

West Central C.U.S.D. #235

2025-2026 District Student Handbook



Our Mission: "Providing Opportunity, Expecting Excellence"

West Central C.U.S.D. #235 does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, age, sexual orientation, or disabling conditions.

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Preface/Preamble

On behalf of the faculty and staff, welcome to West Central C.U.S.D. #235, Home of the Heat! We hope it will be a beneficial, productive, and enjoyable experience.

This District Student Handbook is provided to acquaint you and your family with the policies and procedures and other relevant information necessary for the orderly functioning of the school. It is structured to help promote student progress as well as an interest in modeling appropriate school government. In addition, this handbook provides for the psychological and physical safety of the students through appropriate rules and regulations. This handbook is only a summary of West Central C.U.S.D. #235's policies and expectations and is not a comprehensive statement of school procedures.

When breaches of school disciplinary rules and regulations occur, it is the responsibility of involved teachers and administrators to work with the student, his/her parents, and other support personnel to help the student correct his/her behavior. All disciplinary actions shall be directed toward protecting the welfare of the school community as well as helping the student develop self-discipline. All situations will be handled on a case by case basis. When determining the response for a specific breach of discipline, school personnel will consider the nature of the act, his/her age and maturity, any mitigating circumstances, and the effect of his/her actions on the welfare of the school community. Disciplinary responses may include but are not limited to the actions described in the handbook. Please be aware that handbook and school rules apply to all school sponsored events, even those occurring off campus, (such as field trips, extracurricular events, etc...)

Both you and your parents are encouraged to read this District Student Handbook with care. It will serve as an important guide during your time at West Central.

District Student Handbook Duration, Notification, and Acknowledgments

This entire District Student Handbook will remain in effect for the entire 2025-2026 school year unless there is a program change. Only minor modifications may be made during said time without notification or approval from the Board of Education.

The Building Principal or designees will inform the students of the content of the District Student Handbook. Written acknowledgment from the parents or guardians relative to the receipt of the District Student Handbook will be required. This data will be on file in the Principal's Office or in the office of the Principal's designee.

Every student attending West Central C.U.S.D. #235 will be provided annually with a copy of or access to the District Student Handbook.

Forward

The rules and regulations set forth in this handbook are not a substitute for Illinois or United States' laws, nor are they restrictive in regard to the discretion of the Board of Education and administration. In any discipline case that is not specifically covered in the following sections, the Principal or the Superintendent will use their discretion to determine the level of the offense and the proper interventions to follow.

In case of conflict or uncertainty, the policies of the Board of Education, state laws or regulations, and Federal laws and regulations – including those specified under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) – will take precedence over any policies or procedures listed in this handbook.

Teacher Qualifications

A parent/guardian may request, and the District will provide in a timely manner, the professional qualifications of your student's classroom teachers, including, at a minimum, whether:

- a. The teacher has met the State qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- b. The teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status.
- c. The teacher is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
- d. Paraprofessionals provide services to the student and, if so, their qualifications.

Annual Report Card

Each year, the District is required to disseminate an annual report card that includes information on the District as a whole and each school served by the District, with aggregate and disaggregated information for each required subgroup of students including: student achievement on academic assessments (designated by category), graduation rates, district performance, teacher qualifications, and certain other information required by federal law. When available, this information will be placed on the District's website at www.wc235.k12.il.us.

Enrollment

West Central CUSD #235 allows a dependent of the United States military personnel who is housed in temporary housing located outside of the district to enroll if the dependent will be living within the district within 6 months after the time of initial enrollment and the military personnel seeking to enroll the dependent under this exception provides proof that the dependent will be living within the boundaries of the district within 6 months.

Equal Educational Opportunities and Sex Equity

Equal educational and extracurricular opportunities are available to all students without regard to race, color, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, status as homeless, immigration status, order of protection status, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy.

No student shall, based on sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity be denied equal access to programs, activities, services, or benefits or be limited in the exercise of any right, privilege, advantage, or denied equal access to educational and extracurricular programs and activities.

Any student or parent/guardian with a sex equity or equal opportunity concern should contact: Stacey Day at (309) 627-2371.

Citizenship Philosophy

We believe children are individuals who possess unique needs and potential. The primary goal of West Central School District #235 is to provide a safe and successful experience for each student and to provide the best learning environment for all students. The purpose of the Code of Conduct expectations is to promote appropriate citizenship behavior and our hope is to provide an orderly

and just approach to teaching students that the best approach to living is one of respect for others and self-discipline of one's own behavior. It is the responsibility of the parents and school to teach self-discipline. Self-discipline is the acceptance of responsibility on the part of the student for his/her own actions and is the appreciation of the rights of others. Self-discipline is important to the community, as well as to the school. Students must address their teachers as Miss, Mr., Ms., or Mrs. We will start the first part of the day with reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. One of the functions of the school system is to oversee and direct disciplinary matters. These decisions are based upon constitutional guidelines. No single method of discipline is effective or appropriate for every student. Discipline is defined as controlled behavior. Good discipline is the responsibility of the students, parents, and school system.

VISITORS/VOLUNTEERS

The District encourages visits by the parents/guardians. All visitors and parents are reminded that all doors are locked during the day. We do this for the safety of our students and staff. When arriving on campus, please push the button and wait for someone to buzz you into the building. All visitors, including parents and siblings, are required to enter through the front door of the building and report immediately to the building office. Visitors should identify themselves and inform office personnel of their reason for being at school. Students will be called to the office in the case of an emergency. No unauthorized person shall be permitted in the hallways, outside of the classroom doors, or on the campus, without the specific permission of the Principal. If a parent wishes to confer with the teacher, an appointment should be made for a time outside of school hours. Any visitor in the building, without an approved pass, is trespassing and will be asked to leave.

Children living outside the district or who are not of school age are not permitted, without permission from the Principal and making appropriate arrangements with the classroom teachers, to visit classes. Students may not bring guests to school except as part of the school's educational program, without the specific permission of the Principal. Students will not be allowed to have visitors when exams or tests are being given. All visitors must report to the office to sign in and sign out.

School and classroom visits shall not be disruptive or in any way interfere with the instructional program. All visits and visitors shall be subject to the authority of the Building Principal who may restrict or limit visits, or visitors as he/she considers necessary. No person on school property or at a school event shall perform any of the following acts:

1. Strike, injure, threaten, harass, or intimidate a staff member, board member, sports official or coach, or any other person.
2. Behave in an unsportsmanlike manner or use vulgar or obscene language.
3. Unless specifically permitted by State law, possess a weapon, any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon or looks like a weapon, or any dangerous device.
4. Damage or threaten to damage another's property.
5. Damage or deface school property.
6. Violate any Illinois law or municipal, local or county ordinance.
7. Smoke or otherwise use tobacco products.
8. Distribute, consume, use, possess, or be impaired by or under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, cannabis, other lawful product, or illegal drug.

9. Be present when the person's alcoholic beverage, cannabis, other lawful product, or illegal drug consumption is detectible, regardless of when and/or where the use occurred.
10. Use or possess medical cannabis, unless he or she has complied with Illinois' Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Act and district policies.
11. Impede, delay, disrupt, or otherwise interfere with any school activity or function (including using cellular phones in a disruptive manner).
12. Enter upon any portion of school premises at any time for purposes other than those that are lawful and authorized by the board.
13. Operate a motor vehicle: (a) in a risky manner, (b) in excess of 20 miles per hour, or (c) in violation of an authorized district employee's directive.
14. Engage in any risky behavior, including roller-blading, roller-skating, or skateboarding.
15. Violate other district policies or regulations, or a directive from an authorized security officer or district employee.
16. Engage in any conduct that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the district or a school function.

Volunteer Requirements and Process

The building principal directs the use of volunteers within his or her building. Volunteers may come from all backgrounds and age groups. The main qualification is for the individual to have a desire to give his or her time and talent to enrich student learning opportunities and the school community. All persons wishing to serve as a volunteer in the District must complete a Volunteer Information Form and will be subject to a criminal background check. A person who is a "sex offender," as defined by the Sex Offender Registration Act, or a "violent offender against youth," as defined by the Child Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Registration Act, is prohibited from being a resource person or volunteer.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT/SCHOOL VISITATION RIGHTS

The District has an annual Kick-Off at the beginning of the school year in conjunction with Locker Night for all parents/guardians. At the Kick-off, school staff will discuss parental involvement and opportunities for parents/guardians to get involved in the education of their children. Parents/Guardians should use this open house as an opportunity to ask questions, make suggestions, and learn about all of the opportunities and programming available for them to be fully involved in the educational process.

The District and its teachers provide meetings, including parent/teacher conferences, at flexible times to accommodate a variety of parent schedules. Parents/Guardians will be given notice of meeting availability at the beginning of each year, and at least two weeks before fall and spring conferences or other regularly scheduled meetings to provide sufficient opportunity to schedule and attend meetings with teachers. Additionally, teachers are available regularly to meet with parents/guardians to discuss the success of their child. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to inquire about available meeting times and to work with teachers.

The School Visitation Rights Act permits employed parents/guardians, who are unable to meet with educators because of a work conflict, the right to time off from work under certain conditions to attend necessary school functions such as parent-teacher conferences, academic meetings, and behavioral meetings. Letters verifying participation in this program are available from the school office upon request.

The District provides parents/guardians with access to:

- (a) individual student progress and assessment results, including an interpretation of results as well as school performance profiles;
- (b) a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school;
- (c) opportunities for meetings to formulate suggestions, share experiences with other Parents/Guardians, and participate as appropriate in decisions relating to the education of their children if such Parents/Guardians so desire; and
- (d) timely responses to suggestions.

Everyone is responsible for the success of the students. While the school provides the best education it can, it is critical to the success of students that parents/guardians assist us in meeting the goals of education set forth by the state, the federal government, and the District.

The state's resources on parental involvement can be located at: www.schoolcommunitynetwork.org. The state's website on parental involvement provides information, training, and support for parents and schools on various websites which may be useful or interesting to parents and students, and provides advice and information about how to get involved and participate in the educational process.

Parent/Community Organizations

Anyone who is interested in helping the District and children are welcome and encouraged to participate in a variety of available organizations including Parent Teacher Committee (PTC), Music Boosters, Athletic Boosters, and West Central Education Foundation.

DISTRICT COMMUNICATION

There are several different ways for parents and teachers to stay in communication throughout the school year. These include but are not limited to: Seesaw, Remind Text Messaging, Skyward, Email, and Phone Calls. Grades 3 through 5 utilize a daily planner to communicate assignments, and some teachers send home a behavior chart on a daily basis so that you are aware of your student's behavior for a particular day. The middle school and high school maintain an informational page on the school website with current updates. Please consult your teacher on their preferred type of communication between home and school.

Parent Phone Messaging System

West Central has a message alert system called Finalsite. This system allows the district to communicate with parents by phone, email and text. Any changes or cancellation due to weather, as well as reminders and announcements, can be delivered by our system. There is no cost for this service and all families will be automatically enrolled. Please remember that if you change your phone number(s) or email address, notify the office so we can update our files. Additionally, you may follow West Central CUSD #235 on Facebook to receive important updates.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Birth Certificate

Students that attend West Central Schools are required by state law to have a copy of a certified birth certificate in the student's permanent file. It is required by state law that names of students and their mailing address be turned over to law enforcement offices after a reasonable timeline has been provided for families to comply with the legal requirement of providing the birth certificate to the school.

Fundraising

Students may raise funds for school-sponsored events with permission of the administration and the student's parents/guardians. Students who do not return collected funds will be denied participation in future fundraisers until the funds are returned. Fundraising by students for events that are not school-sponsored must also be approved by the administration if promoted at school or at school sponsored activities. By state law, no fundraising of any kind that involves food being sold between midnight and 3:45 p.m. on weekdays can occur.

Gum/Treats (Elementary and Middle School)

Gum should be left at home.

We invite students to bring treats to school, but please follow these guidelines:

- a. Simple treats. Some suggestions for treats would be fruit, cheese sticks, or store-packaged cupcakes or cookies. Treats being brought to school, after school has started, should be dropped off in the office.
- b. If sending drinks, cups must be provided as well.
- c. Students may bring treats to the room in the morning (Middle School takes theirs to homeroom).
- d. Food allergies should be considered when sending snacks to school.
- e. Middle School students should not pass out candy/treats randomly in the hallways. Only snacks for students to eat before/after a game/practice/event are allowed in lockers.

Beverages

The pop machines are never to be on during the school day. No outside beverages will be allowed to be brought into the school that are opened before the student enters the building. Upon entering the building, refillable water bottles must be empty, and store bought water bottles must be sealed. Any drinks brought into the building that are not opened will be stored in the student's locker until the student reports to the lunchroom that day for lunch. Elementary and Middle School students will not be allowed to have, pop, caffeinated drinks or energy drinks with their lunch. We encourage all students to have milk or juice. Elementary and Middle School students are only allowed plain water in the classrooms/during the day.

Toys (Elementary)

Toys are not allowed at school unless there is a specific request by note from the teachers for a special purpose.

Trading Cards

Trading Cards (baseball, football, Pokemon, etc.) are not allowed at school.

Invitations (Elementary)

Students who would like to pass out invitations to classmates may do so at school ONLY if they are inviting all students in their classroom. If they are for specific students, they must not be distributed at school.

Bookbags/Backpacks

Bookbags, backpacks, gym bags, or purses of any kind are not allowed in classrooms during the school day. They may be brought to school but must be placed in the lockers during the school day.

Lost Items

All student possessions should be labeled. Each year we have many unclaimed items due to the fact that we cannot identify whose clothing/shoes/school supplies were left behind.

Personal Valuables

Students are not to leave anything of value in the school buildings. Attempts shall be made to safeguard all personal property in the school, but in no case will the school assume liability for it. Students should not carry any more cash than is necessary for the school day.

Field Trips

Field trips are a privilege for students. Students must abide by all school policies during transportation and during field-trip activities, and shall treat all field trip locations as though they are school grounds. Failure to abide by school rules and/or location rules during a field trip may subject the student to disciplinary action.

All students who wish to attend a field trip must receive written permission from a parent or guardian with authority to give permission. Students may be prohibited from attending field trips for any of the following reasons.

- Failure to receive appropriate permission from parent/guardian or teacher;
- Failure to complete appropriate coursework, including academic progress;
- Behavioral or safety concerns;
- Denial of permission from administration;
- Repeated disciplinary offenses;
- Other reasons determined by the school.

Family Pets

Due to liability and allergy concerns, students will not be allowed to have animals brought to school.

Lockers

Each student will be assigned a locker. Middle school and high school students are expected to keep their locker locked at all times, neat and are not permitted to switch lockers, use more than one locker, or use their own locks without office permission. If a student uses his/her own lock, he/she must submit a key or combination code to that lock to the office. Each student may check out a lock to use during the year for his or her locker only. There will be a fee of \$5.00 assessed if the student loses or does not turn in the lock at the end of the year; otherwise, there is no charge for the use of the lock. Elementary students are not allowed to put locks on lockers. Students are to keep all items inside lockers. It is suggested that students do not bring valuable items or sizable amounts of cash to school. Attempts are made to safeguard all property at the school, but the school will not assume any liability for lost or stolen articles. If it is necessary to bring items of value to the school,

they may be left in the office. Food or opened drinks are not to be kept in a locker unless it is the student's daily lunch in which case any leftovers are to be disposed of daily. Drinks must be in a sealed, unopened container when brought to the school. These lockers are for the use of students during the school year but remain, at all times, the property of the school district. Pictures, etc. are not to be hung on the outside of a locker unless it has been provided by a sponsor/coach for purposes of recognizing a team/club member. Magnets, rather than tape, must be used to hang approved items. Fines may be assessed for damage to lockers. Students are responsible for the cost of repair for any damage to their assigned lockers.

Lockers are school property, and school officials and law enforcement officials may search lockers at any time with or without the student's knowledge or consent. Students should have no expectations of privacy concerning locker contents. Any losses or vandalism should be reported to the office immediately.

Social Activities

Attendance at school social activities is a privilege. Only students who attend West Central schools may attend school-sponsored social activities, unless the principal or designee approves a student's guest in advance of the event. Any approved guest of a student must be under the age of 21 unless they are a West Central C.U.S.D. #235 student who has not yet graduated. Elementary and middle school students cannot attend high school social events. Elementary and high school students cannot attend middle school social events.

All school rules, including the school's discipline code and dress code are in effect during school sponsored social activities.

Students who violate the school's discipline code will be required to leave the social activity immediately and the student's parents/guardians will be contacted. The school may also impose other discipline as outlined in the school's discipline code.

Permission in writing must be secured from the principal before any activity is held. Social functions will be chaperoned by the faculty and the parents of students. Socially unacceptable behavior may cause the administration to revoke the student's privileges of school sponsored social activities. Further disciplinary actions may be taken according to the level of offense.

Transfers

Students who transfer into the district must meet the same requirements as those who initially enroll in the district. This includes age and immunization requirements. Upon registration of new students, record requests will be requested of the former school district. Students must be in good standing in their former district or may not be allowed to enroll in this district.

SECURITY/SAFETY

Mandated Reporters

All school personnel are mandated reporters by the State of Illinois and are required by law to immediately report to the Child Abuse Hotline any and all suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. This call may be caused by bruises or burns on a student, or statements that a student may make to a member of the staff. Failure of a staff member to report a possible child abuse situation can lead to legal charges being filed against that member of the staff.

State law requires schools to notify parents/guardians during school registration or parent-teacher conferences that information about sex offenders and violent offenders against youth is available to the public on the Illinois Department of State Police (ISP) website. The ISP website contains the following:

Illinois Sex Offender Registry, www.isp.state.il.us/sor/ (<http://www.isp.state.il.us/sor/>) Illinois Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Registry, www.isp.state.il.us/cmvo/ (<http://www.isp.state.il.us/cmvo/>)

Frequently Asked Questions Concerning Sex Offenders, www.isp.state.il.us/sor/faq.cfm (<http://www.isp.state.il.us/sor/faq.cfm>)

Sex Offender Notification Law

State law prohibits a convicted child sex offender from being present on school property when children under the age of 18 are present, except for in the following circumstances as they relate to the individual's child(ren):

- To attend a conference at the school with school personnel to discuss the progress of their child.
- To participate in a conference in which evaluation and placement decisions may be made with respect to their child's special educational services.
- To attend conferences to discuss issues concerning their child such as retention, promotion, or accelerated placement.

In all other cases, convicted child sex offenders are prohibited from being present on school property unless they obtain written permission from the Superintendent or Board of Education.

Anytime that a convicted child sex offender is present on school property – including the three reasons above – he/she is responsible for notifying the principal's office upon arrival on school property and upon departure from school property. It is the responsibility of the convicted child sex offender to remain under the direct supervision of a school official at all times he/she is in the presence or vicinity of children.

