).

3.7 Student Behavior Expectations

Students are held to the expectations created within the classrooms and grade level pods at the beginning of the year, as well as behavioral expectations outlined in District Policy. If students are not meeting these expectations, they will be held to consequences. As part of the Love and Logic framework and in conjunction with Responsive Classroom, teachers and school staff work to find a natural consequence for the behavior that has occurred. Because of this, we do not have a set list of behaviors and coordinating consequences for these behaviors.

End of Day Clean-up

If clean-up is done after each class, there is little to do at the end of the day. In the final 15 minutes of the day, students should help clean up classrooms. Students in all rooms should stack chairs to help the room sweepers.



Part 4 – After School

4.1 After-School Care

Classroom teachers will release students to the Champions program as appropriate. See section 2.3 for more information on the Champions program.

4.2 Dismissal Times

School will dismiss at 3:30 p.m.

Please follow car line procedures as described in this handbook in section 2.4.

Outside supervision of students waiting to be picked up will be from 3:30-3:45.

Students may not call a parent from their personal phone to get picked up without authorization from office staff. The office staff will allow students to call as needed from a school phone.

4.3 Clubs and Activities

Clubs will be offered quarterly. Clubs officially begin on the second week back from Summer Break, Fall Break, Winter Break, or Spring Break.

[Club registration](#) is online and runs two weeks into the Quarter. After the final Registration Day, NO club registrations will be accepted, NO exceptions.

Behavioral concerns or habitually late pickups may result in student club/activity participation being discontinued.



Part 5 – Policies and Procedures

5.1 District Policies

Westgate students are subject to District policy. Please see the [District Policy](#) website for more information.

5.2 Behavior Management

Under the discretion of the teacher, student behaviors are first addressed by the staff member (as a witness or as the reporting adult). If a behavior continues to occur, communication with parents and guardians will follow. All reports will be directed to a member of the administration team who will assess the referral and respond accordingly.

There are certain behaviors that may be sent directly to the assistant principal or principal, including, but not limited to any sort of action that causes significant bodily harm or causes students to feel unsafe in the environment. With any significant event, administration refers to the district policies provided by Adams 12. When a student receives a consequence, the parent/guardian will be notified.

5.3 Bullying Addendum to Adams 12 Five Star Schools District Policy 5110

Westgate Community School has added a school-specific supplement to the Adams 12 Five Star Schools District Policy 5110 in conjunction with the Colorado Department of Education's Bullying Prevention and Education Grant. WCS was awarded the BPEG in December 2016. The grant recommends adoption of additional policies or clarification for policy.

Definitions:

To clarify and synopsize the comprehensive definition provided by Adams 12 Five Star Schools, bullying necessitates three core components:

- intent to harm,



- imbalance of power
- behavior is either repeated or likely to be repeated.

The four types of bullying are defined as:

- physical
- verbal
- relational
- damage to property

The four roles in bullying incidents include:

- perpetrator or offender
- victim
- bully-victim
- bystander

Prevention:

WCS has adopted various prevention programs and strategies.

Advocacy:

A daily, 30-minute SEL structure. During this time, students engage in quality social emotional learning. Students learn and practice new skills and invest in positive culture.

Bullying Prevention in Positive Behavioral Intervention Strategies (BP-PBIS):

A schoolwide program which supports positive culture at WCS. Within PBIS, WCS has adopted a universal “Enough” stopping protocol and kindness recognition through R.I.S.E.

RISE:

RISE tenants are taught and supported throughout the school.

- Respect
- Integrity
- Safety
- Empathy

“Enough” Protocol :

Empowers students to practice three clear steps when witnessing or experiencing disrespectful behavior. Students are taught how to use the “Enough” protocol, how to



respond appropriately when receiving the protocol, and teachers are also taught how to respond in alignment with the protocol. The steps are:

1. Sign “stop” with your hands and simultaneously say, “Enough.”
2. Walk away.
3. Report immediately to an adult.

Buddy Benches

Present in two locations on the playground. Students sit on the Buddy Bench when they are seeking a friend or companion.

Student Led Committees:

Meet weekly to continue student led bullying prevention.

Consequences:

In addition to the consequences listed in the Adams 12 District Policy, all involved students will be given the opportunity to meet with a member of the mental health support team.

According to the General Procedure for Bullying/ Harassment flowchart, consequences will vary in method and severity according to:

1. the nature of the behavior,
2. the developmental age of the student,
3. the student’s history of problem behaviors.

Some examples of educational programming at WCS include restorative practice and educational modules with specific skill building components.

Bystanders may be subject to the same tiered offense structure.

General Procedure for Addressing Bullying/ Harassment Behavior

Please see Appendix A – Addressing Bullying & Harassment Behaviors for flow chart.

All reports will be directed to a team made up of counseling professionals and administrative personnel who will assess the report.



Methods of reporting behavior include:

- Bullying Report at www.westgateschool.org
- Safe2Tell
- Verbally to any adult
- Written to any adult
- Email to any teacher or administrator
- Phone communication

5.4 Student Dress Code

While we allow students many freedoms in what they wear to school, we must maintain a dress code that helps us keep a non-distracting, safe environment for our students and staff.

We adhere to the dress code policies of the Adams 12 District. These policies are not only in place to create a safe and respectful learning environment but also to prepare our students for professional settings outside the classroom.