A violation of this law is a Class 4 felony.

Erin's Law/Stranger Danger

Students will receive instruction and tips to avoid situations which could lead to child abduction. Students may also receive instruction on child abuse or inappropriate touching. We anticipate these student presentations to occur during the month of September. Information will be provided to parents/guardians regarding these student presentations prior to these sessions. Please contact the Building Principal if you have any questions. A written request may be made by a parent/guardian requesting that their child be excluded from such instruction.

For security purposes, cameras have been installed throughout the building, grounds, and on school buses and will be accessed as needed. All exterior doors are locked during the school day.

Safety Drill Procedures and Conduct

Safety drills will occur at times established by school administration. Students are required to be silent and shall comply with the directives of school officials during emergency drills. There will be a minimum of three (3) evacuation drills, a minimum of one (1) severe weather (shelter-in-place) drill, a minimum of one (1) law enforcement lockdown drill within 90 days of the start of school to address a school shooting incident, and a minimum of one (1) bus evacuation drill each school year. There may be additional drills at the direction of the administration. The law enforcement lockdown drill will be announced in advance and a student's parent/guardian may elect to exclude their child from participating in this drill. All other drills will not necessarily be preceded by a warning to the students or staff.

Faith's Law - Sexual Abuse Resource Guide

Following the requirements of Faith's Law, West Central CUSD #235 has posted the Sexual Abuse Response and Prevention Guide on the district website for easy access for students and families in need of support or resources.

Emergency Procedures During Inclement Weather

During an emergency (loss of water, loss of electricity, ice storm, blowing snow storm, fog, etc.) school may be canceled, delayed, or students may be sent home early. Parents should plan in advance to have someone responsible for their child in the event one of these situations occur. When this occurs, the administration will announce this through the Blackboard Connect messaging system to all available numbers. Information about school closings will also be available on the District Facebook page and District website at www.wc235.k12.il.us.

Pesticide Application Notice

The district maintains a registry of parents/guardians of students who have registered to receive written or telephone notification prior to the application of pesticides to school grounds. To be added to the list, please contact:

Jaime Shultz
1415 US Route 34
Biggsville, IL 61418
(309) 627-2371 Ext. 1000

Notification will be given before application of the pesticide. Prior notice is not required if there is imminent threat to health or property.

SCHOOL DAY

Monday Late Starts

Every Monday school is in session and will be an approximate one-hour late start time. On Monday Late Starts the elementary school will start at 9:30 a.m.; the middle school will start at 9:20 a.m., and the high school will start at 9:15 a.m. Buses will also run one hour later in the morning.

Elementary

Students should not arrive at school before 7:50 a.m. as there is no supervision before this time. Parents may enter the building to drop off their student from 8:00 – 8:15 a.m.

The school day officially begins at 8:30 a.m. each morning. Students are expected to be in their classroom at that time. If the students are not in their assigned room when school starts at 8:30 a.m., they will be marked tardy. Required instructional minutes will be considered when determining half day absences.

School is officially dismissed at 3:15 p.m. Students are expected to leave the building at this time unless under the direct supervision of a staff member.

Students will be expected to go to their regular destination after school. If a change is requested, and the student will be picked up after school, a parent/guardian is required to send a note to school or contact the office staff at least one (1) hour before dismissal time.

Any student arriving after 8:30 a.m. or leaving before 3:10 p.m. must be signed in or out in the Elementary Office by a parent or guardian. If a student is being picked up by someone other than the parent/guardian, permission must be given, and the student must be signed out in the office.

Middle School

Students should not be in the building before 7:45 a.m. unless they are there for a supervised school activity. Upon arrival students should report to the gymnasium. Students should take notes and lunch money to the office before reporting to the gymnasium. Any students eating breakfast at school should do so as soon as they arrive.

The school day officially begins at 8:25 a.m. each morning. Students are expected to be in their 1st hour class at that time. If the students are not in their assigned room when school starts at 8:30 a.m., they will be marked tardy. Required instructional minutes will be considered when determining half day absences.

School is officially dismissed at 3:15 p.m. Students who live on the North end of the District are dismissed at that time to catch the shuttle. Students living in Stronghurst are dismissed at approximately 3:20 p.m., and students living on the South end of the District are dismissed to load buses at approximately 3:30 p.m. Students are expected to leave the building at their designated time unless under the direct supervision of a teacher or coach.

Students will be expected to go to their regular destination after school. If a change is requested, and the student will be picked up or remain in Stronghurst after school, a parent/guardian is required to send a note to school or contact the office staff at least one (1) hour before dismissal time.

Any student arriving after 8:25 a.m. or leaving before 3:10 p.m. must be signed in or out in the Middle School Office by a parent or guardian.

High School

Students should not be in the building before 7:45 a.m. unless specifically requested and directly supervised by a teacher. Teachers are not required to be present for supervision until 7:45 a.m. Students are not to be in the building after 3:30 p.m. unless specifically requested to stay and directly supervised by a staff member.

The school day officially begins at 8:15 a.m. Students are expected to be in their 1st hour class at that time. If the students are not in their assigned room when school starts at 8:15 a.m., they will be marked tardy. Required instructional minutes will be considered when determining half day absences.

School is officially dismissed at 3:09 p.m. Students are expected to leave the building at that time unless under the direct supervision of a teacher or coach.

Any student arriving after 8:15 a.m. or leaving before 3:09 p.m. must sign in or out in the High School Office.

Closed Campus

West Central C.U.S.D. #235 has closed campuses. Students are not to leave the school grounds between the start and end of the school day for any reason without permission. Students must be in the cafeteria or other assigned areas during their lunch period. Signing out does not mean that a student is excused. Students who must leave during the school day, and have permission, are to sign out in the office. Once a student arrives at school, they are not allowed to leave campus or loiter in the parking lots. The parking lot is off limits during the day, including the lunch period. The elementary building is also a restricted area for middle school and high school students with the exception of Physical Education classes or other approved tasks. Middle school and high school students found to be in the elementary sections of the campus without proper permission will be subject to disciplinary action.

Announcements

Middle School

Announcements will be announced over the intercom each day at the beginning of the 7th hour. Paper copies will be posted on bulletin boards around the school. Rigid attempts will be made to prevent announcements during the remainder of the day. Announcements for the next day should be in the office in writing by 3:30 p.m.

High School

Announcements will be made live via a social media platform and/or over the PA/phone system at the high school during the first period of the school day. Students requesting announcements for a club or organization should write their announcement out, have the sponsoring teacher sign it for approval, then take the announcement to the office by 3:25 p.m. the school day before the announcement is to be made. Written copies of the day's announcements will be delivered to each classroom at the beginning of the day through a staff email. Teachers will provide a convenient place to post the day's announcements so that students may check them if necessary throughout the day. Announcements will also be posted on the school website.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Illinois law requires that whoever has custody or control of any child between six (by September 1) and seventeen years of age shall assure that the child attends school in the district in which he or she resides, during the entire time school is in session (unless the child has already graduated from high school). Illinois law also requires that whoever has custody or control of a child who is enrolled in the school, regardless of the child's age, shall assure that the child attends school during the entire time school is in session.

There are certain exceptions to the attendance requirement for children who: attend private school, are physically or mentally unable to attend school (including a pregnant student suffering medical complications as certified by her physician), are lawfully and necessarily employed, are between the ages of 12 and 14 while in confirmation classes, have a religious reason requiring absence, or are 16 or older and employed and enrolled in a graduation incentive program.

Whenever students are absent, they miss valuable information and opportunities. The missed educational opportunity can never be entirely made up. Absences are noted on transcripts which are sent to colleges and employers. Employers and colleges note excessive absences negatively as do committees that award scholarships.

Students' attendance at school is the number one factor in their success at school. When students are not at school, they are not able to learn. The Illinois State Board of Education has put a focus on student attendance and tracks Chronic Absenteeism. **Chronic Absenteeism** is when a student misses 10% or more (18 days) of school for any reason. At West Central we value the education we provide our students and to help our students be successful, we place a priority on student attendance each day. Please know that buildings will track attendance and reach out to the student and/or parent when there is a concern with the student's attendance pattern, in order to help avoid your student being chronically absent.

It is the feeling of the Board of Education, administration, and teaching staff that no student should be absent unless it is absolutely necessary. Regular and punctual patterns of attendance are expected of each student enrolled in the West Central School District. Absences and tardiness are to be kept at a minimum. The following attendance policies reflect this District's philosophy:

Notification of Absences

In the event of an absence, the student's parent/guardian is required to call the appropriate school office by 9:00 a.m. each morning the student is absent to explain the reason for the absence. If a call has not been made to the school by 10:00 a.m. on the day of a student's absence, a school official will attempt to call the home to inquire why the student is not at school. If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted, the student will be required to submit a signed note from the parent/guardian explaining the reason for the absence upon his/her return. Failure to do so shall result in an unexcused absence. The student has two days to clear the unexcused absence. Any unexcused absence not cleared after two (2) school days will remain an unexcused absence, and the penalties for an unexcused absence will apply. The principal, at his/her discretion, has the right to request a written statement from a physician explaining the nature of the absence. Upon request of the parent/guardian, the reason for an absence will be kept confidential.

Absences fall into two categories:

A. Excused - Examples of Excused Absences may include:

- Illness (including mental or behavioral health of the student),
- Observance of a religious holiday or event,
- Death in the immediate family,
- Family emergency,
- Situations beyond the control of the student,
- Circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student's mental, emotional, or physical health or safety,
- Attending a military honors funeral to sound TAPS,
- Attend a civic event,
- Up to five (5) days in cases where the student's parent/guardian is an active-duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support postings. The Board of Education, in its discretion, may excuse a student for additional days relative to such leave or deployment.
- Pre-arranged absences such as college visits, funeral attendance, doctor or dentist appointments and family vacations must be pre-approved by the Building Principal. One college visit day will be allowed to a student as a junior and two as a senior. These days must be approved in advance by the Guidance Counselor and the Building Principal. Students who must be absent for a dental or medical appointment must bring back an appointment card certifying the appointment was kept and a written request or a phone call from their parent or guardian must be on file prior to the absence. Students may not leave for appointments with another student even with a parental note except with siblings,
- Out of school suspensions,
- Other reasons as approved by the Building Principal.

The school may require documentation explaining the reason for the student's absence.

A student will be permitted to make up all missed work, including homework and tests, for *equivalent* academic credit. The student will be given a minimum of one school day for each day absent to complete and return the work.

Anticipated Absences

Anticipated absences may be approved if the following are met (These may be considered excused absences):

- Travel or other extended absences with parents/guardians and other emergencies as determined and defined by the principal.
- All make-up work is to be arranged prior to the student's absence. A student and the student's parent/guardian are responsible for obtaining assignments from the student's teachers prior to any anticipated excused absences and for ensuring that such assignments are completed by the student prior to his or her return to school.

Failure to follow these guidelines may result in an unexcused absence. Any work assigned during the student's absence and not provided to the student prior to being gone, will be given to the student on his/her return and the student will be given a minimum of one school day for each day absent to complete and return the work.

B. Unexcused

All other absences are considered unexcused unless otherwise approved by the Building Principal.

Unexcused absences are detrimental to the learning process and are highly discouraged. Absences correlate more than any other factor with school failure or poor school performance. In order to encourage attendance, penalties for unexcused absences will be issued whenever they occur.

The student has two days to clear the unexcused absence. Any unexcused absence not cleared after two (2) school days will remain an unexcused absence, and the penalties for an unexcused absence will apply.

If a student's absence is unexcused as described above, he/she will be permitted to make up all missed work, including homework and tests, for *equivalent* academic credit. The student will be given a minimum of one school day for each day absent to complete and return the work.

Excessive Student Absenteeism

Parents have 10 parent 'call-ins' that they can use during the school year to excuse their student if an absence is unavoidable. These absences would be considered 'excused' as long as the parent sends a note or contacts the office. Two examples of commonly used parent call-ins are to call in a student because of an illness that does not necessitate a doctor visit or taking a mental health day. After the 10 parent call-ins are exhausted, any additional absences will automatically revert to unexcused absences unless they are verified medical, legal, funeral or other state approved absences.

At 5 and 10 absences, including mental or behavioral health of the student, a warning letter will be sent to parents/guardians concerning truancy issues. Students must present proof from a doctor within 2 school days upon returning. When a student reaches 3 unexcused absences, a warning letter will be sent from the ROE. When a student reaches 6 unexcused absences, a second letter will be sent from the ROE. The third truancy letter will be issued after the 12th unexcused absence. After 15 unexcused absences, the students will receive notice of a hearing before a county Truancy Review Board to be convened by the Office of the Regional Superintendent. The last step in the process (if success is not attained after the hearing before the Truancy Review Board) will be a referral to the appropriate court for legal action. This step will be initiated by the Regional Office of Education.

Truancy

Student attendance is critical to the learning process. Truancy is therefore a serious issue and will be dealt with in a serious manner by the school and district.

Students who miss more than 1% but less than 5% or more of the prior 180 regular school days without valid cause (a recognized excuse) are considered truants. Students who miss 5% or more of the prior 180 regular school days without valid cause are chronic truants. Students who are chronic truants will be offered support services and resources aimed at correcting the truancy issue.

If chronic truancy persists after support services and other resources are made available, the school and district, with support from the Regional Office of Education, will take further action, including:

- Referral to the truancy officer
- Reporting to officials under the Juvenile Court Act
- Referral to the State's Attorney
- Appropriate school discipline

A student who misses 15 consecutive days of school without valid cause and who cannot be located or, after exhausting all available support services, cannot be compelled to return to school is subject to expulsion from school.

A parent or guardian who knowingly and willfully permits a child to be truant is in violation of State law.

High School Dance Attendance

High School students are required to be at school the day before the dance in order to attend the dance. Students who are not in attendance before the start of 3rd hour or have any unexcused absences the day before the dance will not be allowed to attend.

Tardies

Student tardies may result in disciplinary action. Problem solving meetings will take place to address tardies and determine possible solutions.

Elementary

Students are considered tardy when they are not physically present in their classroom at the beginning of the day. Students arriving late at the beginning of the school day are to report to the office, sign in, and have a pass issued to them before they continue to their class.

Middle School

Students are considered tardy when they are not physically present in their classroom at the beginning of the day and when the bell rings at the start of each individual class. Students arriving late at the beginning of the school day are to report to the office, sign in, and have a pass issued to them before they continue to their class. This procedure applies to core classes, lunch, physical education, and exploratory classes.

Consequence for being tardy:

- 5 tardies in the quarter will result in one (1) 30-minute after school detentions (3:15-3:45)
- 10 tardies in the quarter will result in two (2) 30-minute after school detentions (3:15-3:45)
- 15 tardies in the quarter will result in a four (4) 30-minute after school detentions (3:15-3:45)
- Continued tardies will result in on-going disciplinary action
- Tardies will reset at the start of each quarter
- Administration has the option to assign lunch detentions instead of after school detention

High School

Students are considered tardy when they are not physically present in their classroom when the bell rings at the start of each class period, without a pass. A student will be considered tardy if they arrive in class after the bell rings, until 5 minutes after the bell. (Students arriving after 5 minutes, without a pass, will be considered absent for the class period.) Students arriving late at the beginning of the school day are to report to the office, sign in, and have a pass issued to them before they continue to their class. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action.

Consequence for being tardy:

- 5 tardies in the quarter will result in a 30 minute after school detention
- 10 tardies in the quarter will result in two (2) 30 minutes after school detentions
- 15 tardies in the quarter will result in a 3 hour Friday detention
- Continued tardies will result in on-going disciplinary action
- Tardies will reset at the start of each quarter

Perfect Attendance

A student cannot be absent for any portion of any school day in order to be eligible to receive a Perfect Attendance Award. Due to extenuating circumstances, such as a pandemic, perfect attendance awards may be eliminated.

Make-Up Work

When a student is absent from school for any reason, he/she is expected to make-up for all missed work including homework and tests. The student is responsible for obtaining assignments from his/her teacher(s). Students will be given a minimum of one day for each day absent to turn in their make-up work.

Homework Requests

If a student is absent and the parent wishes to obtain the work missed for their child, school personnel ask parents/guardians to make homework requests before 10:00 a.m. This will allow teachers the time necessary to gather assignments. Homework will be available for pick-up at the end of the school day.

After School Activities

Students who have been absent from school without an excuse, absent due to an illness, or serving an out-of-school suspension will not be allowed to attend or participate in evening activities that occur on the same day. A student who is absent in the morning but who returns to school by the start of 3rd period may attend or participate in an evening activity on the same day.

Release Time for Religious Instruction/Observance

A student will be released from school, as an excused absence, to observe a religious holiday or for religious instruction. The student's parent/guardian must give written notice to the building Principal at least five (5) calendar days before the student's anticipated absence(s). Students excused for religious reasons will be given an opportunity to make up for all missed work, including homework and tests, for equivalent academic credit. The student will be given a minimum of one school day for each day absent to complete and return the work.

Home and Hospital Instruction

A student who is absent from school or whose physician (MD), physician assistant (PA) or licensed advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) anticipates his or her absence from school, because of a medical condition, may be eligible for instruction in the student's home or hospital. It is required that students must provide a signed Medical Certification for Home Hospital Instruction form from a physician (MD), physician assistant (PA) or licensed advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) prior to home and hospital instruction.

Appropriate educational services from qualified staff will begin no later than five school days after receiving a written statement from a physician, physician assistant, or licensed advanced practice registered nurse. Instructional or related services for a student receiving special education services will be determined by the student's individualized education program.

A student who is unable to attend school because of pregnancy will be provided home instruction, correspondence courses, or other courses of instruction before (1) the birth of the child when the student's physician, physician assistant, or licensed advanced practice registered nurse indicates, in writing, that she is medically unable to attend regular classroom instruction, and (2) for up to three (3) months after the child's birth or miscarriage.

For more information on home/hospital instruction, contact Mallory Nelson at (309) 627-2371.

Withdrawal or Transfer from School

Should it be necessary for students to withdraw from school during the year, parents or eligible students should notify the Principal's Office of plans to withdraw from or transfer to another school as soon as possible. Students accumulate many things in their school experience which they prize highly and wish to take with them when they leave. By letting the office know of the intent to withdraw students, the school will also be able to complete all school records. Proper clearance through the Principal's Office is necessary before records will be released. All school owned materials must be returned before clearance will be given.

Homeschool Students

Recognition of grade placement and academic credits awarded by a nonpublic school is at the sole discretion of the District. Students must present a transcript from an accredited program/school. All school and class assignments will be made according to Board policy 7:30 and 7:40, Student Assignment, as well as administrative procedures implementing this policy. Homeschool students are not allowed to participate in school district activities (dances, activity days, etc) without being enrolled in a class at West Central.