Dress Code Expectations:

1. **Appropriate Clothing:** All clothing should be appropriate for the school setting. Clothing that displays offensive language, images, or messages is not permitted. This includes, but is not limited to, references to drugs, alcohol, violence, sexual conduct, or any content that could be deemed disruptive to the learning environment.
2. **Safety and Decency:** For the safety and well-being of our students, we require that footwear be worn at all times and that clothing is suitable and not hazardous to any school activities. Clothing should cover the private areas including buttocks, stomach and back and must be of appropriate length (more than two inches of exposed midsection will be considered outside of the dress code).
3. **Spirit Days & Special Events:** While we encourage creativity and individual expression every day, all special attire for school events or spirit days must also adhere to our dress code policies.



5.4 Health Policies

Immunizations

Please go to the Health Clinic page for the most current information about immunization requirements.

When to Keep Your Student Home

- The child is unable to participate in daily activities.
- The child does not feel well enough to take part in normal activities.
- The child needs more care than staff can give, and still care for the other children.
- The illness is on the list on the Health Clinic page and staying home is recommended.

And remember, the best way to prevent the spread of infection is through good handwashing.

See the Health Clinic page for more detail on when to keep your student home.

Medication at School

All medication, including over the counter medications, which need to be taken by students must be kept in the school health office, the appropriate form filled out and must be kept in the original container. Our school medication form must be filled out by a doctor and signed by the parent. Find the form you need on our Health Clinic page. You can email, fax, or drop off forms at the front desk. Email the school nurse at kirsten.hopson@westgateschool.org with questions.



5.5 Attendance Policies

All student attendance can be reviewed in [Infinite Campus](#) online. All guardians can register for an account. Please keep track of your student's attendance.

Attendance Letters – Truancy Vs. Chronic Absences

Attendance letters are sent out to families to keep them informed of where their student stands with attendance for each semester. The Colorado School Attendance Law of 1963 (CRS 22-33- 101, et. Seq.) requires every child between the ages of six (6) and seventeen (17) to attend public school or an otherwise approved educational program. A student that has four (4) unexcused absences in any one month or (10) unexcused absences in any school year is considered “habitually truant.” The School District has a statutory obligation to refer cases of habitual truancy to the Juvenile Court of the 17th Judicial District.

The difference between Truancy and Chronic Absences

Truancy

- Counts only unexcused absences
- Emphasizes compliance with school rules
- Relies on legal and administrative solutions

Chronic Absence

- Counts all absences: excused, unexcused, and suspensions
- Emphasizes academic impact of missed days
- Uses community-based positive strategies

Any general questions regarding attendance should be directed to attendance@westgateschool.org. If you have a question about why your student was marked absent or tardy during the school day, please contact the specific teacher that entered the attendance.

Tardies:

School starts promptly at 8:00 AM. Any student that comes in within the first 10 minutes of a class period is considered tardy. Any tardy marks in IC, during the school day, will



be logged as an unexcused tardy. If your student comes in more than 10 minutes late, it is considered a partial absence. All students (K-8) coming in after 8:00 MUST be signed in by a parent to have the tardy be excused. If a student is not signed in, it will be considered unexcused. High School students may sign themselves in. After 5 tardies for the semester, all tardies will be considered unexcused.

Absences

Ways to Report an Absence:

- Fill out the Absence Notification form on our Westgate Parent Page or fill out the form through the Westgate App.
- Email attendance@westgateschool.org with the date and reason for the absence
- Call the office at 303.452.0967, feel free to leave a message with the date & reason for the absence.

Telling/emailing a teacher does not suffice for any excused absence.

*Students may not call a parent from their personal phone to get picked up without authorization from office staff. The office staff will call for student pickups as needed.

Extended Absences

(a week or longer), an extended absence form must be filled out and approved at least 2 weeks in advance. The form can be found on the parent page under Attendance Policies & Procedures.

Requests for absences to be excused due to vacation or for other non-emergency reasons will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. For extended absences (a week or longer), an extended absence form must be filled out and approved at least 2 weeks in advance. This form can be found on the [About Us > Policies](#) page under [Attendance](#).

Excused Absences

For an absence to be excused, an attendance form, phone call or documentation (doctor's note, legal document, etc.) must be submitted within two school days of the school day absence. In the case of multiple consecutive absences, the excuse must be



submitted within 48 hours of the last school day absent. No absence will be excused without following the proper procedures. After a student has accumulated 5 absences throughout the semester, they will be unexcused for any other absences that are not followed with proper documentation.

Excused absences:

Excused absences are defined as absences caused and excused due to one or more of the following reasons:

- A verified illness, injury or physical, mental and/or emotional disability.
- A religious observance recognized by an established and bona fide religious organization.
- Absence required by a legal body (court, juvenile authorities, or police).
- A family emergency such as a serious illness or death of an immediate family member.

How Many Absences a Student Can Have Throughout the Year?

Parents may excuse up to 5 absences per semester, without documentation. Absences beyond 5 will be considered unexcused unless proper documentation is provided. A student coming in more than 10 minutes late will have a partial absence recorded in IC and these marks will count towards the 5 absences. The documentation that will be accepted needs to come from an authorized official and not from a parent. Even though the absences will be unexcused without proper documentation, you will still need to follow the appropriate procedures to report an absence.