Any school aged home school student residing in the West Central School District that is interested in participating in athletic programs must contact the Athletic Director prior to the start of the season. Students are required to enroll in at least 1 course at West Central for the school year to participate. They also must meet IHSA/IESA eligibility standards for their home school coursework. IHSA/IESA requires students to be passing a minimum of 5 semester hours in an accredited program. To count for eligibility, home-school course work must be pre-approved by administration and a grade report must be reported to the Athletic Director before 8:00 am every Thursday during the athletic season.

GRADING, ASSESSMENT, AND PROMOTION/GRADUATION

School report cards are made available, via Skyward and/or paper copy, to students and parents/guardians on a quarterly basis. For questions regarding grades, please contact the classroom teacher.

The decision to promote a student to the next grade level is based on successful completion of the curriculum, attendance, performance on standardized tests and other testing. A student will not be promoted based upon age or any other social reasons not related to academic performance.

Middle School Retention

Middle school students who receive two (2) F's in core subjects will not be permitted to advance to the next grade level unless special circumstances merit advancement or conditional advancement to the next grade. Summer credit recovery may be required for students who receive F's in ELA or Math. The final placement will rest with the Administration and the Board of Education.

Skyward Family Access

Skyward Family Access is a web-based, database program that allows parents/guardians to monitor student progress. Student attendance, grades, lunch account balances, and emergency contact information are available for viewing. All teachers will make every effort to update gradebooks quickly and accurately. Each family is assigned a login, and the system is password protected. Please contact the office for additional information and to sign up for this access.

Grading Scales

An explanation of the Kindergarten grading system will be included on report cards. The First Grade grading scale is listed below. Grades Two through Five will follow a uniform grading scale that is used in all classes and all departments of the District, including Grades 3 – 5 PE. Grades Six through Twelve will follow a uniform grading scale that is used in all classes and departments. Elementary students will receive an E/M/U for Physical Education (grades K-2). Elementary students will receive a Pass/Fail grade in Music and Art (K-5). These reasonable percentages allow students to be challenged to achieve high academic achievement, yet give all students an attainable percentage for pass performance.

GRADING SCALE FOR GRADE ONE

90-100 E
80-89 M+
70-79 M
65-69 M-
0-64 U

GRADING SCALE FOR GRADES TWO - FIVE

A 94-100
A- 90-93
B+ 87-89
B 83-86
B- 80-82
C+ 77-79
C 73-76

C-	70-72
D+	68-69
D	66-67
D-	65
F	0-64

GRADING SCALE FOR GRADES K-2:

E	90-100%
M	65-89%
U	0-64%

GRADING SCALE FOR GRADES SIX - TWELVE

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	0-59

Progress Reports and Report Cards

Progress is the very foundation of education, and it is the school's obligation to give private periodic reports of a student's progress. These reports are a vital form of communication between the school and the parents/guardians. All progress reports must be based upon full information, accurately and honestly reported, with the proper maintenance of confidentiality. The appropriate teachers or other professional personnel will issue a report depicting the student's progress. In addition to the periodic reports, parents/guardians will be notified when a student's performance requires special attention and concern.

Honor Roll (Middle School and High School)

An Honor Roll will be announced and published after the close of each grading period for 6th – 12th grades. All core academic subjects taken for credit will be counted. For the purpose of Honor Roll, the computer does not round scores up.

- High Honor Roll 3.60 to 4.00
- Honor Roll 3.20 to 3.59
- No "F's" and No Incompletes

Assessments

Students and parents/guardians should be aware that students will take standardized tests throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to cooperate in preparing students for the standardized testing because the quality of the education the school can provide is partially dependent upon the school's ability to continue to prove its success in the State's standardized tests.

Parents/Guardians can assist their student in achieving their best performance by doing the following:

1. Encourage students to work hard and study throughout the year;
2. Ensure students get a good night's sleep the night before exams;
3. Ensure students eat well the morning of the exam;
4. Remind and emphasize for students the importance of good performance on standardized tests;
5. Ensure students are on time and prepared for tests, with appropriate materials;
6. Teach students the importance of honesty and ethics during the performance of tests;
7. Encourage students to relax on testing day; and
8. For high school students, encourage students to take the prep classes offered by the school.

We will be administering our State assessments again this year as follows:

ASSESSMENT	ADMINISTRATION WINDOW	GRADES	DURATION OF ASSESSMENT
Illinois Science Assessment	March 2 - April 30, 2026	5 th and 8 th Grades	1 Hour
Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR) ELA Math	March 2 – April 17, 2026	3 rd – 8 th Grades	Approximately 4.5 Hours Approximately 4.5 Hours
PreACT Secure	March - April 2026	9 th and 10 th Grades	Approximately 4 Hours
ACT	March - April 2026	11 th Grade	Approximately 4 Hours
DLM-AA	March 11 – May 6, 2026	Alternatively Assessed Students in 3 rd – 11 th Grades	
ACCESS for ELLs	January 14 – March 3, 2026	English Language Learner Students in K-12 th Grades	

Accelerated Placement

The District provides for an Accelerated Placement Program (APP) for qualified students. It provides students with an educational setting with curriculum options that are usually reserved for students who are older or in higher grades than the student. Accelerated placement includes, but may not be limited to, early entrance to kindergarten or first grade, accelerating a student in a single subject, and/or grade acceleration. Students in Grades 9 - 12 who meet or exceed the state benchmark on state assessments in ELA, Math and Science will automatically be enrolled in the next most rigorous course. Parents can opt their student out of the course placement by enrolling them in another course to fit their future needs. Participation is open to all students who demonstrate high ability and who may benefit from accelerated placement. It is not limited to students who have been identified as gifted or talented. Please contact the building principal for additional information.

Commencement Exercises

Only students who earn the required credits for a West Central diploma will be eligible to participate in commencement exercises, unless stated in a student's IEP. Student participation in commencement exercises is not mandatory nor is participation a guaranteed right. Names on the program will appear in alphabetical order. All students shall wear prescribed caps and gowns. No adornment of caps or gowns will be permitted except for school-provided symbols of achievement such as sashes, medals, or cords

Students shall not be prohibited from wearing or accessorizing the student's graduation attire with items associated with the student's cultural, ethnic, or religious identity or any other protected characteristic or category identified in the Illinois Human Rights Act.

All fines, fees, book rentals, etc. must be paid prior to graduation practice in order for students to participate in the rehearsal for graduation proceedings. All disciplinary actions must also be completed prior to the date of graduation practice or the student will not be admitted to graduation practice. Attendance at graduation practice is mandatory for a student to go through the formal graduation exercises in front of the public audience.

Valedictorian and Salutatorian

Valedictorian and Salutatorian awards are tentatively determined at the end of the seventh semester for local purposes only. Final class rank and G.P.A. will be determined after the eighth semester.

Early Graduation

The Board of Education realizes the need for some students to complete their high school education in less than the customary four years. However, the Board encourages all students to attend four years of high school. Students may be allowed to graduate one semester early, but only upon approval of the administration and the Board of Education.

Provisions for Early Graduation:

Students may be eligible for early graduation upon completion of seven (7) semesters of school attendance and when they have met all graduation requirements. A student must apply in writing to their counselor for early graduation. Written permission of parent(s)/guardian(s) is required. Initial application for consideration for early graduation should be made no earlier than the beginning of the sixth semester and no later than the beginning of the seventh semester.

Notification of the student's request and verification of the student's acceptability for early graduation will be given to the Superintendent by the counselor.

Permission for early graduation may be granted to a student by the Board of Education upon the recommendation of the Superintendent.

The early graduate will be considered a graduate of West Central High School at the end of the semester the student completes the course work. He/she will have adult status and surrender all rights and privileges afforded a student with the exception of participating in graduation. An early graduate who wishes to be enrolled at West Central High School after completing the coursework necessary for graduation will have the early graduation application voided. If the student withdraws before the end of the semester, a failing grade will be recorded for each course enrolled. A letter from the principal stating that graduation requirements have been met will suffice as proof of graduation until the graduate receives the diploma. The early graduate may have his or her picture placed in the composite of those graduating that year. The early graduate will be allowed to order graduation announcements and other symbols of graduation. The early graduate may receive a diploma by participating in the graduation ceremony, personally picking it up after graduation, or by having it mailed. Students graduating early, understand that they are ineligible to participate in athletics or other student activities (including prom, activity days, etc).

High School Graduation Requirements

To graduate from high school, unless otherwise exempted, each student is responsible for:

1. Completing all State mandated graduation requirements listed below.
2. Completing all District graduation requirements that are in addition to State graduation requirements.
3. Passing an examination on patriotism and principles of representative government proper use of the flag, methods of voting, and the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Participating in the State assessment required for graduation.

State Mandated Graduation Requirements

- Four years of language arts.
- Two years of writing intensive courses, one of which must be English and the other of which may be English or any other subject. When applicable, writing-intensive courses may be counted towards the fulfillment of other graduation requirements.
- Three years of mathematics, one of which must be Math A and one of which must include geometry content
- Three years of science, one year of which is biology and the second year of which is Physical Science
- One year of a course that includes intensive instruction in computer literacy, which may be English, social science, or any other subject and which may be counted toward the fulfillment of other graduation requirements
- Three years of social studies, of which at least one year must be history of the United States or a combination of history of the United States and Civics, including passing an examination on patriotism and principles of representative government, proper use of the flag, methods of voting, and the Pledge of Allegiance.
- One year chosen from (A) music, (B) art, (C) foreign language, which shall be deemed to include American Sign Language, D) vocational education or E) forensic speech (speech and debate)
- One semester of health
- Four years of Physical Education.
- A course covering American patriotism and the principles of representative government, as enunciated in the American Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United State of America and the Constitution of the State of Illinois, and the proper use and display of the American flag.
- One semester of Consumer Economics
- Accumulated total of 25 earned credits
- Participating in the State assessment
- Completion of the FAFSA or file a waiver with the school district.

The above requirements do not apply to students with disabilities whose course of study is determined by an Individualized Education Program or students who are exempted from participation in certain courses in accordance with State law.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Graduation Requirement

As a prerequisite to receiving a high school diploma, the parent or guardian of each student or, if a student is at least 18 years of age or legally emancipated, the student must comply with either of the following:

1. File a FAFSA with the United States Department of Education or, if applicable, an application for State financial aid.
2. File a waiver indicating that the parent or guardian or, if applicable, the student understands what the FAFSA and application for State financial aid are and has chosen not to file an application.

Upon request, the school will provide a student and his or her parent or guardian any support or assistance necessary to comply with this requirement

A school district may award a high school diploma to a student who is unable to meet this requirement due to extenuating circumstances, as determined by the school district, if (i) the student has met all other graduation requirements, and (ii) the principal attests that the school district has made a good faith effort to assist the student or, if applicable, his or her parent or guardian in filing an application or a waiver.

Class Identification by Credits

Students will be classified according to the credit categories listed below:

- Freshman (0-5.5 credits)
- Sophomore (6.0- 11.5 credits)
- Junior (12.0- 17.5 credits)
- Senior (18.0- 25 credits)

GUIDANCE COUNSELING

The District provides a guidance and counseling program for students. The school's counselors are available to those students who require additional assistance.

The guidance program is available to assist students in identifying career options consistent with their abilities, interests, and personal values. Students are encouraged to seek the help of the counselors to develop class schedules that meet the student's career objectives. High school juniors and seniors have the opportunity to receive college and career-oriented information. Representatives from colleges and universities, occupational training institutions and career-oriented recruiters, including the military, may be given access to the school campus in order to provide students and parents/guardians with information.

Schedule Changes

Middle School

Students wishing to change class schedules must do so before the second full day of the semester. Requests made after the second full day will be denied. Prior to a schedule change being considered, the student must present a written request from the parent/guardian.

High School

In order to ensure the individual students' schedules are in the best interest for both the student and the teacher, the following drop guidelines have been established:

1. Students must contact the counselor within the first five (5) school days of the semester to make any changes in their schedules. After one week, no schedule changes can be made.

Dual Credit/Dual Enrollment

West Central High School strives to provide a well-balanced education. In doing so, we have partnered with local area colleges and universities to provide our students the opportunity to take college level courses while still in high school. Students must meet college criteria to enroll in a college level course. Students who are interested in taking a college course during their junior and/or senior year must receive permission from the high school counselor and high school principal. Specific rules, restrictions, and regulations pertaining to these courses are available through the Guidance Office. PA 102-1077 requires school districts to allow students to enroll in dual credit courses without meeting the criteria needed by the college/university for high school credit only. High school students should contact the Guidance Office with any questions.

In our partnership with colleges/universities, West Central has developed a grade and credit granting policy in order to award students both high school and college level credits. Students must choose, for each class in which they are enrolled, whether they would like the enrollment to be considered *dual credit*, or *dual enrollment*. For the purposes of West Central's record keeping, please reference the following definitions when making this decision.

Dual Credit: A dual credit course will grant the student a WCHS credit and grade, as well as college credit and grade. The grade earned from this course will count towards the student's high school GPA and will be reflected on their transcript.

Dual Enrollment: A dual enrollment course will allow the student to take a college level class while in high school, but will ONLY grant credit and a grade at the college in which they are enrolled. The student will NOT be granted high school credit, and the grade they earn will NOT count towards their GPA or be reflected on their transcript.

Students will be required to complete a form to designate, for each college class, whether they would like the class to count as dual credit or dual enrollment for West Central High. Once the designation has been made, the student will have 1 week from the first day the class begins to revoke/change their decision.

When a student enrolls in a dual credit or dual enrollment course, the student/parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible for the tuition cost. Upon successfully passing the course demonstrated by submitting a transcript of the grade earned, the District will reimburse the student 1/2 of the tuition cost.

Counseling

Every pupil at some time needs personal and individual help to solve problems or improve planning. Typical guidance services include personal/social development, academic assistance, investigation of college, trade school, military opportunities and work opportunities.

Information Services

Students are encouraged to make use of the guidance library and seek information from the counselor on issues that affect their school life or future.

Assisting the School Staff

The guidance program strives to serve the entire school. Information is available, when effectively used, that may help to vitalize and improve the activities of the school.

Testing

Placement information for the college-bound and the vocational student is provided, along with a variety of tests that enable students to determine both their strengths and weaknesses.

Coordinating Home, School, and Community

This is done by gathering information about community resources, job opportunities, and job placement.

Evaluation and Follow-Up

Students are instructed on planning for new situations and on making the best possible adjustments in new experiences. High school graduates will be surveyed to further evaluate the school program.

The Guidance Department is available to all students, teachers, and parents. All conferences of a personal nature are confidential and shall be treated as such with the exception of mandatory reporting. Students are encouraged to seek help on problems of any nature such as educational, personal, social, financial, parental, or academic concerns. The primary aim of the guidance department is to assist students in helping themselves by learning to make wise choices.

Appointments

Any students desiring to meet with the guidance counselor may do so by securing a pass from the counselor. Students will not be dismissed from any classes without a pass from the counselor. Passes will be obtained from the counselor before school, between classes, or during lunch period.

Alternative School

Student initiated requests to attend the RAES program may transfer no more than 2 credits per year back to West Central High School to apply toward a West Central High School diploma. This same restriction does not apply to students who have been referred by West Central High School to the RAES program. Students who leave West Central to attend RAES are dropped from West Central and are no longer registered as a student at West Central. These students, by transferring out of West Central, give up the right to attend West Central activities as a West Central student. Students who transfer from West Central in good standing may attend activities as a guest of a current West Central student. Students who attend RAES are not allowed to participate in athletics or activities (prom, graduation, activity days, etc). They will receive a RAES diploma, if they complete the needed credits for that program.

Post-graduation Contact

The guidance office is charged with maintaining some contact with graduates of West Central High School for purposes of curriculum evaluation and school improvement.

Hotline Numbers

As a service to both students and parents, we have included a list of numbers we hope will be useful should you feel the need for outside assistance in a number of areas.

Child Abuse Hotline	1-800-252-2873	Depression Awareness	1-800-421-4211
Henderson Co. Health Dept.	1-309-627-2812	Henderson Co. Sheriff	1-309-867-4291
Illinois Poison Center	1-800-942-5969	National Suicide Hotline	988
Road Conditions	1-800-452-4368	School Violence	1-800-477-0024

STUDENT RECORDS

A school student record is any writing or other recorded information concerning a student and by which a student may be identified individually that is maintained by a school or at its direction or by a school employee, regardless of how or where the information is stored, except for certain records kept in a staff member's sole possession; records maintained by law enforcement officers working in the school; video and other electronic recordings (including electronic recordings made on school buses) that are created in part for law enforcement, security, or safety reasons or purposes, though such electronic recording may become a student record if the content is used for disciplinary or special education purposes regarding a particular student.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Illinois Student Records Act afford parents/guardians and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's school records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and copy the student's education records within 10 business days of the day the District receives a request for access.

The degree of access a student has to his or her records depends on the student's age. Students less than 18 years of age have the right to inspect and copy only their permanent record. Students 18 years of age or older have access and copy rights to both permanent and temporary records. A parent/guardian or student should submit to the building principal a written request that identifies the record(s) he or she wishes to inspect. Within 10 business days, the principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. In certain circumstances, the District may request an additional 5 business days in which to grant access. The District charges \$.35 per page for copying but no one will be denied their right to copies of their records for inability to pay this cost.

These rights are denied to any person against whom an order of protection has been entered concerning the student.

2. The right to have one or more scores received on college entrance examinations included on the student's academic transcript.

Parents/guardians or eligible students may have one or more scores on college entrance examinations included on the student's academic transcript. The District will include scores on college entrance examinations upon the written request of the parent/guardian or eligible student stating the name of each college entrance examination that is the subject of the request and the dates of the scores that are to be included.

3. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent/guardian or eligible student believes are inaccurate, irrelevant, or improper.

A parent/guardian or eligible student may ask the District to amend a record that is believed to be inaccurate, irrelevant, or improper. Requests should be sent to the building principal and should clearly identify the record the parent/guardian or eligible student wants changed and the specific reason a change is being sought.

If the District decides not to amend the record, the District will notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the decision and advise him or her of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardian or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

4. The right to permit disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that the FERPA or Illinois School Student Records Act authorizes disclosure without consent.

Disclosure without consent is permitted to school officials with legitimate educational or administrative interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board. A school official may also include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of personally identifiable information from education records (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, or educational technology vendor); or any parent/guardian or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility or contractual obligation with the district.

Upon request, the District discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student has enrolled or intends to enroll, as well as to any person as specifically required by State or federal law. Before information is released to these individuals, the parents/guardians or eligible student will receive prior written notice of the nature and substance of the information, and an opportunity to inspect, copy, and challenge such records.

Academic grades and references to expulsions or out-of-school suspensions cannot be challenged at the time a student's records are being forwarded to another school to which the student is transferring.

Disclosure is also permitted without consent to: any person for research, statistical reporting or planning, provided that no student or parent/guardian can be identified; to another school district that overlaps attendance boundaries with the District, if the District has entered into an intergovernmental agreement that allows for sharing of student records and information with the other district, any person named in a court order; appropriate persons if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the

student or other persons; and juvenile authorities when necessary for the discharge of their official duties who request information before adjudication of the student.

5. The right to a copy of any school student record proposed to be destroyed or deleted.

The permanent record is maintained for at least 60 years after the student transfers, graduates, or permanently withdraws. The temporary record is maintained for at least 5 years after the student transfers, graduates, or permanently withdraws. Temporary records that may be of assistance to a student with a disability who graduates or permanently withdraws, may, after 5 years, be transferred to the parent/guardian or to the student, if the student has succeeded to the rights of the parent/guardian. Student temporary records are reviewed every 4 years or upon a student's change in attendance centers, whichever occurs first.

6. The right to prohibit the release of directory information.

Throughout the school year, the District may release directory information regarding students, limited to:

- Name
- Address
- Grade level
- Birth date and place
- Parent/guardian names, addresses, electronic mail addresses, and telephone numbers
- Photographs, videos, or digital images used for informational or news-related purposes (whether by a media outlet or by the school) of a student participating in school or school-sponsored activities, organizations, and athletics that have appeared in school publications, such as yearbooks, newspapers, or sporting or fine arts programs
- Academic awards, degrees, and honors
- Information in relation to school-sponsored activities, organizations, and athletics
- Major field of study
- Period of Attendance in school

Any parent/guardian or eligible student may prohibit the release of any or all of the above information by delivering a written objection to the building principal within 30 days of the date of this notice.

7. The right to request that military recruiters or institutions of higher learning not be granted access to your student's information without your prior written consent.

Federal law requires a secondary school to grant military recruiters and institutions of higher learning, upon their request, access to secondary school students' names, addresses, and telephone numbers, unless the student's parent/guardian, or student who is 18 years of age or older, submits a written request that the information not be released without the prior written consent of the parent/guardian or eligible student. If you wish to exercise this option, notify the building principal.

8. The right contained in this statement: No person may condition the granting or withholding of any right, privilege or benefits or make as a condition of employment, credit, or insurance the securing by any individual of any information from a

student's temporary record which such individual may obtain through the exercise of any right secured under State law.

9. **The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA.**

The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

U.S. Department of Education
Student Privacy Policy Office
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington DC 20202--8520

Student Biometric Information

Before collecting biometric information from students, the school must seek the permission of the student's parent/guardian or the student, if over the age of 18. Biometric information means information that is collected from students based on their unique characteristics, such as fingerprint, voice recognition or retinal scan.

No school official or staff member may market or sell personal information concerning students (or otherwise provide that information to others for that purpose). The term *personal information* means individually identifiable information including: (1) a student or parent's first and last name, (2) a home or other physical address (including street name and the name of the city or town), (3) a telephone number, (4) a Social Security identification number or (5) driver's license number or State identification card.

The above paragraph does not apply: (1) if the student's parent/guardian have consented; or (2) to the collection, disclosure or, use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.

STUDENT PRIVACY PROTECTIONS – SURVEYS

Release of Names/Addresses

The school will release names and addresses of a student to military and college recruiters upon the student's request. Parents may have their son's/daughter's name removed from the list by instructing the Guidance Office in writing.

Surveys by Third Parties

Before a school official or staff member administers or distributes a survey or evaluation created by a third party to a student, the student's parent/guardian may inspect the survey or evaluation upon their request and within a reasonable time of their request. This applies to every survey:

- (1) that is created by a personal entity other than a district official, staff member, or student;
- (2) regardless of whether the student answering the questions can be identified; and
- (3) regardless of the subject matter of the questions.

Parents/Guardians who object to disclosure of information concerning their child to a third party may do so in writing to the Building Principal.

Surveys Requesting Personal Information

School officials and staff members will not request, nor disclose, the identity of any student who completes any survey or evaluation (created by any person or entity, including the school or district) containing one or more of the following items:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian.
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family.
- Behavior or attitudes about sex.
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
- Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom students have close family relationships.
- Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian.
- Income other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such a program.

The student's parent/guardian may inspect the survey or evaluation, and refuse to allow their child to participate in the survey. The school will not penalize any student whose parent/guardian exercised this option.

Instructional Material

A student's parent/guardian may inspect, upon request, any instructional material used as part of their child's educational curriculum within a reasonable time of their request.

Annual Notice to Parent about Education Technology

School districts throughout the State of Illinois contract with different educational technology vendors for beneficial K-12 purposes such as providing personalized learning and innovative educational technologies, and increasing efficiency in school operations.

Under Illinois' Student Online Personal Protection Act, or SOPPA (105 ILCS 85/), educational technology vendors and other entities that operate Internet websites, online services, online applications, or mobile applications that are designed, marketed, and primarily used for K-12 school purposes are referred to in SOPPA as *operators*. SOPPA is intended to ensure that student data collected by operators is protected, and it requires those vendors, as well as school districts and the Ill. State Board of Education, to take a number of actions to protect online student data.

Depending upon the particular educational technology being used, our District may need to collect different types of student data, which is then shared with educational technology vendors through their online sites, services, and/or applications. Under SOPPA, educational technology vendors are prohibited from selling or renting a student's information or from engaging in targeted advertising using a student's information. Such vendors may only disclose student data for K-12 school purposes and other limited purposes permitted under the law.

In general terms, the types of student data that may be collected and shared include personally identifiable information (PII) about students or information that can be linked to PII about students, such as:

- Basic identifying information, including student or parent/guardian name and student or parent/guardian contact information, username/password, student ID number
- Demographic information
- Enrollment information
- Assessment data, grades, and transcripts
- Attendance and class schedule
- Academic/extracurricular activities
- Special indicators (e.g., disability information, English language learner, free/reduced meals or homeless/foster care status)
- Conduct/behavioral data
- Health information
- Food purchases
- Transportation information
- In-application performance data
- Student-generated work
- Online communications
- Application metadata and application use statistics
- Permanent and temporary school student record information

Operators may collect and use student data only for K-12 purposes, which are purposes that aid in the administration of school activities, such as:

- Instruction in the classroom or at home (including remote learning)
- Administrative activities
- Collaboration between students, school personnel, and/or parents/guardians
- Other activities that are for the use and benefit of the school district

SUPPORT SERVICES

The West Central School District wants all students to have a rewarding and enjoyable school experience. To meet this goal, we need ongoing communication between home, school, and particularly among teachers, students and parents/guardians. If students are unhappy or feeling unsuccessful, and if parents feel that we can be of assistance, they should not hesitate to call.

The staff has developed a plan to assist students who may experience problems at school. The District has many individuals who are available to help both parents and students. These professionals include a School Nurse, School Psychologist, School Social Worker, School Counselor, a Speech and Language Pathologist, and Special Education Resource staff and Title I staff. The District employs all of these people to assist parents, children, and teachers.

Response to Intervention (RtI)/Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS)

We do offer Response to Intervention and Multi-Tiered Support System (known as RtI or MTSS), which is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with academic and social-emotional concerns. In the RtI/MTSS model, a small group of staff members can review a student's record if a student is experiencing academic difficulty. The goal is to work with the student and parents to identify a method of teaching and interventions that will help a student achieve academic success. A student in RtI/MTSS then has his/her academic progress monitored frequently to see if these interventions are sufficient to help the student catch up with peers. If the

student fails to show significant improvement despite several well-designed interventions, this failure to “respond to intervention” can be viewed as evidence of an underlying learning disability. One advantage of RtI/MTSS is that it allows schools to intervene early to meet the needs of struggling learners. Another is to find specific learning styles that benefit a particular student. This information can be very helpful to both teachers and parents. If a further evaluation is necessary, a conference will be held with the parents and staff involved, and an individualized educational plan (IEP) can be developed to address appropriate learning accommodations. Students may be referred to the RtI/MTSS team by parents/guardians or school personnel when there is an academic concern.

Teacher Assistance Team (Elementary)

We offer a Teacher Assistance Team. Students may be referred to TAT by parents or school personnel when there is a behavior concern. This referral for a student may lead to an evaluation to determine learning styles, physical capabilities, needs, and/or behavioral interventions. A small group of staff members will convene to identify specific areas of concern and create a plan for the student to become more successful in the school environment. Parents will also be encouraged to participate in these meetings. The recommendations of the TAT Team will be shared with those who work with the student and individual monitoring will follow.

Title I (Elementary and Middle School)

The purpose of Title I is to meet the educational needs of struggling and/or at-risk students. The focus of our programs will be the improvement of achievement in reading, language arts, and math as resources and time permit. Our goal is to enable every child to read at grade level to ensure success in school. Research clearly shows that children, including low-achieving children, can succeed when expectations are high and all children are given the opportunity to learn challenging material. All parents/guardians can contribute to their children’s success by helping at home and becoming partners with teachers so that children can achieve high standards. A close working relationship among the classroom teacher, Title I teacher, and parent/guardian is necessary in order to identify and provide support for those students at risk.

In the fall of each year, all students within the building will be given a reading assessment. Based on local, state, and federal selection program guidelines, the Title Program will be developed to best meet the needs of all of our students.

Systematic instruction is key to building reading skills, starting with basic concepts and gradually introducing more complex ones. This method follows a deliberate order, ensuring skills build upon each other in a way that enhances understanding and proficiency. It is both cumulative and diagnostic, crucial for teaching foundational aspects like phonological awareness and phonics. This approach is especially important for young learners mastering reading basics and older students who might need targeted interventions to boost their literacy skills. Our program is based on the belief that such assistance should be provided within the regular classroom structure, wherever possible, to supplement the reading and language arts instruction that our students currently receive. Our second priority is to focus on those students in 3rd through 5th grades who are not meeting the Illinois State Standards, providing services first to those in the Did Not Yet Meet Expectations Level and then to those students who scored in the Partially Met Expectations Level. This assistance will also be provided where possible within the regular reading/language arts classroom structure as funding permits. In addition, we will provide assistance to Middle School students as identified in need based on reading assessment results and teacher referrals.

Speech and Language

Speech and language services are also provided for students ages 3 - 21. Students who receive these services are identified either through our Preschool and Kindergarten Screening or through a referral from either a teacher or a parent. Parents/Guardians who feel that students have a communication delay should contact our Speech Language Pathologist.

Education of Children with Disabilities

It is the intent of the district to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act are identified, evaluated and provided with appropriate educational services.

The School provides a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment and necessary related services to all children with disabilities enrolled in the school. The term “children with disabilities” means children between ages 3 and the day before their 22nd birthday for whom it is determined that special education services are needed, except those children with disabilities who turn 22 years of age during the school year are eligible for special education services through the end of the school year. It is the intent of the school to ensure that students with disabilities are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services.

A copy of the publication “Explanation of Procedural Safeguards Available to Parents of Students with Disabilities” may be obtained from the Special Services’ Office, the District Office or the Building Principal’s Office. If parents feel that students may be in need of a special education program and have been denied that opportunity, they should contact our Special Education Coordinator at (309) 627-2371.

The parent/guardian of a student receiving special education services, or being evaluated for eligibility, is afforded reasonable access to educational facilities, personnel, classrooms, and buildings. This same right of access is afforded to all independent educational evaluators or qualified professionals retained by or on behalf of a parent or child.

Special Education Services

West Central offers special services to students who are having difficulty in the learning process. The special education programs available at West Central C.U.S.D. #235 are designed to provide services to students who have learning or behavioral disabilities. A conference will be held with the parents/guardians and staff involved to discuss the evaluation, and if the evaluation warrants, an individualized educational plan (IEP) will be developed to address appropriate interventions. Students with disabilities have Individual Educational Programs (IEP) that outline the type and amount of special education services provided. A referral procedure for procuring special education services is available at the school. Parents/Guardians or teachers may refer students for an evaluation to determine learning styles, physical capabilities, needs, and/or behavior interventions.

If parents feel that students may be in need of a special education program and have been denied that opportunity, they should contact our Special Education Coordinator at (309) 627-2371.

Parents who have concerns about their student’s performance in school should share their concerns with their child’s teacher(s), Case Manager, and/or Special Education Coordinator. If not satisfied, feel free to contact the Building Principal.

The school district has an established policy and procedure regarding behavior guidelines for students with disabilities. A copy of these behavioral guidelines is available at the District Office or in the Building Principal Offices. All students are subject to disciplinary action. The appropriateness of disciplinary action concerning children with disabilities will be addressed in each student's Individualized Education Program and, if necessary, in a Multidisciplinary Conference.

Upon graduation or permanent withdrawal of a disabled student, temporary school records containing special education information, which may be of continued assistance to the student, may be transferred to the custody of the parent/guardian or to the student after five years (unless the student has been deemed incompetent by the court).

A student with a disability who has an individualized education program prescribing special education, transition planning, transition services, or related services beyond the student's four years of high school, qualifies for a Certificate of Completion after the student has finished four years of high school. The student is encouraged to participate in the graduation ceremony of his/her graduating class.

When a student with a disability reaches 18 years of age all educational rights transfer from the parent/guardian to the student, unless the school district is otherwise notified. The transfer of all special educational rights will occur unless the court has determined that the student is incompetent.

Related Service Logs

For a child with an individualized education program (IEP), the school district must create related service logs that record the type of related services administered under the child's IEP and the minutes of each type of related service that has been administered. The school will provide a child's parent/guardian a copy of the related service log at the annual review of the child's IEP and at any other time upon request.

Section 504

Students with disabilities who do not qualify for an individualized education program, as required by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and implementing provisions of this Illinois law, may qualify for services under Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 if the student (i) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, (ii) has a record of a physical or mental impairment, or (iii) is regarded as having a physical or mental impairment.

For further information, please contact:

Jordain Johnson, High School
(309)627-2377

Ariel Dillard, Middle School
(309)924-1681

Kendrah Ruebush, Elementary
(309)627-2339

Behavioral Intervention Guidelines for Students with Disabilities

The school will comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) when disciplining students. As required by law, the West Central Community Unit School District #235 Board has adopted guidelines for Behavioral Interventions for students with disabilities. These guidelines establish the process for the district to comply with P.A. 87-1103. Behavioral interventions will be used with students with disabilities to promote and strengthen desirable student behaviors and reduce identified inappropriate behaviors. No special education student shall be

expelled if the student's particular act of gross disobedience or misconduct is a manifestation of his or her disability as determined through a Manifestation Hearing. Any special education student whose gross disobedience or misconduct is not a manifestation of his or her disability may be expelled pursuant to the expulsion procedures. The complete handbook can be obtained at the District Office or from the Special Needs Coordinator.

Exemption from Physical Education Requirements

A student in grades 3-12 who is eligible for special education may be excused from physical education courses if:

- The student's parent/guardian agrees that the student must utilize the time set aside for physical education to receive special education support and services, or
- The student's individualized education program team determines that the student must utilize the time set aside for physical education to receive special education support and services.

The agreement or determination is made a part of the individualized educational program. A student requiring adapted physical education will receive that service in accordance with the student's individualized education program.

Homeless Child's Right to Education

When a child loses permanent housing and becomes a homeless person as defined at law, or when a homeless child changes his or her temporary living arrangements, the parent or guardian of the homeless child has the option of either:

- continuing the child's education in the school of origin for as long as the child remains homeless or, if the child becomes permanently housed, until the end of the academic year during which the housing is acquired; or
- enrolling the child in any school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend.

English Language Learners

The school offers opportunities for resident English Language Learners to achieve high levels in academic subjects and to meet the same challenging State standards that all children are expected to meet.

Parents/guardians of English Learners will be informed how they can: (1) be involved in the education of their children, (2) be active participants in assisting their children to attain English proficiency, achieve at high levels within a well-rounded education, and meet the challenging State academic standards expected of all students, and 3) participate and serve on the District's Transitional Bilingual Education Programs Parent Advisory Committee.

For questions related to this program or to express input in the school's English Learners Program, contact Mallory Nelson at (309) 627-2371.

Pregnant (including Suspected Pregnancy) Student Rights

The Title IX Regulations provide expanded protections for pregnant students and for students who are suspected of being pregnant. Students who are pregnant or suspected of being pregnant will be contacted by a trained staff member to offer information about support and rights for those students (right to no discrimination, reasonable accommodations/academic adjustments, lactation space and applicable grievance procedures).

TITLE I - SCHOOL / PARENT COMPACT - ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL

West Central Elementary School, West Central Middle School, and the parents/guardians of the students participating in activities, services, and programs funded by Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (participating children), agree that this compact outlines how the parents/guardians, the entire school staff, and the students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents/guardians will build and develop a partnership that will help children achieve the State's high standards.

School Responsibilities

West Central Elementary School and West Central Middle School will:

1) Ensure that all students will be taught by highly qualified teachers.

Qualifications of all current staff members can be confirmed in district records located in the district Superintendent's Office.

2) Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the participating children to meet the State's student academic achievement standards as follows:

Using an English, reading/language arts, and math curriculum aligned to the Illinois State Standards, the school will provide daily instruction in English, Reading/Language Arts and Math skills to all students. Identified students will receive extra assistance from Title I teachers and paraprofessionals daily. The KIDS assessment will be used with all Kindergarten students. The Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR) will be administered to all 3rd through 8th grade students. The PSAT will be administered to all freshman and sophomores in the spring. The SAT will be administered to all juniors in the spring. The MAP assessment will be administered to all Kindergarten – 12th grade students in the fall, winter, and spring. Information gained from these assessments will be used to inform classroom instruction and identify areas of concern. Instruction will also be focused and assessed quarterly on the District Exit Outcomes identified by staff. Assessments on these outcomes will be performed quarterly. Additional assessments at the elementary level, such as Spelling Inventory and STAR, are given and results are reviewed.

3) Hold parent-teacher conferences (at least annually) during which this compact will be discussed as it relates to the individual child's achievement.

Parent-teacher conferences may be held with staff at any other time throughout the school year upon request.

4. **Provide parents with frequent reports on his/her child's progress.**

Aside from parent-teacher conferences, parents will receive quarterly reports on student progress through the use of the district report cards at the end of each grading period. Mid-term reports will be available online and sent home upon request to keep parents informed. Any parent wishing more frequent reporting may contact the school and arrange a conference at the convenience of both teacher and parent/guardian.

Online access to student academic progress as well as attendance records is available to all parents through the SKYWARD Parent Access system. Parents simply need to request access codes through their child's Building Office.

5. **Provide parents reasonable access to staff members.**

Staff will be available for consultation with parents/guardians during regular school hours from 7:45 a.m. until 3:45 p.m. daily. Parents/Guardians should contact the school office (Elementary 627-2339, Middle School 924-1681, or High School 627-2377) to arrange for a time to meet with their child's teacher.