Can My High School Student Leave During The Day?

High School students are never authorized to leave during the day, without a phone call or absence form filled out by a guardian. High School students may not be excused to take their friends or family member home during the day.

What If We Take A Vacation?

Vacations or non-emergency activities should be scheduled for days or times when students are not in school. Please check the academic calendar on the website for a list of our breaks and days off.

Unexcused absences

Unexcused absences accumulate when the proper procedures have not been followed to report a student absent, if they have not been signed in/out or if they were marked absent by a teacher during the day, without explanation of why. All absences will be



unexcused unless a listed parent/guardian in IC has notified the school. Grandparents, stepparents, etc. that are not listed as a guardian are not able to call in for a student.

***Please note**, students on attendance contracts or who have exceeded 5 unexcused absences per semester will need documentation to excuse all instruction time missed, for any reason.

Out of Building Activities:

Out of building activities consist of district sponsored or chaperoned events. High School students can join their district schools for sports or other school related events. These activities are not considered absences from school, but documentation is requested.

Club sports are not sponsored or chaperoned by any district school, so these activities will count towards a student's absences. You must notify administration if your student will be absent due to participation in outside sport activities.

Dropping off/Picking Up High School Students from FRCC:

Parents must inform via Absence Notification Form or phone, before picking up their student at Front Range for it to be excused. If a student must adjust their schedule for the day (i.e., a scheduled lab class, meeting with a professor, etc.), a Student Permission Form for Irregular FRCC Day must be completed at least 24 hours in advance and be signed by parents, teachers, and the counselor for the student to be excused. These forms can be found outside of the counselor's office. Without this form, the absence will be considered unexcused.

5.6 Fees

K-8 Student Fees

Westgate assesses an annual student supply fee every school year. This fee covers all school supplies for the entire school year, technology, licensing, and software, as well



as most of the school year's activities and guest speakers. This fee does not cover some special activities, such as outdoor education and the Civil War reenactment.

K-8 Student Supply Fees are due by August 31. If you have concerns about making the payment in full, please contact the business office at business@westgateschool.org.

Families who have applied for and qualified for the Free and Reduced Lunch Program are exempt from paying Student Supply Fees.

Due to the nature of the expense to Westgate for the items that the Student Supply Fee covers, no refunds will be given after the Friday of the first week of school.

High School Fees

The high school student fee applies to students in grades 9-11 and covers all school supplies for the entire school year, technology use, licensing, and software, as well as most of the school year's activities and guest speakers. This fee also helps offset the costs of Front Range planning, counseling, and transportation to and from Front Range Community College. Parents of high school students are also responsible for any fees and textbooks associated with the Front Range courses (Westgate pays 100% of the tuition). This fee does not cover some special activities such as high school service trips and prom. Students in 12th grade are not charged a student fee.

High School Student Supply Fees are due by August 15. If payment is not received by August 15, the student may not be eligible for Front Range Community College courses.

Families who have applied for and qualified for the Free and Reduced Lunch Program are exempt from paying Student Supply Fees.

Due to the nature of the expense to Westgate for the items that the Student Supply Fee covers, no refunds will be given after the Friday of the first week of school.

5.7 Unpaid Balances Policy

Westgate contracts with a collections company to help with past due account balances. Any outstanding balances that are over \$25 and/or 30 days past due may be turned over to the collections company. Other unpaid balances may be sent to the collections company at the discretion of the administration.



Types of balances that may be turned over to the collections company include, but are not limited to, broken and lost computers, damaged school property, lunch accounts, and unpaid student travel balances.

5.8 Volunteers

Westgate requires all volunteers who work in the school during school hours and/or chaperone field trips/overnight events to agree to our Westgate Volunteer Agreement and a background check. The background checks are valid for 12 months and completed through Sterling Volunteers. All fees are paid directly to Sterling Volunteers.

If you are interested in volunteering, it's as easy as 1, 2,3. Go to our [Volunteer & Visitors](#) page:

- Complete a Volunteer Request Form
- Complete a Volunteer Agreement
- Complete a background check. Cost is \$20.95. Payment assistance is available and will be kept confidential. Contact business@westgateschool.org.

5.9 Parents/Guardians and Visitors

All parents, guardians, and visitors must enter through the main entrance and present a government issued photo ID. Photo ID's will be held at the front desk in exchange for a visitor badge. Visitor badges must be returned to the front desk and your ID will be returned. Parents are not permitted to deliver items to students in the classroom.

5.10 Giving of Gifts to School Staff

Many families like to express gratitude to teachers and staff. We ask that your gifts be moderate (\$25 or less). We ask teachers to maintain strict professional boundaries and providing access to personal property or excessive gift-giving can put teachers in a compromised position.



5.11 School Fundraisers

The Westgate Community School Events Committee is overseen by the board of directors and works to create a variety of fundraising events each year. See our [Events](#) page on our website for more information.

Fundraisers are intended to benefit the school and should not be used by teachers as opportunities to receive personal gifts. Teacher “wish lists” are for school, classroom library, or other resources and are not to be used or understood as opportunities to acquire personal property.

Event committee members, volunteers, teachers, staff administrators, or parents/guardians of Westgate students are generally unable to make a personal profit or commission directly from any school fundraiser, event, or club. However, there are specific exceptions for certain fundraisers:

Events with Food Trucks:

- Parents/Guardians who own food trucks and are invited to appear at school events may retain profits from their food sales during these events.
- The school recognizes the value of their participation and supports their entrepreneurial efforts.