6. **Provide parents opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class and to observe classroom activities.**

Parents are encouraged to volunteer, participate and observe school activities. If a parent wishes to volunteer time assisting the school, he/she should contact the school and arrange to meet with the Principal. Notices of school or specific classroom activities in which parents are invited to participate or observe will be sent home with students. If a parent has any questions about their desire to visit school, they are encouraged to contact the school office. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to provide input on revisions and evaluations of the compact and programs yearly.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

We, as parents/guardians, will support our child's learning in the following ways:

- Monitor and encourage attendance.
- Ensure homework is completed.
- Monitor the amount of television children watch.
- Volunteer in a child's classroom or at school sponsored activities.
- Participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to my student's education.
- Promote positive use of my child's extracurricular time.
- Stay informed about my child's education and communicate with the school by promptly reading all notices from the school or the school district either received by my child or by mail and respond, as appropriate.
- Serve, to the extent possible, on school/District advisory groups, such as being the Title I, Part A parent representative on the school's School Improvement Team, the Title I Policy Advisory Committee, the District-wide Policy Advisory Council, or other school advisory or policy groups. Any parents interested in volunteering to serve on one of these committees should contact the Building Principal.
- Encourage my child to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the school and to continually strive for excellence.

Student Responsibilities

We, as students, will share the responsibility to improve our academic achievement, to continually strive for excellence, and to achieve the State's high standards. Specifically, we will:

- Attend school on a regular basis and come prepared for class.
- Complete all assignments daily and turn them in on time.
- Ask questions and seek out extra help when unsure of material covered, either with the teacher or through tutoring provided by the school.
- Read at least 30 minutes every day outside of school time.
- Display appropriate behavior in the classroom in order to allow the teacher to teach and the students to learn.
- Give our parents or the adult who is responsible for our welfare all notices and information received by us from our school every day in a timely manner.

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Students Have the Right

- To be treated with respect and kindness: Belittling/harassing comments will not be tolerated.
- To be themselves: No one will treat them unfairly due to looks, abilities, or gender.
- To be safe: No one will threaten them, bully them, or damage their property.
- To be heard: Opinions will be considered from every student who wishes to express an idea.
- To learn about themselves: They are free to express their feelings and opinions without being criticized.

The legal rights afforded students are not exactly the same as those afforded citizens within the mainstream of society.

Since the school, by law, acts in place of the parent, it has greater latitude than the government in dealing with students. There are areas where student rights are guaranteed. Examples of this would be free speech, if it does not create "material or substantial distraction," due process, as appropriate, and the right to be free from discrimination—be it race, religion, or sex, as provided by law.

There are also areas where student rights are not provided. Examples of this would include locker privacy, guaranteed confidentiality between student and teacher, and censorship of student publications according to State and Federal Laws.

All these rights will be afforded to students with the understanding that student responsibilities must also be exercised.

Students' Responsibilities

Freedom and responsibility are mutual and inseparable: Freedom for all of us depends on responsibility by each of us. To secure and expand our liberties, therefore, we accept these responsibilities as individual members of a free society:

- To be fully responsible for our own actions and for the consequences of those actions: Freedom to choose carries with it the responsibility for our choices.
- To respect the faculty, staff, and administration of the school in word and action.

- To respect the rights and beliefs of others: In a free society, diversity flourishes. Honor individual differences. Courtesy and consideration toward others are measures of a civilized society. We should treat others as we want to be treated.
- To give sympathy, understanding and help to others: Listen and let others be heard. Be tolerant, allow others to learn and express their ideas. As we hope others will help us when we are in need, we should help others when they are in need.
- To respect and obey the laws: Laws are mutually accepted rules by which, together, we maintain a free society. Liberty itself is built on a foundation of law. That foundation provides an orderly process for changing laws. It also depends on our obeying laws once they have been freely adopted.
- To respect the property of others, both private and public: No one has a right to what is not his or hers. The right to enjoy what is ours depends on our respecting the right of others to enjoy what is theirs.

SEMESTER EXAMS

All students must take semester exams. Seniors must take 1st semester exams. They have the option to take their 2nd semester exams if they choose to do so in order to raise their grade. Seniors choosing to take 2nd semester exams will have that exam grade included as part of the final grade, regardless of its impact on that grade.

Students are expected to be on time for all exams. Students who miss exams without a valid excuse will receive a zero for any missed exams. Exams may not be taken earlier than the school-scheduled date, unless arranged differently by the teacher.

A student who qualifies as “exempt” from a semester exam may choose to take the test, but that test will only improve the student’s overall grade in the class.

Students are not to be tardy during semester exams. Students who are unavoidably late will only be allowed the allotted time to complete their exam. Any work not completed by the end of the examination period will be counted off on the final grade. If a student misses an exam due to illness, he/she must provide a written Doctor’s Excuse. Semester exams must be made up before the teacher leaves for the semester/summer. When absolutely necessary, an incomplete may be given until the exam can be completed.

CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

Conduct

Students are to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with their age and grade level. For all students, this includes respect and consideration for others. This conduct is expected while on school premises, while on buses, and when attending or engaging in school activities on or off school property. Students who exhibit inappropriate behavior shall be subject to discipline.

Prohibited Student Conduct

Students may be disciplined for gross disobedience or misconduct, including but not limited to the following:

1. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, selling or offering for sale tobacco or nicotine materials, including electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), vapes, vape pens, or other vaping products.
2. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling alcoholic beverages. Students who are under the influence of an alcoholic beverage are not permitted to attend school or school functions and are treated as though they had alcohol in their possession.
3. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, selling or offering for sale:
 - Any illegal drug, controlled substance, or cannabis (including marijuana, hashish, and medical cannabis unless the student is authorized to be administered a medical cannabis infused product under *Ashley's Law*).
 - Any anabolic steroid unless it is being administered in accordance with a physician's or licensed practitioner's prescription.
 - Any performance-enhancing substance on the Illinois High School Association's most current banned substance list unless administered in accordance with a physician's or licensed practitioner's prescription.
 - Any prescription drug when not prescribed for the student by a physician or licensed practitioner, or when used in a manner inconsistent with the prescription or prescribing physician or licensed practitioner's instructions. The use or possession of medical cannabis, even by a student for whom medical cannabis has been prescribed, is prohibited unless the student is authorized to be administered a medical cannabis infused product under *Ashley's Law*.
 - Any inhalant, regardless of whether it contains an illegal drug or controlled substance: (a) that a student believes is, or represents to be capable of, causing intoxication, hallucination, excitement, or dulling of the brain or nervous system; or (b) about which the student engaged in behavior that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student intended the inhalant to cause intoxication, hallucination, excitement, or dulling of the brain or nervous system. The prohibition in this section does not apply to a student's use of asthma or other legally prescribed inhalant medications.
 - "Look-alike" or counterfeit drugs, including a substance that is not prohibited by this policy, but one: (a) that a student believes to be, or represents to be, an illegal drug, controlled substance, or other substance that is prohibited by this policy; or (b) about which a student engaged in behavior that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student expressly or impliedly represented to be an illegal drug, controlled substance or other substance that is prohibited by this policy.
 - Drug paraphernalia, including devices that are or can be used to: (a) ingest, inhale, or inject cannabis or controlled substances into the body; and (b) grow, process, store, or conceal cannabis or controlled substances.
 - Any substance inhaled, injected, smoked, consumed or otherwise ingested or absorbed with the intention of causing a physiological or psychological change in the body, including without limitation, pure caffeine in a tablet or powdered form.

Students who are under the influence of any prohibited substance are not permitted to attend school or school functions and are treated as though they have the prohibited substance, as applicable, in their possession.

4. Using, possessing, controlling or transferring a "weapon" or violating the procedures listed below under the Weapons Prohibition section of this handbook procedure.

5. Using a cellular telephone, smartphone, smart watch, video recording device, or similar electronic device in any manner that disrupts the educational environment or violates the rights of others, including using the device to take photographs in locker rooms or bathrooms, cheat, or otherwise violate student conduct rules. Prohibited conduct specifically includes, without limitation, creating and sending, sharing, viewing, receiving or possessing an indecent visual depiction of oneself or another person through the use of a computer, electronic communication device or cellular telephone, commonly known as “sexting.” See page 66 for more details.
6. Using or possessing a laser pointer unless under a staff member’s direct supervision and in the context of instruction.
7. Disobeying rules of student conduct or directives from staff members or school officials. Examples of disobeying staff directives include refusing a staff member’s request to stop, present school identification or submit to a search.
8. Engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination, altering report cards and wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores.
9. Engaging in bullying, hazing or any kind of aggressive behavior that does physical or psychological harm to a staff person or another student or encouraging other students to engage in such behavior. Prohibited conduct specifically includes, without limitation, any use of violence, intimidation, force, noise, coercion, threats, stalking, harassment, sexual harassment, public humiliation, theft or destruction of property, retaliation, hazing, bullying, bullying using a school computer or a school computer network or other comparable conduct.
10. Engaging in any sexual activity, including without limitation, offensive touching, sexual harassment, indecent exposure (including mooning) and sexual assault.
11. Leaving campus without permission.
12. Engaging in teen dating violence.
13. Causing or attempting to cause damage to, stealing, or attempting to steal, school property or another person’s personal property.
14. Entering school property or a school facility without proper authorization.
15. In the absence of a reasonable belief that an emergency exists, calling emergency responders (calling 9-1-1); signaling or setting off alarms or signals indicating the presence of an emergency (fire alarms or blue emergency buttons); or indicating the presence of a bomb or explosive device on school grounds, school bus or at any school activity.
16. Being absent without a recognized excuse.
17. Being involved with any public school fraternity, sorority, or secret society.
18. Being involved in a gang or engaging in gang-like activities, including displaying gang symbols or paraphernalia.
19. Violating any criminal law, including but not limited to, assault, battery, arson, theft, gambling, eavesdropping, vandalism and hazing.

20. Engaging in any activity, on or off campus, that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including but not limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property.
21. Making an explicit threat on an Internet website against a school employee, a student, or any school-related personnel if the Internet website through which the threat was made is a site that was accessible within the school at the time the threat was made or was available to third parties who worked or studied within the school grounds at the time the threat was made, and the threat could be reasonably interpreted as threatening to the safety and security of the threatened individual because of his or her duties or employment status or status as a student inside the school.
22. Operating an unarmed aircraft system (AUS) or drone for any purpose on school grounds or at any school event unless granted permission by the building principal.

For purposes of these rules, the term “possession” includes having control, custody, or care, currently or in the past, of an object or substance, including situations in which the item is: (a) on the student’s person; (b) contained in another item belonging to, or under the control of, the student, such as in the student’s clothing, backpack, or automobile; (c) in a school’s student locker, desk, or other school property; (d) at any location on school property or at a school-sponsored event; or (e) in the case of drugs and alcohol, substances ingested by the person.

Efforts, including the use of positive interventions and supports shall be made to deter students, while at school or a school-related event, from engaging in aggressive behavior that may reasonably produce physical or psychological harm to someone else.

No disciplinary action shall be taken against any student that is based totally or in part on the refusal of the student’s parent/guardian to administer or consent to the administration of psychotropic or psychostimulant medication to the student.

The list of violations is not all-inclusive; other infractions are to be handled at the discretion of the principal. School officials may change the severity of offense at their discretion without prior notification. Student attitude and intent, severity of the infraction, and frequency of occurrence are all to be considered in determining level of discipline. All school discipline policies are in force at all school events, whether held on West Central School grounds or elsewhere. Area police may be involved at any time if the situation warrants. Consequences of behavior choices will follow SB100 Law and will trump language written in this handbook, as needed.

Artificial Intelligence Use

“Artificial intelligence” or “AI” is intelligence demonstrated by computers as opposed to human intelligence. “Intelligence” encompasses the ability to learn, reason, generalize, and infer meaning. Examples of AI technology include ChatGPT and other chatbots and large language models.

AI is not a substitute for schoolwork that requires original thought. Students may not claim AI generated content as their own work. The use of AI to take tests, complete assignments, create multimedia projects, write papers, or complete schoolwork without permission of a teacher or administrator is strictly prohibited. The use of AI for these purposes constitutes cheating or plagiarism.

In certain situations, AI may be used as a learning tool or a study aid. Students who wish to use AI for legitimate educational purposes must have permission from a teacher or an administrator. Students may use AI as authorized in their IEP.

Students may not use AI, including AI image or voice generator technology, to violate school rules or school district policies.

In order to ensure academic integrity, tests, assignments, projects, papers, and other schoolwork may be checked by AI content detectors and/or plagiarism recognition software.

When and Where Conduct Rules Apply

The grounds for disciplinary action also apply whenever the student's conduct is reasonably related to school or school activities, including but not limited to:

1. On, or within sight of, school grounds before, during, or after school hours or at any time;
2. Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school;
3. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or
4. Anywhere, if the conduct interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including but not limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property.
5. During periods of remote learning.

Weapons Prohibition

A student who is determined to have brought one of the following objects to school, any school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school shall be expelled for a period of not less than one year but not more than 2 calendar years:

(1) A firearm, meaning any gun, rifle, shotgun, weapon as defined by Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code, firearm as defined in Section 1.1 of the Firearm Owners Identification Card Act, or firearm as defined in Section 24-1 of the Criminal Code of 1961. The expulsion period may be modified by the superintendent, and the superintendent's determination may be modified by the board on a case-by-case basis.

(2) A knife, brass knuckles or other knuckle weapon regardless of its composition, a billy club, or any other object if used or attempted to be used to cause bodily harm, including "look alikes" of any firearm as defined above.

The expulsion requirement may be modified by the superintendent, and the superintendent's determination may be modified by the board on a case-by-case basis.

Gang & Gang Activity Prohibited

"Gang" is defined as any group, club or organization of two or more persons whose purposes include the commission of illegal acts. No student on or about school property or at any school activity or whenever the student's conduct is reasonably related to a school activity, shall: (1) wear,

possess, use, distribute, display, or sell any clothing, jewelry, paraphernalia or other items which reasonably could be regarded as gang symbols; commit any act or omission, or use either verbal or non-verbal gestures, or handshakes showing membership or affiliation in a gang; or (2) use any speech or commit any act or omission in furtherance of the interest of any gang or gang activity, including, but not limited to, soliciting others for membership in any gangs; (3) request any person to pay protection or otherwise intimidate, harass or threaten any person; (4) commit any other illegal act or other violation of district policies, (5) or incite other students to act with physical violence upon any other person.

Vandalism

Students are expected to treat school property with care and respect. Students found to have damaged or destroyed school property will be required to reimburse the school district, as well as being subject to additional discipline. School officials are responsible to aggressively pursue, with the aid of police, the apprehension and prosecution of vandals. Recovery of damages shall include all costs pertaining to the incident. Failure on the part of the student and/or parent or guardian to make restitution may result in further action.

DISCIPLINE

Legal Authorization

Educational employees should maintain discipline in the schools, including school grounds that are owned or leased by the Board and used for school purposes and activities. The responsibility of school personnel to maintain discipline shall extend to activities connected with all school programs, including athletic and extracurricular activities, and may be exercised at any time for the safety and supervision of the students in the absence of their parents or guardians.

Nothing in this Section affects the power of the Board to establish a policy on discipline. The policy so established must provide that a staff member may use reasonable force as needed to maintain safety for the other students, school personnel or persons, or for self-defense or the defense of property, including the removal of a student from the classroom for disruptive behavior, and must provide due process to students. This policy does not include slapping, paddling, or prolonged maintenance of students in physically painful positions, nor does it include the intentional infliction of bodily harm.

The Administration may make and enforce reasonable rules of conduct and sportsmanship for athletic and extracurricular school events. Any person who violates such rules may be denied admission to school events in compliance with Board Policy 8:30, provided that adequate notice of the violation is given to such person. A meeting with administration may be held as appropriate.

Delegation of Authority

Each teacher or any other school personnel when students are under his/her charge, is authorized to impose any disciplinary measure, other than suspension, or expulsion, corporal punishment or in-school suspension, which is appropriate and in accordance with the policies and rules on student discipline. Teachers may use reasonable force as needed to maintain safety for other students and remove students from a classroom for disruptive behavior.

The Superintendent and Building Principal are authorized to impose the same disciplinary measures as teachers and may suspend students guilty of gross disobedience or misconduct from school (including all school functions) and from riding the school bus, up to 10 consecutive school days, provided the appropriate procedures are followed.

Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment is illegal and will not be used. Corporal punishment is defined as slapping, paddling, or prolonged maintenance of students in physically painful positions, or intentional infliction of bodily harm. Corporal punishment does not include reasonable force as needed to maintain safety for students, staff, or other persons, or for the purpose of self-defense or defense of property.

Isolated Time Out, Time Out, and Physical Restraint

Isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint shall only be used if the student's behavior presents an imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others and other less restrictive and intrusive measures were tried and proven ineffective in stopping it. The school may not use isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint as discipline or punishment, convenience for staff, retaliation, a substitute for appropriate educational or behavioral support, a routine safety matter, or to prevent property damage in the absence of imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others

Disciplinary Measures/Restorative Practices

Students who engage in prohibited conduct are subject to disciplinary measures. School officials shall limit the number and duration of expulsions and out-of-school suspensions to the greatest extent practicable, and, where practicable and reasonable, shall consider forms of non-exclusionary discipline before using out-of-school suspensions or expulsions. School personnel shall not advise or encourage students to drop out of school voluntarily due to behavioral or academic difficulties. Potential disciplinary measures include, but are not limited to, any of the following measures:

- Notifying parents/guardians.
- Disciplinary conference.
- Consultation with professional support staff.
- Withholding of privileges.
- Temporary removal from the classroom.
- Return of property or restitution for lost, stolen or damaged property.
- In-school suspension.
- After-school or before-school study provided the student's parent/guardian has been notified. (If transportation arrangements cannot be made in advance, an alternative disciplinary measure will be assigned to the student.)
- Community service.
- Seizure of contraband; confiscation and temporary retention of the personal property that was used to violate school rules.
- Suspension of bus riding privileges.
- Suspension from school and all school activities for up to 10 days. A suspended student is prohibited from being on school grounds.
- Expulsion from school and all school activities for a definite time period not to exceed 2 calendar years. An expelled student is prohibited from being on school grounds.

- Transfer to an alternative program if the student is expelled or otherwise qualifies for transfer under State law.
- Notifying juvenile authorities or other law enforcement whenever the conduct involves criminal activity, such as, illegal drugs (controlled substances), “look-alikes,” alcohol or weapons or in other circumstances as authorized by the reciprocal reporting agreement between the District and local law enforcement agencies.

The above list of disciplinary measures is a range of options that will not always be applicable in every case. In some circumstances, it may not be possible to avoid suspending or expelling a student because behavioral interventions, other than a suspension or expulsion, will not be appropriate and available, and the only reasonable and practical way to resolve the threat and/or address the disruption is a suspension or expulsion.

Classroom Interventions

Removal from the classroom, notification of parents, withholding of privileges, and surrender of contraband (including cell phones, etc.)

Detention

Detentions are to be served at lunchtime or outside of the regular school day for a minimum of 30 minutes. Students are expected to work on school assignments during the detention time. Students will be notified of the location to serve the detention.

Classroom detentions will be issued by the classroom teacher for misconduct in the classroom. If the student is disrupting class to the level that the other student’s ability to learn is lessened, the student will be sent to the office where they will remain for the rest of the period. Upon receiving the referral from the teacher the office has the option of increasing the level of discipline given in the classroom. Students will serve detentions with the classroom teacher who assigned them within one week of the time it was issued. Detentions will be served beginning at 7:45 a.m. and/or 3:15 p.m.

Alternative Educational Placement

(Alternative Educational Placement(A.E.P.) replaces the term “in school suspension”). An A.E.P. will be assigned during the regular school day for students who violate rules and/or are not being successful in the regular classroom environment. Students will be notified of the location of the A.E.P. The parent/guardian of a student who is assigned an A.E.P. will receive a notice by mail or telephone of the reasons for the assignment and how many days the student will serve.

Teachers of a student who is alternatively placed will be asked to forward to the Principal’s Office the student’s assignments for the day that the student is alternatively placed.

A student who has been assigned an A.E.P. will report to the Principal’s Office as soon as he or she arrives at school. The student will receive a restroom break at about 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. but not during passing time between classes. Lunch will be arranged for those students outside of the regular lunchtime hours. The student will continue to do assignments for the alternatively placed assigned day(s) to ensure that he/she keeps up with the instruction and assignments. Students will receive credit for the class work the teacher assigned if completed correctly and during the time allowed. The student will not have any contact with other classmates in the building during the length of the placement. A student who is alternatively placed will not be allowed to talk, sleep, or put his or her

head down on his or her desk, and he or she must stay on task. A student who completes the assigned classroom work before 3:15 p.m. will be provided additional reading materials or assignments so that their entire day will be occupied with some useful study.

Students who are disruptive or choose not to be busy with academic work for the entire A.E.P. will be sent home with no credit for time served. Failure to complete additional A.E.P.'s with a full day's work will result in an out-of-school suspension. Failure to abide by these rules may result in additional A.E.P. days or an out-of-school suspension.

Out-of-School Suspension

Out of school suspension is a disciplinary tool that is used when a student poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process that warrants an immediate, temporary exclusion from school.

A suspension is for a period not to exceed ten (10) school days. By law the district superintendent, principal, or other qualified administrator may suspend a student.

No student under 18 years of age who is suspended shall leave school, with permission, until parent, guardian or responsible adult has been notified. However, a student whose presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process may be immediately removed from school. If the situation warrants extra assistance, law enforcement officials may be called. In such cases, the requirement of notice and hearing shall follow as soon as practical. Any suspension shall be reported as soon as reasonably possible to the parents or guardian of such pupil along with a full statement of the reasons for such suspension. Upon request, the parent has the right to review the reasons for this suspension and will be afforded all rights provided in the State of Illinois School Code.

Students assigned an Out-of-School suspension will be counted as an excused absence and receive full credit for all classroom work that takes place during the assigned time of suspension. During the period of an out-of-school suspension, a student may not be in, on, or about school or school grounds without the permission of the school administration.

Students may not attend or participate in school activities during a suspension. This includes school related activities held at locations other than West Central. Violation of these rules will result in further disciplinary action.

Students and parents/guardians may be required to meet with administration as a condition of reinstatement back into the normal school routine.

Expulsion

Expulsion from school is a formal process whereby an individual has his or her right to an education withdrawn for a period in excess of ten (10) school days. Only the Board of Education may expel a student.

The student and the student's parents or guardians shall be notified of the reason(s) for the proposed expulsion by certified letter from the appropriate administrative official which will state:

- The rules and regulations allegedly violated.
- The date, time, and place of the Board of Education hearing.
- The right to have an attorney present at his/her expense at the hearing.

The expulsion shall not take place until after the Board of Education has had the opportunity to hear the case and render a decision.

Students are suspended from school pending expulsion procedures. Anytime an expulsion offense is committed, an expulsion hearing will be conducted within ten (10) school days of the suspension.

No student under 18 years of age shall leave school until a parent, guardian or responsible adult is notified. However, a student whose presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process may be immediately removed from school. In such cases, the requirements of notice and hearing shall follow as soon as practical.

At a hearing by the Board of Education:

- The student has a right to counsel at his/her own expense.
- The right to question the person who made the recommendation to expel.
- The right to present and question witnesses.
- The right to make a statement on his/her own behalf.

If a student is expelled from District #235, the student's temporary record has the date of the expulsion hearing recorded and is placed in the student's temporary record. The temporary record is reviewed every four years to eliminate out-of-date information and is destroyed entirely within five years after graduation or permanent withdrawal. In compliance with the Illinois School Code no school shall maintain any student temporary records or the information contained therein beyond its period of usefulness to the student and the school and in any case no longer than five years after the student transferred, graduated, or otherwise permanently withdrew from the school.

The Board of Education may recommend principal's probation as a part of the expulsion process. If the terms of the probation are violated, the expulsion may immediately go into effect. The principal will notify the Board of Education as to whether or not probation is successfully completed. If the probation is successfully completed all references to expulsion will be removed from the permanent record.

A student who is expelled from school may lose any and all credit for work done in classes for the semester(s) expelled.

In the interest of helping students, the school district may assist in providing or locating alternative educational opportunities for the expelled student.

Offenses Which May Cause Recommendation for Expulsion:

- Continued chronic truancy
- Chronic disobedience
- Chronic insubordination
- Theft
- Arson
- Bomb threat
- Burglary/Robbery
- Excessive suspensions
- False fire alarm/emergency button
- Sexual Assault/Assault
- Verbal or physical threat or attack of school personnel
- Involvement in gangs, satanic cults, hate groups and related activities
- Possession/use of a weapon, ammunition, explosive or look-alike devices
- Possession, use, distribution, purchase, sale or if found to be under the influence of controlled substances and/or look-alike substances and/or alcoholic beverages
- Possession or use of drug paraphernalia
- Repeated physical/verbal altercations with other students
- Possession of a firearm
- Vandalism or destruction of school property
- Threats of violence to school personnel and/or students

A student who is determined to have brought one of the following objects to school, any school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school shall be expelled for a period of not less than one year but not more than 2 calendar years:

- A firearm, meaning any gun, rifle, shotgun, weapon as defined by Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code, firearm as defined in Section 1.1 of the Firearm Owners Identification Card Act, or firearm as defined in Section 24-1 of the Criminal Code of 1961. The expulsion period may be modified by the superintendent, and the superintendent's determination may be modified by the board on a case-by-case basis.
- A knife, brass knuckles or other knuckle weapon regardless of its composition, a Billy-club, or any other object if used or attempting to be used to cause bodily harm, including "look a-likes" of any firearm as defined above.

The expulsion requirement may be modified by the superintendent, and the superintendent's determination may be modified by the board on a case-by-case basis.

Voluntary Admission of Substance Abuse

Voluntary admission of substance abuse may not always result in expulsion. In such cases, a conference with the counselor, administrators, parents, and other necessary school personnel and subsequent adherence to given recommendations for treatment are required. This voluntary admission-exemption may not be used if the school is already aware of an abuse-related situation.

This provision may only be used once. Further admissions of use, which are revealed during treatment sessions, will not be used against him/her. If an infraction of the school policy occurs during the treatment and the school is aware of the infraction, the school policy regarding substance abuse will go into effect.

Re-Engagement of Returning Students

The building principal or designee shall meet with a student returning to school from an out-of-school suspension, expulsion or alternative school setting. The goal of this meeting shall be to support the student's ability to be successful in school following a period of exclusion and shall include an opportunity for students who have been suspended to complete or make-up missed work for equivalent academic credit.

TRANSPORTATION

The district provides bus transportation to and from school for all students living 1.5 miles or more from the school. A list of bus stops will be published at the beginning of the school year before student registration. Parents must, at the beginning of the school year, select one bus stop at which a student is to be picked up, and one stop at which a student is to be dropped off. Students are not permitted to ride a bus other than the bus to which they are assigned. Exceptions must be approved in advance by the building administration.

While students are on the bus, they are under the supervision of the bus driver or other school official. Students are expected to follow all school rules while on the bus. In most cases, bus discipline problems can be handled by the bus driver. Disciplinary steps will include: 1) verbal warning by the driver, 2) verbal warning and the driver will call parents, 3) written referral to the office and the building administrator will issue appropriate consequences for the violation.

In the case of a written disciplinary referral, student bus problems will be investigated and handled by the building administration. Students may be suspended from riding the school bus for up to 10 consecutive school days for violating school rules or for engaging in other gross disobedience or misconduct. The school board may suspend the student from riding the school bus for a period in excess of 10 days for safety reasons. The district's regular suspension procedures shall be used to suspend a student's privilege to ride a school bus. The administration may, if he or she deems the offense sufficient to warrant it, suspend the student on the first offense.

The parent/guardian will be notified of the suspension and the reason by phone if possible. The parent/guardian may request a hearing before the Principal and/or Superintendent. If such hearing is not satisfactory, the parent has recourse to a hearing before the Board of Education. A request for a hearing before the Board should be made with the Superintendent. If a pupil is suspended on the morning run, the student will be transported home before such suspension occurs. Suspension from riding the bus is not suspension from school. The child is required to be in school even though suspended from riding the bus. A student who is suspended from riding the school bus and who does not have alternative transportation to school shall be allowed the opportunity to make up all missed work for equivalent academic credit. It is the responsibility of the student's parent or guardian to notify the school that the student does not have alternative transportation to school.

In the interest of the student's safety and in compliance with State law, students are also expected to observe the following:

1. Dress properly for the weather. Make sure all drawstrings, ties, straps, etc. on all clothing, backpacks and other items, are shortened or removed to lessen the likelihood of them getting caught in bus doors, railings or aisles.
2. Arrive on time at the bus stop, and stay away from the street while waiting for the bus.
3. Stay away from the bus until it stops completely and the driver signals you to board. Enter in single file without pushing. Always use the handrail.
4. Take your assigned seat right away and remain seated facing forward. Keep your hands, arms, and head inside the bus.
5. No animals will be transported with students.
6. Talk quietly on the bus. No shouting or creating loud noises that may distract the driver. Tablets, iPods®, iPads®, smart phones, and other electronic devices must be silenced on the bus unless a student uses headphones. No talking is permitted when approaching and crossing railroad tracks.
7. Help keep the bus neat and clean. Keep belongings out of the aisle and away from emergency exits. The EMERGENCY door is used only for EMERGENCIES! Eating and drinking are not allowed on the bus except on field trips or extra-curricular trips after permission is granted.
8. Students must report any damage to the bus to the driver. Parents will be liable for any defacing or damage their student causes to a bus.
9. Always listen to the driver's instructions. Be courteous to the driver and other students. Sit with your hands to yourself and avoid making noises that would distract the driver or bother other passengers. Remain seated, keeping your hands, arms, and head inside the bus at all times.
10. Wait until the bus pulls to a complete stop before standing up. Use the handrail when exiting the bus.
11. Stay out of the danger zone next to the bus where the driver may have difficulty seeing you. Take five giant steps away from the bus and out of the danger zone, until you can see the driver and the driver sees you. Never crawl under a bus.
12. If you must cross the street after you get off the bus, wait for the driver's signal and then cross in front of the bus. Cross the street only after checking both ways for traffic.
13. Never run back to the bus, even if you dropped or forgot something.

Video and audio cameras may be active on buses to record student conduct and may be used for the purposes of investigation into misconduct or accidents on the bus.

For questions regarding school transportation issues, contact: Brian Kreps at (309) 627-2371, Extension 1023.

Activity Bus Regulations

Any student who is participating in an extra-curricular activity or other school activity requiring travel must ride on school-supervised transportation to and from the activity.

Exceptions to this policy may be granted upon written request from the parent/guardian. No student will be allowed to ride home with anyone but an adult or an approved sibling without a written note from the parent/guardian.

Compliance with Illinois School Code

The Board of Education is given the power to expel students guilty of gross disobedience or misconduct, and no action shall lie against them for such expulsion.

Expulsion shall take place only after the parents have been requested to appear at a meeting of the Board, or with a hearing officer appointed by it, to discuss their child's behavior. Such request shall be made by registered or certified mail and shall state the time, place and purpose of the meeting. The Board, or a hearing officer appointed by it, at such meeting shall state the time, place and purpose of the meeting. The Board, or a hearing officer appointed by it, at such meeting shall state the reasons for dismissal and the date on which the expulsion is to become effective. If the Board appoints a hearing officer, he/she shall report to the Board a written summary of the evidence heard at the meeting and the Board may take such action thereon as it finds appropriate.

The Board of Education has the power by regulation to authorize the administration of the school district to suspend students guilty of gross disobedience or misconduct and no action shall lie against them for such suspension. The suspension period shall not exceed ten (10) school days.

Due Process

The Constitution of the State of Illinois states, "A fundamental goal of the People of the State is the educational development of all persons to the limits of their capabilities." Fundamental due process consists of students being informed of the accusations against them and being given an opportunity to respond prior to disciplinary action being taken. The formality of the due process afforded a student depends upon the nature of the accusation and the severity of the consequence that could follow. Minor infractions (such as simple classroom misconduct, tardiness, etc.) require minimal due process. Due process is afforded to guarantee that the accused person has a chance to present a defense.

Offenses recommended for expulsion may require a higher and more formal level of due process.

Complaints/Grievances

It is the goal of West Central C.U.S.D. #235 to resolve students'/parents'/guardians' complaints and grievances at the lowest level. Students/parents/guardians are encouraged to address problems to appropriate teachers or other licensed employees, rather than the administration, for resolution of the complaint.

If the complaint cannot be resolved by the teachers, the students/parents/guardians may discuss this matter with the Principal within ten (10) days. If the concern cannot be resolved by the Principal, the students/parents/guardians may discuss the concern with the Superintendent within ten (10) days, after speaking with the Principal.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

West Central School District #235 is considered a Safe School Zone. Breaches of discipline which are also violations of the laws pertaining to Safe School Zones will be pursued through school disciplinary procedures and referred to legal authorities. Conviction under the Safe School laws may include enhanced legal penalties. Safe School Zones are in effect 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and include buses.

In order to maintain order safety and security in the schools, school authorities are authorized to conduct reasonable searches of school property and equipment, as well as of students and their personal effects. "School authorities" includes school liaison police officers.

School Property and Equipment as well as Personal Effects Left There by Students

School authorities may inspect and search school property and equipment owned or controlled by the school (such as lockers, desks, and parking lots), as well as personal effects left there by a student, without notice to or the consent of the student. Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in these places or areas or in their personal effects left there.

The building principal may request the assistance of law enforcement officials to conduct inspections and searches of lockers, desks, parking lots, and other school property and equipment for illegal drugs, weapons, or other illegal or dangerous substances or materials, including searches conducted through the use of specially trained dogs.

Student Searches

School authorities may search a student and/or the student's personal effects in the student's possession (such as, purses, wallets, knapsacks, book bags, lunch boxes, etc.) when there is a reasonable ground for suspecting that the search will produce evidence the particular student has violated or is violating either the law or the school or district's student rules and policies. The search will be conducted in a manner that is reasonably related to its objective of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the student's age and sex and the nature of the infraction.

School officials may require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is specific information about activity on the student's account on a social networking website that violates the school's disciplinary rules or school district policy. In the course of an investigation, the student may be required to share the content that is reported in order for the school to make a factual determination. School officials may not request or require a student or his or her parent/guardian to provide a password or other related account information to gain access to the student's account or profile on a social networking website.

Seizure of Property

If a search produces evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the school or district's policies or rules, evidence may be seized and impounded by school authorities and disciplinary action may be taken. When appropriate, evidence may be transferred to law enforcement authorities.

Questioning of Students Suspected of Committing Criminal Activity

Before a law enforcement officer, school resource officer, or other school security person detains and questions on school grounds a student under 18 years of age who is suspected of committing a criminal act, the building principal or designee will: (a) Notify or attempt to notify the student's parent/guardian and document the time and manner in writing; (b) Make reasonable efforts to ensure the student's parent/guardian is present during questioning or, if they are not present, ensure that a school employee (including, but not limited to, a social worker, psychologist, nurse, guidance counselor, or any other mental health professional) is present during the questioning; and (c) If practicable, make reasonable efforts to ensure that a law enforcement officer trained in promoting safe interactions and communications with youth is present during the questioning.

Cooperation with Law Enforcement Agencies

The school has a dual responsibility in regard to its relationship with law enforcement agencies. The first responsibility is to honor the legal rights of police, especially that right to take direct, unhindered action in an emergency situation. Not to do so is a crime. The second responsibility is to take the place of the parents (*in loco parentis*) to ensure that the student's rights are not violated. This most clearly comes into effect when a student is considered to be a suspect, is eighteen years of age or older, and is questioned on school grounds. In this case it is the duty of the school to have a school official present during the delivery of the Miranda Warning and the right to counsel and/or have the school official present during the questioning. However, the presence of a school official is not necessary during the questioning of a witness, associate, or victim.

When a visit is necessary, the police officer is to contact the building principal or designees immediately upon entering the school. In cooperation with law enforcement officials, the office will send for the student or students and the questioning will be conducted in a room secure from casual visitors or curious students. Any legal action taken for a specific offense is separate and in addition to school-based disciplinary action for that offense.

Interviews by Outside Agencies

As a general rule, individuals from outside of the school district may not interview students. If an individual, such as a Law Enforcement Officer or representative from Department of Children and Family Services, wishes to interview students, the request must come through the administrative office. The office will attempt to contact parents/guardians when possible. Such requests will be granted only when such interviews are required or permitted by law. When a parent/guardian is not present, school administration may take the place of the parent/guardian (*en loco parentis*) to ensure that the student's rights are not violated.

Cooperation with Dept. of Children and Family Services

School officials are not required to be present during an interview, but may be present under certain circumstances and the presence of the official is not viewed as a breach of confidentiality.

In the event that DCFS believes the child is in imminent danger, DCFS may take custody of the child without a court order.

Finally, if the child becomes a ward of DCFS, DCFS is entitled access to the school records concerning that child.