Craft Fair Booths:

- During events where booths are sold, parents who pay for booth space may sell their crafts and products to attendees.
- These parents are encouraged to participate and contribute to the success of the fair.



Part 6 – Communication

6.1 School Communication

Online

[Westgate Community School Website](#)

WCS has a powerful website with many features to enhance communication in our community. On our website you can find our school wide calendar, announcements, forms, events, activities, contact information, and much, much more!

[Class Pages](#)

Also, teachers have a page for each of their classes. Each class page contains announcements, contact information, learning goals, schedules, links, files, weekly assignments, multi-media blogs, and more! Parents will need to subscribe to each of their student's teacher pages to have updates emailed to them. All updates on pages will result in a notice, so that parents and students can easily track all assignments and events. Anyone can subscribe to any class page.

Westgate App

Westgate is transitioning to a new phone app which will be available on the Google Play or Apple Store. It will be used for event updates, emergency notifications, and general information about the school. We will let families know as soon as it is available.

Weekly Updates to Infinite Campus (IC) Grade book

All teachers at WCS use Infinite Campus software for progress reporting. Infinite Campus is a program that allows you to directly connect assessments to standards. It gives parents a detailed document that shows the standards you have assessed and their student's ability to demonstrate specific knowledge and skills with proficiency. Please see the Parent page on our website for instructions.



Both students and parents have access to their live records. There should be a grade entered for each class, every week. If grades are not updated, please follow the communications pathway.

Westgate Wire Newsletter

WCS publishes a general school newsletter monthly called Westgate Wire. It contains a wide range of general school and grade level specific information about upcoming events, meetings, policies, and issues. A link to the online newsletter is sent to families via email each month.

News Blasts

Occasionally there is a need for a quick, global email to all stakeholders. These blasts are sent via email, text, and the Westgate App.

Email/Texts

Teachers

Email is an essential element in parent-teacher communication. Since email can be accessed at all times, it is often the best way to share information.

Please allow teachers 48 business hours and administration 72 business hours to respond to your email.

Westgate

For Westgate wide emails and texts, such as the newsletter and important or emergency communications, your email and/or phone number must be on file with IC in order to receive email and text notifications. If you are not receiving these communications, you may have opted out or blocked us from sending you emails or texts. Or your information may be incorrect in Infinite Campus.

Check Infinite Campus first to confirm your email and phone number records are correct. Once corrected you should receive emails and texts.



If your email and phone number are correct in IC, you must send an email to communications@westgateschool.org to indicate that you are not receiving notification emails and texts and ask to be unblocked to have your access restored.

K – 4 Friday Folders

Friday Folders are an important component of our communication system. K-4 Friday folders should contain work samples that provide evidence of weekly work and teacher feedback.

Parents of all students want and need to see actual student work and that teachers are providing feedback to students. There should be at least one item sent home each week for each content area.

All K-4 Friday Folders may also contain special flyers, permission slips, or information but in general all communication should be sent electronically rather than in hard copy.

5th-High School

Older students primarily do their work on Microsoft Teams. To view your student's Teams assignments, you will need your student's login to access their Office 365 account. Go to the Parent & Student Resources page for information on how to login. If your student cannot remember their password, please email the student's advocacy teacher.

6.2 Communications Pathway

Guidelines for Asking Questions and Addressing Concerns & Conflicts

Contact the teacher or staff member most directly involved by email. Please follow the Communication Pathways, as outlined in Appendix B. In your email, state what you know or have heard and ask clarifying questions. Please refrain from drawing conclusions or making accusations that may be unfounded. Please follow the Community Compact, Appendix C.



If there is no evidence that a parent, student, or staff member has initiated the communications pathways process at the lowest level possible, the concern will be redirected to the appropriate starting point. The Board of Directors will not become involved in the Formal Grievance/Dispute Resolution process until all steps in the communications pathway have been tried and the issue is still not resolved. See the Communication Pathway in Appendix B or use the following instructions:

Who to Contact:

For Social-Emotional Communications

1. Contact the Teacher(s) involved. If the issue is not resolved, then contact:
2. School Counselor. If the issue is not resolved, then contact:
3. Assistant Principal, (talk to the appropriate level, K-4/5-8/9-12). If the issue is not resolved, then contact:
4. Principal, If the issue is not resolved, then contact:
5. Executive Director: If the issue is not resolved, then contact:
6. A Board member.

For Academic Communications

1. Contact the Teacher(s) involved. If the issue is not resolved, then contact:
2. Gifted Coordinator (only for gifted issues) If the issue is not a gifted issue or not resolved, then contact:
3. Assistant Principal, (talk to the appropriate level, K-4/5-8/9-12). If the issue is not resolved, then contact:
4. Principal, If the issue is not resolved, then contact:
5. Executive Director: If the issue is not resolved, then contact:
6. A Board member.

For School Operations or Policy Communications

1. Contact the Executive Director: If the issue is not resolved, then contact:
2. A Board member.

If the issue is not resolved after addition of the highest level of administrative moderation and response, the Grievance/Dispute Resolution Process may be initiated.