Staff members are mandated to report to the Child Abuse Hotline whenever there is a reasonable suspicion that a student has been abused or neglected. This call may be caused by bruises or burns on a student, or statements that a student may make to a member of the staff. Failure of a staff member to report a possible child abuse situation can lead to legal charges being filed against that member of the staff.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) at West Central Elementary

There are many components within our social-emotional learning at West Central Elementary. The *Second Step* curriculum is taught at all grade levels. We use PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) expectations as well as interventions. This program teaches all students the expectations in all settings of the school. Students can earn HEAT points for following these expectations. Character Cash is also used to recognize students being extraordinary. In addition,

HEAT points are collectively earned for each student's designated Family. The WCE Family structure consists of six Families that represent the West Central community: Family of Harvesters, Family of Planters, Family of Creators, Family of Growers, Family of Explorers, and Family of Builders. The purpose of the "Family" structure is to provide another avenue for building strong relationships at school, not only adult to student but also, student to student. "Families" also build a culture of community at school and a way for students to serve the school community as leaders and mentors. Students will remain in this family for their entire career at WCE. By setting forth clear social and behavioral expectations while building relationships in our school community, we are able to create a positive environment for learning.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) at West Central Middle School

There are many components within our social-emotional learning at West Central Middle School. The *Second Step* curriculum is taught at all grade levels. We use PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) expectations as well as interventions. This program teaches all students the expectations in all settings of the school. Students can earn HEAT Bucks for following these expectations. Students may exchange their HEAT Bucks for small prizes, special perks, or in quarterly drawings. Monthly assemblies and full school activities also highlight those that exhibit positive behavior. By setting forth clear social and behavioral expectations while building relationships in our school community, we are able to create a positive environment for learning.

WCHS Pride

West Central High School uses an incentive program called Pride.

Incentives

- Quarter PRIDE Days (Examples: Movie Day, Catered Lunch, Ice Cream Social, and Pizza Party)
- Front of Line Privileges for Lunch
- Front Parking Lot Privileges

Criteria

- 1st Quarter PRIDE Criteria – Referral Free, No Unexcused Absences, No D's or F's, 3 or less tardies.
- 2nd Quarter PRIDE Criteria – Referral Free, No Unexcused Absences, No D's or F's, 2 or less tardies
- 3rd Quarter PRIDE Criteria – Referral Free, No Unexcused Absences, No D's or F's, 1 or fewer tardies
- 4th Quarter PRIDE Criteria – Referral Free, No Unexcused Absences, No D's or F's, No tardies

PREVENTION OF AND RESPONSE TO BULLYING, INTIMIDATION, AND HARASSMENT

Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment are important district and school goals.

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, , military status, unfavorable discharge status from the military service, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender-related

identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, order of protection status, status of being homeless, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic **is prohibited** in each of the following situations:

1. During any school-sponsored education program or activity;
2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities;
3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment; or
4. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school-related location, activity, function, or program; or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the school district or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school.

Bullying (includes cyber-bullying) and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or privileges provided by a school.

Cyberbullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally or in writing to the Building Principal, Nondiscrimination Coordinator, District Complaint Manager or any staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. All school staff members are available for help with a bully or to make a report about bullying. Anyone, including staff members and parents/guardians, who has information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to report it to the District Complaint Manager or any staff member. Anonymous reports are also accepted by phone call or in writing. Administrators will work to inform parents of all students involved in bullying within 24-hours of being made aware of the incident.

Nondiscrimination Coordinator:

Ms. Brittney Kugler
215 W. South St, Stronghurst, IL 61480
(309) 924-1681
kugler-brittney@wc235.k12.il.us

Complaint Managers:

Mr. Jason Kirby
1514 US Route 34, Biggsville, IL 61418
(309) 627-2377
kirby-jason@wc235.k12.il.us

Mr. Byron Helt
215 W. South St, Stronghurst, IL 61480
(309) 924-1681
helt-byron@wc235.k12.il.us

A reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is prohibited. A student's act of reprisal or retaliation will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.

A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if the school's investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing knowingly false information will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.

Students and parents/guardians are also encouraged to read the following school district policies: 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited* and 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation and Harassment*.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying involving West Central Students is prohibited. Cyberbullying is bullying through e-mail, instant messaging, chat room exchanges, social network sites, web sites, or digital messages or images sent to a cell phone or personal digital assistant. Cyberbullying becomes a school issue when it disrupts the learning environment and can include problems caused by communication from home computer to home computer and cell phone to cell phone. It also becomes a school issue when it compromises the values of the school, becomes obscene or uses school-owned technology.

Pursuant to Public Act 97-340, under certain conditions, allows a student to be disciplined for making an explicit threat on an Internet website. “Making an explicit threat on an Internet website against a school employee, a student, or any school-related personnel if the Internet website through which the threat was made is a site that was accessible within the school at the time the threat was made or was available to third parties who worked or studied within the school grounds at the time the threat was made, and the threat could be reasonably interpreted as threatening to the safety and security of the threatened individual because of his or her duties or employment status or status as a student inside the school.

School officials may conduct an investigation or require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is specific information about activity on the student’s account on a social networking website that violates a school disciplinary rule or policy. In the course of an investigation, the student may be required to share the content that is reported in order to allow school officials to make a factual determination.

HARASSMENT AND TEEN DATING VIOLENCE PROHIBITED

Harassment Prohibited

No person, including a school or school district employee or agent, or student, shall harass, intimidate, or bully a student on the basis of actual or perceived: race; color; national origin; military status; unfavorable discharge status from military service; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity; gender-related identity or expression; ancestry; age; religion; physical or mental disability; order of protection status; status of being homeless; actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy; association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics

Sexual harassment of students is prohibited. A person engages in sexual harassment whenever he or she makes sexual advances, requests sexual favors, and /or engages in other verbal or physical conduct, including sexual violence, of a sexual or sex-based nature, imposed on the basis of sex, that:

1. Denied or limits the provision of educational aid, benefits, services, or treatment; or that makes such conduct a condition of a student’s academic status; or
2. Has the purpose or effect of:
 - a. Substantially interfering with a student’s educational environment
 - b. Creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
 - c. Depriving a student of educational aid, benefits, services, or treatment, or
 - d. Making submission to or rejection of such conduct the basis for academic decisions affecting a student

The terms *intimidating*, *hostile*, and *offensive* include conduct that has the effect of humiliation, embarrassment, or discomfort. Examples of sexual harassment include touching, crude jokes or pictures, discussions of sexual experiences, teasing related to sexual characteristics, and spreading rumors related to a person’s alleged sexual activities. The term sexual violence includes a number of different acts. Examples of sexual violence include, but are not limited to, rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse, and sexual coercion.

Teen Dating Violence Prohibited

Engaging in teen dating violence that takes place at school, on school property, at school-sponsored activities, or in vehicles used for school-provided transportation is prohibited. For purposes of this policy, the term *teen dating violence* occurs whenever a student who is 13 to 19 years of age uses or threatens to use physical, mental, or emotional abuse to control an individual in the dating relationship; or uses or threatens to use sexual violence in the dating relationship.

Teen dating violence is unacceptable and is prohibited. All students have the right to a safe learning environment. Students are to notify school staff and/or administration when incidents of teen dating violence take place at the school, on school grounds, at school sponsored activities, or in vehicles used for school-provided transportation.

Suicide and Depression Awareness and Prevention

Youth suicide impacts the safety of the school environment. It also affects the school community, diminishing the ability of surviving students to learn and the school's ability to educate. Suicide and depression awareness and prevention are important goals of the school district.

The school district maintains student and parent resources on suicide and depression awareness and prevention. Much of this information, including a copy of District's policy, is posted on the District website. Information can also be obtained from the school office.

West Central works with Safe2Help Illinois a suicide/mental health hotline available to all students. Students can access the support by visiting their website at www.safe2helpil.com or by downloading their app. Students are encouraged to talk to a trusted adult at school with any concerns for support as well.

Sexual Abuse Response and Prevention Resource Guide

Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to use the following link for support if they (or someone they know) has been a victim of sexual abuse. The guide is provided by ISBE to support families and the school in supporting students. The guide is available at the following address: <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Faiths-Law-Resource-Guide.pdf#search=sexual%20abuse%20response>.

Making a Report or Complaint

Students are encouraged to promptly report claims or incidences of bullying, intimidation, harassment, sexual harassment, or any other prohibited conduct to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, Assistant Building Principal, Dean of Students, a Complaint Manager, or any employee with whom the student is comfortable speaking. A student may choose to report to an employee of the student's same gender. Complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible given the need to investigate. Students who make good faith complaints will not be disciplined.

Nondiscrimination Coordinator:

Ms. Brittney Kugler
215 W. South St, Stronghurst, IL 61480
(309) 924-1681
kugler-brittney@wc235.k12.il.us

Complaint Managers:

Mr. Jason Kirby
1514 US Route 34, Biggsville, IL 61418
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Mr. Byron Helt
215 W. South St, Stronghurst, IL 61480
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helt-byron@wc235.k12.il.us

Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding prohibited conduct will likewise be subject to discipline.

STUDENT FEES

Student fees, as determined by the Board of Education, are payable at registration. The student fees for the 2025-2026 school year are listed below. Students rent textbooks for use during the school year. It is agreed that books must be returned in good condition. The following charges for lost or damaged books shall be made at the end of the year:

Loss of book---purchase price
Marking the edge of book---minimum \$2.50, more if in ink
Unnecessary writing in book---minimum \$2.50
Damaged book---charge depends upon amount of damage.

The Board of Education has adopted a policy that before the enrollment is considered complete for the next school term, the fees must be paid or proper arrangements made with the administration to delay payment.

According to state law, families that qualify for free lunches may also be eligible for a registration fee waiver. A student is eligible for fee waivers if at least one of the following prerequisites is met:

1. The student currently lives in a household that meets the free lunch or breakfast eligibility guidelines established by the federal government pursuant to the National School Lunch Act; or
2. The student or the student's family is currently receiving aid under Article IV of the Illinois Public Aid Code (Aid to Families of Dependent Children).
3. The student's parent is a veteran or active-duty military personnel with income at or below 200% of the federal poverty line.
4. The student is homeless, as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

The building principal may give additional consideration where one or more of the following factors are present:

- An illness in the family;
- Unusual expenses such as fire, flood, storm damage, etc.;
- Unemployment;
- Emergency situations; or
- When one or more of the parents/guardians are involved in a work stoppage.

According to state law, West Central CUSD #235 waives school fees and any fines for the loss of school property assessed by the district on children whose parents are unable to afford them, including but not limited to: (i) children living in households that meet free lunch or breakfast eligibility guidelines established by the federal government and (ii) homeless children and youth.

The building principal will notify the parent/guardian promptly as to whether the fee waiver request has been granted or denied. Questions regarding the fee waiver application process should be addressed to the Building Principal. A fee waiver does not exempt a student from charges for lost and damaged books, locks, materials, supplies, and/or equipment.

Families enrolling several children that do not qualify for the fee waiver may be eligible for a registration fee payment plan according to School Board policy. This information is available at registration or from the Superintendent's Office. The individual classroom teachers will distribute instructional materials.

Student Fees and Meal Costs

Registration

Elementary	\$55.00
Middle School	\$65.00
High School	\$85.00

Driver's Education \$150.00 Plus \$20.00 to Secretary of State for Permit

Technology Fee \$30.00

Lunch & Breakfast

Breakfast \$1.70

Lunch

Elementary	\$2.55
Middle School	\$2.70
High School	\$2.90

Extra Milk for Breakfast and Lunch \$.40

Kindergarten Break Milk \$.40 per carton or \$50.00 per year

Adult Lunch Price \$3.60

Breakfast and lunch fees can be paid at any of the building offices or online. Family accounts are no longer available. Each individual student and staff member will be assigned their own account. If a student's account balance falls below zero, no additional items such as extra milk, seconds, and ala carte items will be allowed to be purchased until there has been money placed into the account.

Pursuant to the Hunger-Free Student's Bill of Rights Act, the school is required to provide a federally reimbursable meal or snack to a student who requests one, regardless of whether the student has the ability to pay for the meal or snack or owes money for earlier meals or snacks. Students may not be provided with an alternative meal or snack and the school is prohibited from publicly identifying or stigmatizing a student who cannot pay for or owes money for a meal or snack.

The technology fee is \$30.00 for each student. The fee replaces chromebook insurance. This is an annual fee and it covers the first accidental damage to the chromebook. Repeated or intentional damage will be charged to the student account.

Telephone

Students may be allowed to use the office phone for a legitimate reason prior to school beginning, at lunch, and after school. Administration or other office personnel are to be asked for permission. Students will not be called to the phone unless an emergency occurs. The school phones are not for social purposes. **Reminder:** Any cell phone use is prohibited during school hours unless permission is granted by a school official.

Cell Phones

Elementary Cell Phones and Smart Watches

Cell phones are to be off and stay in student backpacks or lockers. Cameras, picture phones, and any other photo imaging devices are not to be in restrooms or locker rooms. Any student found to be in possession of a photo imaging device in restricted areas may be assigned disciplinary consequences.

Students will not be allowed to use or carry with them cell phones during the school day. We ask that parents not call or text their students during the day. If a parent needs to talk to their child, please call the elementary office, and we will get a message to them. Students are not allowed to have their devices on them, unless there is a medical requirement or stated in their IEP.

If a student is suspected of having inappropriate pictures or video on their cell phone on school property, legal authorities will be contacted. If a student disables a phone to interfere with the investigation of an accusation involving a cell phone use and refuses to restore it to working order, they will be charged with insubordination. The above circumstances would not be a violation of school policy if permission was granted by school officials. School property is defined as all property under the direction and control of the school district. This policy regarding phone use would be in effect from the time the doors open and a student enters school in the morning until the time the student exits the building for the day.

Middle School Cell Phones and Smart Watches

Cell phones are only allowed to be used before school and after school. Devices are to be powered off before entering the building and not turned on until students exit the building. During the school day phones must be turned off and stored in the student's locker. At any time, staff may confiscate cell phones. Students are not allowed to have their devices on them, unless there is a medical requirement or stated in their IEP.

Students who violate the cell phone policy will have the following consequences:

- a. First offense – School personnel will confiscate the device. A verbal warning will be assigned. The student will receive the device back at the end of the day in the school office.
- b. Second offense – The device will be confiscated. Parents will be notified that the next time they will be required to pick-up the device in the office.
- c. Third offense – The device will be confiscated. The student's parent/guardian will be notified and required to pick up the device in the school office.
- d. Fourth and subsequent offense – An Administrator will confiscate the device. The student's parent/guardian will be notified and required to pick up the device in the school office. There will be a discussion about whether the student will be allowed to bring a phone to school or not.

High School Cell Phones

Students are not allowed to use their cell phones (including earbuds, iPods, iPads, eReaders, Smart Watches, etc) during the school day. Cell phones are not allowed from 8:15 am - 3:10 pm and are to be kept turned off, locked in the students locker. Students are not allowed to have their devices on them, unless there is a medical requirement or stated in their IEP.

Consequences

- 1st Offense – Student loses device for remainder of the day
- 2nd Offense – Student loses device for the remainder of the day and 1. serves a 30 minute detention or 2. student turns their device into the office the next two school days.
- 3rd Offense – Student loses device for remainder of the day and 1. the student serve ISS or 2. the student turns their device into the office for the next two weeks
- 4th Offense and Future Offenses – Student loses device until the end of the day, student serves 2 ISS days and a parent/guardian must come pick up the device (no sooner than the end of the school day)

Student refusal to turn the device over to the teacher or the office will result in a 1-Day ISS for insubordination.

Inappropriate Video/Pictures

If a student is suspected of having inappropriate pictures or video on his/her phone on school property, legal authorities will be contacted. If a student disables a phone to interfere with the investigation of an accusation involving cell phone violations and refuses to restore it to working order, he/she will be charged with insubordination. The student may be suspended from attending school and school activities. School property is defined as all property under the direction and control of the school district.

Sexting

The term “sexting” involves transmission of inappropriate photos or information over cell phones or computers. Anyone, regardless of age, who sends naked pictures or video of a minor, can be charged with child pornography. If a person receives and keeps a naked picture or video of a minor, he/she can be charged with possession of child pornography. Sending naked photos or naked videos electronically or possessing naked images of a minor, is a violation of the law. Any suspected violation of this policy will result in electronic equipment in question being confiscated and notification of law enforcement. If a student disables a phone to interfere with the investigation of an accusation involving cell phone use and refuses to restore it to working order, he/she will be

charged with insubordination. The student may be suspended from school and school activities. “Sexting” or possession, distribution, and or attempts to obtain pornography of any type on school property is prohibited. It is important for students to know that once anything is put on the Internet, social media, etc., it is there forever.

Electronic Games/Music

Students are not allowed to play with electronic games during school hours. IPOD/MP3 players and radios (as examples) will not be allowed. The unsanctioned use of headphones will also not be allowed while students are in the building during the school day. The school will not be responsible for these items.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Elementary

All students must have a pair of gym shoes (non-marking soles), with their names in them. Regular shoes or street shoes are not allowed in the gym. If a student wears sandals to school, they need to have a separate pair of shoes for outside Physical Education. Parents are reminded that our students may run on a cinder track when weather permits.

High School

Students participating in Physical Education class are required to wear blue athletic shorts/sweatpants, West Central t-shirts (blue, red or grey) and tennis shoes. Physical Education students will change their clothes to go to class and not wear their P.E. clothes to class. No tank tops or shirts without a hem in sleeves or waist are allowed. Students should have a separate, clean pair of tennis shoes for use on the gym floor. These items may be purchased at a store of the parent’s choice. Clothes should be taken home and laundered weekly.

Grading Policy

- Grades in Physical Education are comprised of:
 - 50% Participation
 - 30% Attitude and Willingness to Learn
 - 20% Preparedness for Class (Meaning dressing for class and having the proper footwear.)
- Attendance and participation are critical to a student’s success in Physical Education. The Physical Education staff will make every effort to see that each student has the opportunity to be successful.

Physical Education Excused Absence Policy

In order to be excused from participation in Physical Education, a student must present an appropriate excuse from his or her parent/guardian or from a person licensed under the Medical Practice Act. The excuse may be based on medical or religious prohibitions. An excuse because of medical reasons must include a signed statement from a person licensed under the Medical Practice Act that corroborates the medical reason for the request. An excuse based on religious reasons must include a signed statement from a member of the clergy that corroborates the religious reason for the request. Upon written notice from a student’s parent/guardian, a student will be excused from engaging in the physical activity components of Physical Education during a period of religious fasting.

A note provided by a parent can only excuse a student for a length of one day. Only three parent notes will be accepted per quarter. On the day a student brings a parent note an alternate activity will be provided. This activity will include walking or a writing assignment if the note restricts the student's movement.