Grievance/Dispute Resolution Process

1. Submit Written Grievance to Appropriate Administrator

If the grievant is not satisfied with the response received after proceeding through the general process of conflict resolution, the grievant should submit a formal written grievance to the Executive Director.

This written grievance should: 1) describe the incident, decision, or practice that gave rise to the complaint; 2) cite the contract, policy, or procedure that has been violated and/or rationale for concern; 3) describe what conflict resolution strategies were attempted via steps 1 and 2; and 4) explain what corrective action is being requested.

All grievances, including those about the Executive Director, must follow step four. It is the Executive Director's responsibility to manage the resolution of conflicts between and amongst parents, students, faculty, and staff.

Should a grievant feel that they were not treated equitably, or that their concern did not receive the attention it deserved throughout the grievance process, s/he is free to submit a new grievance about the Executive Director's dealings with the original concern.

Such a grievance would need to follow these procedures sequentially again, beginning with step one.

2. Provide Written Grievance to the Board

After the administrator has been given one week to respond to this formal grievance, the grievant should bring the matter to the attention of the Board only if the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved, and only if it pertains to the Executive Director or to the execution of school-wide policy or procedure. The written grievance should be delivered to the President or Secretary of the Board at least one week prior to the next scheduled Board meeting. The President or Secretary will review with the individual the above process and ensure that the proper steps were taken before adding the issue to a meeting agenda.



Grievances should never be brought to the Board as a matter of Public Comment, as this does not give the Board sufficient time to consider the issue(s) and address them through the collective governance process that is fair to all parties. The Board will not hear matters that do not follow this grievance process. Likewise, school issues that are taken directly to Adams 12 are likely to be redirected to the school for implementation of the conflict resolution process.

It is important to the integrity of our school that grievance be handled in an informed, direct, fair, and equitable manner. The administration and board share responsibility in ensuring the integrity of the vision and its implementation through the system of due process described in this Grievance policy. Any concern or grievance must be examined through the lens of the mission of the school. The final forum for conflict resolution, after a grievant has followed the steps outlined above, will be at the level of the Board of Directors.

The Westgate Community School Board of Directors is the final authority in most matters of the school.

General Policy Questions

1. Start by reviewing the appropriate handbook (i.e., Student/Community or High School Handbook) for written policies specific to WCS.
2. Refer also to the Adams 12 District Policies. Unless a formal waiver is requested and approved, WCS follows all existing district policies. District policies may be updated throughout the year and WCS policies are reviewed annually or created as needed.
3. If, after seeking information and clarification from written policy, there are still questions or concerns, write to the classroom teacher and they will point you to the appropriate party if necessary.



For certain programs or situations governed by legal statute, the District must be involved as the Local Education Authority (LEA) in any due process proceedings.

6.3 Informational Events

Norms

Community events are an important part of the communication and community-building process at WCS. Model the behavior at all events that you would like to see in your child's classroom. Here are our norms for all events:

- Arrive on time
- Attention and participation are important
- Be an active participant, seek clarification if something does not make sense
- Take notes that are meaningful to you

Back to School Night

The first event that sets the tone for the year is the annual Back to School Night. This is an event where parents and students can casually interact with teachers. There is no formal presentation by the teachers nor is it a time to have a conference about an individual child. It is just an opportunity to meet and greet families.

Parent/Guardian Engagements & Events

Throughout the year Westgate Community School will host a variety of parent/guardian engagements and events. These are not times for individual conferences but will often be informational sessions for specific age or class groups or the entire community. We will communicate the availability of these sessions as they are planned and they will be placed on the Event Calendar and emails and app notifications will be sent.

These sessions may include:

- Community Connect sessions
- Engagement nights



- Meet-ups
- Film Series
- Special Speakers
- Other events

Conferences

There are four sets of conferences each year. Parent teacher Conference are conducted at the

end of quarters 1, 2, and 3. At the end of quarter 4, we will have a school-wide student showcase. Look out for sign up emails from your student's Advocacy teacher toward the end of each quarter.



Part 7 – Safety & Emergencies

7.1 Safety & Emergency Response Plan (6114)

In order to provide for the safety and well-being of students and staff of the District, the Department of Safe and Secure Environments, Adams 12 schools shall establish emergency procedures for the orderly and safe handling of emergencies. The emergency procedures shall incorporate the following principles:

- Student safety shall be the overriding concern in decisions regarding emergencies and shall be the responsibility of all staff members
- Standard emergency procedures as described through the Emergency Procedures
- The Safety Manual shall serve as the primary guidelines for the District except where a contrary course of action is indicated by special local conditions
- Plans shall be formed by Building Administration which supplement the District guidelines as noted in the Emergency Procedures Manual
- Copies of individual procedures shall be on file in each building and with the Director of Safe and Secure Environments
- Written reports shall be made directly to the Director of Safe and Secure Environments to report or inform of any emergency or crisis encountered at the respective building level

7.2 General Emergency Procedures

Adams 12 establishes emergency procedures for the orderly and safe handling of all emergencies across its schools. All Westgate staff members are trained annually on these procedures.

Standard procedures apply except where a contrary course of action is indicated by special local conditions.



7.3 Emergency Drills

Student safety is the overriding concern in decisions regarding emergencies and shall be the responsibility of all staff who practice these drills with their students.

7.4 Security

Westgate Community School is committed to ensuring employees' and students' security. Our premises are equipped with both security alarms that are active outside working hours and a fire alarm system. At no time may visitors enter classrooms without first signing in at the office. The front doors will be locked. There is an intercom and camera system at the front door that will be used to gain access to the office during the school day.

All visitors must present an ID to enter the building. Westgate uses the Raptor system which searches the sex-offender registry each time a person's information is entered. Visitors will be given a name badge to wear at all times in the building. If you are not in the school on business or to volunteer, you will be asked to leave the building. If you have a security concern or need more information about operating these systems, contact the administration, business manager, and/or facilities manager.

7.5 Emergency Measures (Inclement Weather)

We realize that severe weather or hazardous commuting conditions may occasionally make it impossible for employees to report to work on time.

If it becomes necessary to shut down the school due to weather or other emergency, every effort will be made to notify parents through the website, email, and Westgate App. Westgate closure notifications will be sent via email to parents/guardians and will also be posted on our website, Facebook, and Twitter accounts. Please note, Westgate will be closed if Adams 12 Five Star School District is closed for inclement weather.



7.6 Reporting Child Abuse (5141.5 - Form)

The Superintendent has established procedures for reporting suspected abuse to the specified social service agency and/or law enforcement agency in compliance with the provisions of the "Child Protection Act of 1987". In addition, the Superintendent will implement periodic in- service programs for all school personnel about the recognition and reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect, and other related issues as provided by law.

The confidentiality of reports of suspected child abuse or neglect shall be preserved in accordance with statute.

1. The school employee having knowledge of the matter shall immediately report to Adams County or Broomfield County Department of Social Services or local law enforcement.
2. Reports of abuse by a parent or someone in a child's home should be directed to Social Services.
3. Reports of third-party abuse should be directed to local law enforcement.
4. As soon thereafter as possible, the employee shall notify a building administrator.
5. The reporting individual shall promptly follow any oral reports to Adams County or Broomfield County Department of Social Services or local law enforcement with a written report prepared by the appropriate employee setting forth, in as much detail as possible, information required by statute or the appropriate agency.
6. Should the suspected abuse involve a district employee, the building principal shall notify the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources or Superintendent immediately after oral notification of local law enforcement or receipt of notification of a report from an employee.
7. The form entitled, "Child Abuse Report to the Adams / Broomfield County Department of Social Services or Law Enforcement Agency," is included as an Exhibit to this policy/procedure and may be used, but is not required, for making a written report.

7.7 Safe Schools (3500)

The District is committed to providing a safe and secure environment in school, on school transportation, and at all school activities. Safe schools are a priority of the



District and contribute to improved attendance, increased student achievement, and community support.

The District has adopted policies, procedures, and agreements on the following topics to enhance the safety of its schools. Safe Schools procedures shall include but not be limited to the following items:

- A student conduct and discipline code which is consistently enforced
- Procedures to ensure compliance with safe school reporting requirements are established by statute
- Written Internet and technology use guidelines
- Agreements with law enforcement and other state and community agencies to cooperatively strive to keep school environments safe
- Information sharing agreements with local and state agencies consistent with state and federal law
- Procedures for crisis management
- Procedures to provide for necessary inspections and maintenance of District buildings and facilities
- Procedures to allow for parents to safely visit the school and for visitors to safely attend school-sponsored activities
- Procedures that provide for the appropriate screening of employees.

7.8 Zero Tolerance for Violence

Westgate Community School has a zero-tolerance policy concerning threats, intimidation, and violence of any kind in the workplace either committed by or directed at our employees. Employees who engage in such conduct will be disciplined, up to and including immediate termination of employment.



Community members (students, staff, families, and friends) are not permitted to bring weapons of any kind onto school premises or to school functions. Any employee/student who is suspected of possessing a weapon will be subject to a search at the school's discretion. Such searches may include, but not be limited to, the employee's personal effects, desk, and workspace.

If a community member feels he or she has been subjected to threats or threatening conduct by a coworker, student, or parent, the person should notify the administration immediately.



Part 8 – Miscellaneous Information and FAQs

What assessments will my child take at Westgate?

Students at Westgate participate in all state mandated testing including CMAS English Language Arts/Literacy & Math (3 -8), CMAS Science (5,8,11), CMAS Social Studies (4 & 7 some years), PALS (K-3), and GOLD (K), NWEA MAP (K-8), PSAT 9 (9), PSAT NMSQT & PSAT 10 (10), and SAT (11).

I need to pick-up my child early today. What should I do?

Please call the front desk as soon as you know to notify the school. Please do not email the teacher.

Can I bring in food/treats at lunchtime for my child's classroom?

No, not during the hours when lunch is being served. Since Westgate is part of a lunch program which serves Free and Reduced Lunch options, we cannot allow any outside food to be given to students during the lunch periods.

You are welcome to bring store bought snacks/treats (in original packaging with ingredients labeled) to classrooms at the end of the day (see question about birthday treats). All treats will wait in the office until the end of the day.

When can I bring in celebratory birthday treats?

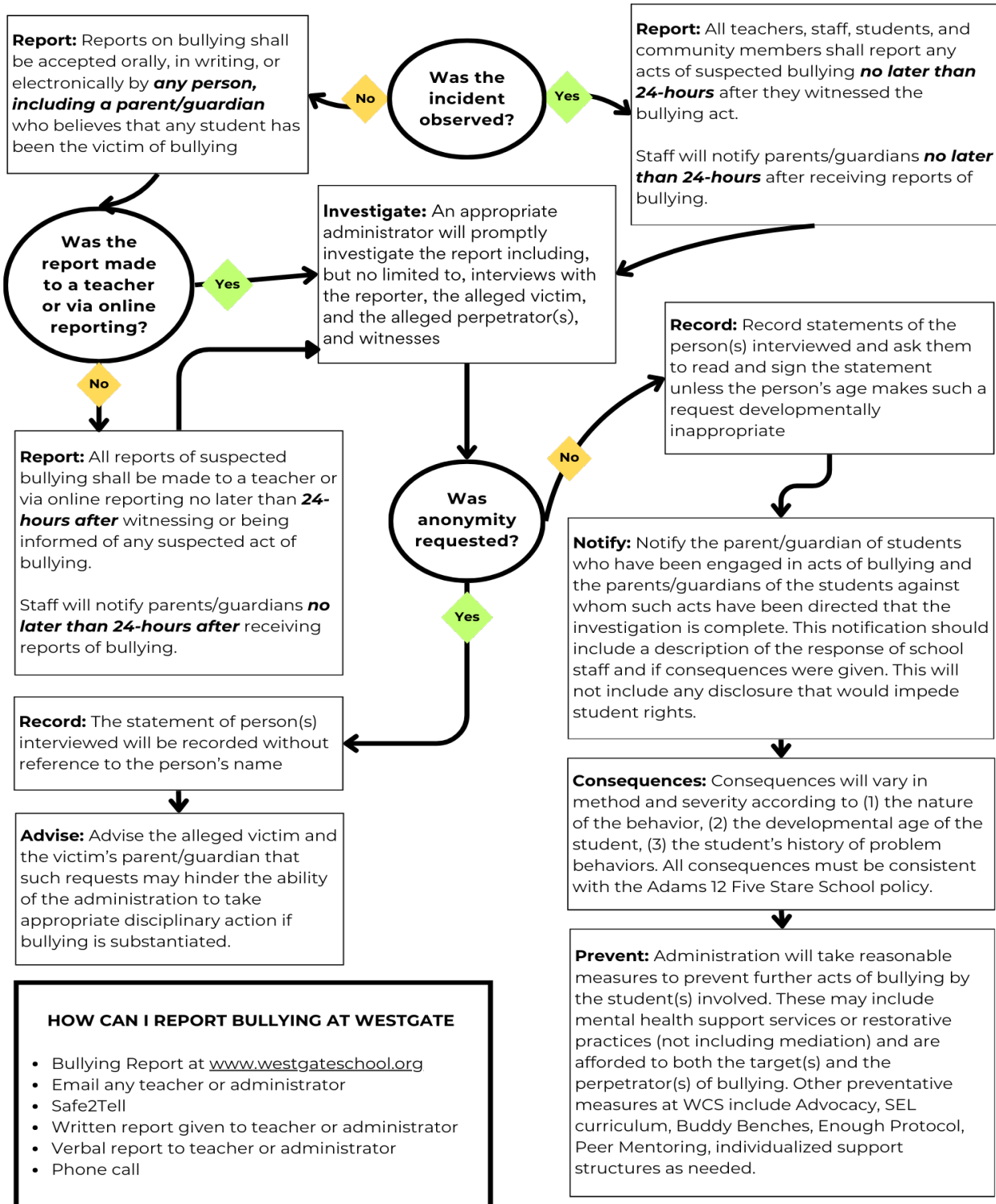
All treats to be handed out to students need to be store bought, in the original packaging so that ingredients can be read to avoid allergies.

Students may observe their birthday during the last 15 minutes of their school day. Please work out a time to drop-off the celebratory treats at the front desk. If your child's birthday is during a holiday or summer vacation, please contact the classroom teacher to select a date to celebrate when school is in session.

Arrangements for class treats must be made in advance with the classroom teacher. Treats should be easy to distribute and not require flatware or plates. Please do not expect teachers to provide napkins, serving utensils, etc. They usually do not have these items readily available in the classroom.

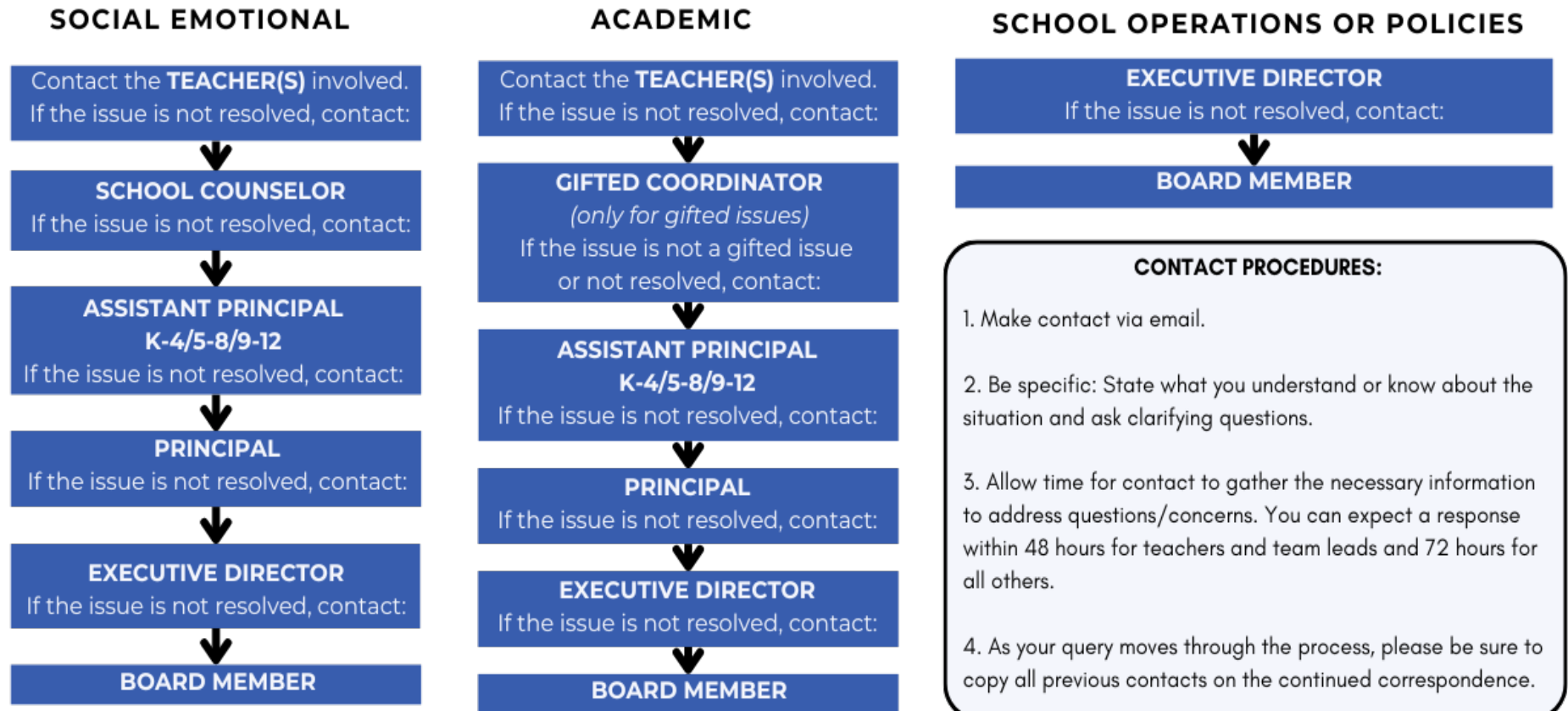
APPENDICIES

APPENDIX A – Addressing Bullying & Harassment Behaviors



APPENDIX B – Communications Pathway

COMMUNICATIONS PATHWAY DIAGRAM



APPENDIX C – Communication Agreement

At Westgate Community School we recognize that our families are personally involved in their student's education and have chosen to be here. We know that we can best support our students when there is a solid partnership between parents, teachers, students, and the community. This requires an agreement from all stakeholders to communicate clearly, honestly, and respectfully.

We have a Communications Pathway outlined in our handbook, but some topics may require phone or face to face conversations. In those cases, the following steps may be implemented:

- A parent/guardian or staff member may choose to request a phone or face to face conversation in lieu of a lengthy email exchange.
- A parent/guardian or staff member may choose to end a conversation or email exchange and request an administrator to mediate a conversation to reach resolution in the event they feel they are not being treated respectfully.
- Direct communication to the appropriate staff member based on the published Communication Pathways.

When Westgate Community School staff, parent, and community members are engaged in written or oral communication, it is important to communicate with the following expectations in mind:

- Advocate for your student through kindness and empathy as we work as a team to support your student.
- Communication should always follow the Communication Pathways, starting with the staff member for whom you have a question or concern.
- Always communicate respectfully and concisely. In most cases, a phone call allows for clearer communication than email and diminishes the risk for a misperception of tone. Emails that are longer than one paragraph in length or with multiple topics may be easier to resolve with a phone call or face-to-face meeting.
 - Please limit communications to official channels through Westgate Community School email and phone numbers. Please do not use the staff's personal cell phone numbers for school communication.



- Lengthy face-to-face conversations regarding questions or concerns should be scheduled in advance. While we value and appreciate the relationships between our staff and families, staff often have competing demands on their time and attention (i.e., prioritizing student safety at pick-up). Scheduling for a time when they do not have other responsibilities allows all parties to give the conversation the attention it deserves.
- Parents should expect a returned phone call/email within two school days and a scheduled meeting within five school days when needed. Teachers are not expected to respond to an email or a phone call outside of normal school hours, which are typically 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.
- Please gather all the information directly from official channels before addressing a situation that may be concerning to you.
- Presume positive intent that Westgate Community School staff members are working to meet the individual needs of all students and want what is best for your child.
- Understand that our teachers are trained professionals and are the experts related to curriculum, instruction, and best practices.
- When there is a change to your home situation (illness, death, divorce/separation, medical diagnosis), please communicate that information to your child's assigned counselor or classroom teacher so that school staff can best support your child and family.
- The use of language that is hurtful, defamatory, discriminatory, racist, sexist, offensive, obscene, inflammatory, unlawful, vulgar, or otherwise objectionable to members of the community or the school is not appropriate when communicating with or about staff, students, and teachers.