Students with a pre-existing health condition (asthma, heart condition, etc....) will be referred to the school nurse after the third note from home. The nurse will then contact the parent to request a medical note if the student does not currently have a health plan on file. Physical Education for a particular student may be modified as warranted

A note from a physician will be honored for the amount of time that is designated by that practitioner. A student will not be allowed back to Physical Education class any earlier than the time period on the note unless a second note from the physician shortens the originally set time. During the absent period an alternative activity will be provided. For the students who cannot participate in any movement, score keeping, time keeping, or another activity will be assigned. If able, the student will participate in walking or time on the exercise bike.

Any note excusing the student from Physical Education classes will also excuse that student from physical activity during any recess activity and/or extra-curricular athletic activity.

Students may also be excused from physical education courses based on medical or religious prohibitions. Excusal requests based on medical prohibitions must be in writing and must include a signed statement from a person licensed under the Medical Practices Act corroborating the medical basis for the request. Excusal requests based on religious prohibitions must be in writing and must include a signed statement from a member of the clergy corroborating the religious basis for the request. Excusal requests based on medical or religious prohibitions will be reviewed on an individual basis in accordance with State and Federal law.

A student in Grades 7-12 may submit a written request to the Building Principal requesting to be excused from Physical Education courses for the reasons stated below. Requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

1. Ongoing participation in an interscholastic or extracurricular athletic program;
2. Enrollment in academic classes that are required for admission to an institution of higher learning (Student must be in the 11th or 12th grade.); or
3. Enrollment in academic classes that are required for graduation from high school, provided that failure to take such classes will result in the student being unable to graduate (Student must be in the 11th or 12th grade.).

Students with an Individualized Education Program may also be excused from Physical Education courses for reasons stated in Handbook Procedure 10.30.

Special activities in Physical Education will be provided for a student whose physical or emotional condition, as determined by a person licensed under the Medical Practices Act, prevents his or her participation in the Physical Education course.

State law prohibits the District from honoring parental excuses based upon a student's participation in athletic training, activities, or competitions conducted outside the auspices of the District.

Students who have been excused from Physical Education shall return to the course as soon as practical. The following considerations will be used to determine when a student shall return to a Physical Education course:

1. The time of year when the student's participation ceases;
2. The student's class schedule; and
3. The student's future or planned additional participation in activities qualifying for substitutions for Physical Education, as outlined above or in Handbook Procedure 10.30.

STUDENT DRESS CODE AND APPEARANCE

A student's appearance, including dress and hygiene, must not disrupt the educational process or compromise standards of health and safety. The school does not prohibit hairstyles historically associated with race, ethnicity, or hair texture, including, but not limited to, protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twists. Students who disrupt the educational process or compromise standards of health and safety must modify their appearance.

Elementary

Clothing or other apparel promoting products that are illegal for use by minors such as alcohol, tobacco, drugs, or obscene material are not appropriate. While the primary responsibility for appearance rests with the students and their parents, the administration reserves the right to judge what is proper and what is not. Halter-tops, bare midriffs, and spaghetti straps are not considered appropriate school attire, as is any other garment that reveals undergarment straps.

Elementary students do have recess outside and members of the staff do have the right to decide if a jacket, coat, or sweatshirt is required. If students are not dressed warmly enough, they may have to stay in the classroom, office, or other designated supervised area.

Parents will also be responsible for determining when it is appropriate for shorts to be worn. Parents are cautioned that students are not allowed to bring pants or sweatpants to school and then change during the school day. If the weather is not warm enough for a student to attend recess with shorts, they may have to stay in the classroom, office, or other designated supervised area.

Students will not be allowed to wear a coat during the school day except for recess. Caps, hoods, and hats are not to be worn in the school building.

Middle School/High School

Students are expected to wear clothing in a neat, clean, and well-fitting manner while on school property and/or in attendance at school-sponsored activities. Students are to use discretion in their dress and are not permitted to wear apparel that causes a substantial disruption in the school environment.

The administration and staff shall be able to determine the appropriateness of the dress and be the final authority of what is acceptable at West Central High School. It is best to dress modestly.

- All items of clothing and shoes must be properly fitting.
- Clothing may not have large rips or holes that expose skin above mid-thigh and or below the neckline.
- Clothing that advertises or promotes the use of any alcohol, tobacco, and/or illegal drugs or is sexually suggestive or insulting in wording, symbol, or metaphor cannot be worn at school.
- All shirts and blouses must cover the midriff
- Spaghetti straps, off-the-shoulder tops, halter tops, and tube tops are not permitted. Regardless of gender, the 2” rule applies for students’ tops to be considered “coverage” of the shoulder area.
- Clothing that allows undergarments to be seen is not allowed.
- Rompers/Skirts/Dresses/Shorts must be mid-thigh or longer
- Students are not permitted to wear caps, hoods on sweatshirts, kerchiefs, or hats in the school building. Caps, kerchiefs, or hats must be left in the locker if brought to school.
- Students are not permitted to wear sunglasses in the school building. Sunglasses must be left in the locker if brought to school

Students will be required to change clothing if they are wearing inappropriate clothing. If the student does not have a change of clothes, parents will be notified to bring a change of clothes to the school or the student will be sent home.

Recess (Elementary)

Unless the weather is severe, we will be having recess outside. There are no hard and fast rules used to determine when we go outside. Our elementary staff will not be taking students out when the weather is so cold as to be dangerous. However, fresh air is very beneficial. The only time students will be kept in would be for a short term following an illness (if we are requested to) or in those rare cases where a specific health problem exists and physicians make the request for a longer term.

It is important to keep in mind that weather fluctuates from day to day and throughout the day. Parents should dress students for the weather with warm hats, gloves or mittens, warm footwear, and a coat heavy enough for our normal winter weather. Even though many students ride a bus, they should still be dressed warmly. Recommended: younger students should have extra pants/socks to be kept in their locker during winter months in case their clothes get wet from playing outside.

LIBRARY MISSION, USE, AND PROCEDURES

All three school libraries within West Central School District aim to create an environment that provides our students, staff, and community with the materials, knowledge, and resources they need to achieve their goals academically and as a member of the broader community by:

- Providing programing, resources, and tools that meet the educational and recreational needs of our students, staff, and community
- Curating an appreciation of literature and informational literacies.
- Creating an environment that supports the learning pedagogy and curriculum found at West Central School District #235

The library contains a collection of materials intended to help in the learning process. We invite and welcome all to take proper advantage of our library resources and services. Rules and policies established for student behavior by this handbook will apply within our library spaces as well. Misuse of the library, its materials and/or resources, or not following library expectations or procedures set up by the library staff will result in disciplinary action as decided by the appropriate building administrator.

Library Procedures:

Book Checkout

- Everyone is allowed to check out two books at a time.
- Books may be borrowed for two weeks and then renewed if another person has not requested them.
- Books overdue for three weeks will be considered lost, and the students will be charged the replacement cost of the book if the book is not returned to the library by the end of the year.
- Materials should be returned as soon as they are finished, as this will lessen the chance of losing them and make them more available to others.

Visiting the Library

- All students must be accompanied by a teacher or given a pass to come to the library.
- All students coming with a pass must sign in at the front desk and sign out when leaving the library.
- Students who visit the library should be respectful of other activities, lessons, and individuals within our library spaces. As always, the library staff is there to help if you have any questions or need assistance.

Lost and or Damaged Library Books or Textbooks:

The students of West Central C.U.S.D. #235 pay a registration fee each year, but this does not cover the cost of abnormal damage done to books by some students. Therefore, it is necessary to assess fines at the end of the year for such damage or loss.

If students do not return the textbooks or library books for which they are responsible, or if they return a book, which shows signs of damage or defacing beyond “fair” normal wear and tear, the policy of the district is to charge for the full value of the book.

Students are responsible to see that all books are returned at the end of the school year. Books should be returned in good condition when returned. Students are responsible for lost or damaged Henderson County Library Bookmobile books. Questions about books from the Henderson County Library Bookmobile, should be directed to the Henderson County Library.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

School Operations During a Pandemic or Other Health Emergency

A pandemic is a global outbreak of disease. Pandemics happen when a new virus emerges to infect individuals and, because there is little to no pre-existing immunity against the new virus, it spreads sustainably. Your child’s school and district play an essential role, along with the local health department and emergency management agencies, in protecting the public’s health and safety during a pandemic or other health emergency.

During a pandemic or other health emergency, you will be notified in a timely manner of all changes to the school environment and schedule that impact your child. Please be assured that even if school is not physically in session, it is the goal of the school and district to provide your child with the best educational opportunities possible.

Additionally, please note the following:

1. All decisions regarding changes to the school environment and schedule, including a possible interruption of in-person learning, will be made by the superintendent in consultation with and, if necessary, at the direction of the Governor, Illinois Department of Public Health, local health department, emergency management agencies, and/or Regional Office of Education.
2. Available learning opportunities may include remote and/or blended learning. Blended learning may require your child to attend school on a modified schedule.
3. Students will be expected to participate in blended and remote instruction as required by the school and district. Parents are responsible for assuring the participation of their child. Students who do not participate in blended or remote learning will be considered truant.
4. All school disciplinary rules remain in effect during the interruption of in-person learning. Students are subject to discipline for disrupting the remote learning environment to the same extent that discipline would be imposed for disruption of the traditional classroom.
5. Students and parents will be required to observe all public health and safety measures implemented by the school and district in conjunction with state and local requirements.
6. During a pandemic or other health emergency, the school and district will ensure that educational opportunities are available to all students.
7. School personnel will work closely with students with disabilities and other vulnerable student populations to minimize the impact of any educational disruption.
8. Students who have a compromised immune system, live with an individual with a compromised immune system, or have a medical condition that may impact their ability to attend school during a pandemic or other public health emergency should contact school officials.
9. During a pandemic or other health emergency, teachers and school staff will receive additional training on health and safety measures.
10. In accordance with school district or state mandates, the school may need to conduct a daily health assessment of your child. Parents and students will be notified of the exact assessment procedures if this becomes necessary.
11. Parents should not send their child to school if their child exhibits any symptoms consistent with the pandemic or other health emergency.
12. Please do not hesitate to contact school or district officials if you have any concerns regarding your child's education, health or safety.

Emergency Information

It is very important that the information on the Student Information form is as complete, updated, and as accurate as possible. Parents/Guardians should notify the school of any changes in information at registration or when a change takes place. Please be sure that the people listed on the form, such as emergency contacts, are aware that they are on the forms.

Students who become ill or are injured at school will be given first aid and parents/guardians will be notified. Usually students will not be sent home until arrangements have been made. In case the

parents/guardians cannot be contacted, the school will use the name of the Emergency Contact on the Student Information form. If no one can be reached, in extreme emergencies, emergency personnel may be notified.

Required Health Examinations and Immunizations

All students are required to present appropriate proof of a health examination performed by a Physician, Physician's Assistant, Nurse Practitioner, or Osteopath and the immunizations against, and screenings for, preventable communicable diseases within one year prior to:

1. Entering kindergarten or the first grade;
2. Entering the sixth and ninth grades; and
3. Enrolling in an Illinois school for the first time, regardless of the student's grade.

4. Proof of immunization against meningococcal disease is required for students in grades 6 and 12. A diabetes screening must be included as part of the health exam (though diabetes testing is not required). Students between the age of one and seven must provide a statement from a physician assuring that the student was "risk-assessed" or screened for lead poisoning. An age-appropriate developmental screening and an age-appropriate social and emotional screening are required parts of each health examination.

Failure to comply with the above requirements by September 22 of the current school year will result in the student's exclusion from school until the required health forms are presented to the school, subject to certain exceptions. A student will not be excluded from school due to his or her parent/guardian's failure to obtain a developmental screening or a social and emotional screening.

New students who register mid-term have 30 days following registration to comply with the health examination and immunization requirements. If a medical reason prevents a student from receiving a required immunization by September 23, the student must present, by September 23, an immunization schedule and a statement of the medical reasons causing the delay. The schedule and statement of medical reasons must be signed by an appropriate medical professional.

All immunizations and shots must be kept current in accordance with state requirements.

Eye Examination

All students entering kindergarten or the school for the first time must present proof by September 23 of the current school year of an eye examination performed by a licensed Optometrist or Ophthalmologist within one year. Failure to present proof by September 23, allows the school to hold the student's report card until the student presents: (1) proof of a completed eye examination, or (2) that an eye examination will take place within 60 days after September 23.

Dental Examination

All students entering kindergarten, second, sixth and ninth grades must present proof by May 15 of the current school year of having been examined by a licensed dentist within the last 18 months. Failure to present proof allows the school to hold the child's report card until the student presents: (1) proof of a completed dental examination, or (2) that a dental examination will take place within 60 days after May 15.

Exemptions

A student will be exempted from the above requirements for:

- Medical grounds if the student's parent/guardian presents to the Building Principal a signed statement explaining the objection;
- Religious grounds if the student's parent/guardian presents to the Building Principal a completed Certificate of Religious Exemption;
- Health examination or immunization requirements on medical grounds if a physician provides written verification;
- Eye examination requirement if the student's parent/guardian shows an undue burden or lack of access to a physician licensed to practice medicine in all of its branches who provides eye examinations or a licensed optometrist; or
- Dental examination requirement if the student's parent/guardian shows an undue burden or a lack of access to a dentist.

VISION AND HEARING SCREENINGS

School Screening

School health personnel perform vision and hearing screening of students. The parents/guardians of a child may request a screening at any time. Vision screening will be done, as mandated, for Preschool, Kindergarten, 2nd grade, and 8th grade students; special education students; teacher referrals; and new students. Hearing screenings will be done, as mandated, for preschool, Kindergarten, 1st grade, 2nd grade, and 3rd grade students; special education students; teacher referrals; and new students during the school year.

Screenings and Required Exams

School vision and hearing screenings are not substitutes for a complete eye and ear examination by an appropriate doctor. Students will not be required to undergo this vision screening if an optometrist or ophthalmologist has completed and signed a report form indicating that an examination has been administered within the previous 12 months and that an evaluation is on file at the school.

Students will not be required to undergo this hearing screening if an audiologist has completed and signed a report form indicating that an examination has been administered within the previous 12 months and that evaluation is on file at the school. This notice is not a permission to test and is not required to be returned.

Vision and hearing screening is not an option. If a vision or hearing examination report is not on file at the school, a student in the mandated age, grade, or group will be screened.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

The term "communicable disease" means an infectious or contagious disease spread from person to person. The school will consult recommendations of the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention regarding communicable diseases.

- Students should be carefully observed for skin rashes, fever, and virus-type illnesses. Physicians should be consulted when appropriate.
- Parents are required to notify the school nurse if they suspect their child has a communicable disease.
- In certain cases, students with a communicable disease may be excluded from school or sent home from school following notification of the parent or guardian.
- A student excluded because of a communicable disease will be permitted to return to school only when the parent or guardian brings to the school a letter from the student's doctor stating that the student is no longer contagious or at risk of spreading the communicable disease.
- Students who have a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher should not return until their temperature remains normal for 24 hours or the recommended time period for that disease without having taken fever-reducing medication such as aspirin, Tylenol, or ibuprofen, prior to returning to school. Students that have a fever at school will be sent home.

Head Lice Policy

The policy of our school requires students with a communicable disease such as head lice to be excluded from school. The school will observe the following procedures regarding head lice:

1. Parents are required to notify the school if they suspect their child has head lice.
2. Infested students will be sent home following notification of the parent or guardian.
3. The school will provide written instructions to parent or guardian regarding appropriate treatment for the infestation. Parents are strongly encouraged to have students treated and back in school in one (1) day. After two (2) days students can be considered truant.
4. A student excluded because of head lice will be permitted to return to school only when the parent or guardian brings the student to school to be checked by the school nurse or Building Principal and the child is determined to be free of the head lice and eggs (nits). Infested children are prohibited from riding the bus to school to be checked for head lice, but must be brought to school by parents or family members. Upon return to school, students will be rechecked. If any nits or lice are noted in the hair, students will not be readmitted to school.

Parents are encouraged to bring the box or label of lice shampoo used when students return to school. We appreciate your cooperation with the above procedure.

Administering Medicine to Students

Parents have the primary responsibility for the administration of medicine to their children. The administration of medication while a student is at school shall, therefore, be avoided where possible.

The School recognizes, however, that occasionally a medication must be administered during the school day. When a medication must be administered during the school day, a certified health nurse, if available, shall administer the medication. If a certified health nurse is unavailable, a licensed administrator shall either: (1) supervise the child self-administering the medication, or (2) administer the medication him or herself. Medications must be in the original containers and labeled with the students' names. The school **WILL NOT** supply over-the-counter medication.

Student Medication

Taking medication during school hours or during school-related activities is prohibited unless it is necessary for a student's health and well-being. When a student's licensed health care provider and parent/guardian believe that it is necessary for the student to take a medication during school hours or school-related activities, the parent/guardian must request that the school dispense the medication to the child by completing a "School Medication Authorization" form. The "School Medication Authorization" form must be signed by a healthcare provider.

No school or district employee is allowed to administer to any student, or supervise a student's self-administration of, any prescription or non-prescription medication until a completed and signed School Medication Authorization Form is submitted by the student's parent/guardian. No student is allowed to possess or consume any prescription or non-prescription medication on school grounds or at a school-related function other than as provided for in this procedure.

Self-Administration of Medication

A student may possess and self-administer an epinephrine injector (EpiPen®) and/or an asthma inhaler prescribed for use at the student's discretion, provided the student's parent/guardian has completed and signed a School Medication Authorization Form.

Students who are diabetic may possess and self-administer diabetic testing supplies and insulin if authorized by the student's diabetes care plan, which must be on file with the school.

Students with epilepsy may possess and self-administer supplies, equipment and medication, if authorized by the student's seizure action plan, which must be on file with the school.

Students may self-administer (but not possess on their person) other medications required under a qualified plan, provided the student's parent/guardian has completed and signed a School Medication Authorization Form.

The school district shall incur no liability, except for willful and wanton conduct, as a result of any injury arising from a student's self-administration of medication, including asthma medication, epinephrine injectors, medication required under a qualifying plan, or the storage of any medication by school personnel. A student's parent/guardian must agree to indemnify and hold harmless the school district and its employees and agents, against any claims, except a claim based on willful and wanton conduct, arising out of a student's self-administration of an epinephrine injector, asthma medication, medication required under a qualifying plan, or the storage of any medication by school personnel.

West Central recognizes that diabetes is a serious and chronic condition that must be managed 24 hours a day to avoid potentially serious health risks. Students who are diabetic may possess and self-administer diabetic testing supplies and insulin. Students who are diabetic must also have a Diabetes Care Plan on file with the school. For further information, see: www.iasb.com/law/diabmats.cfm, Handbook Procedure 1.130 (Care of Students with Diabetes) and Handbook Procedure 1.130-E1 (Exhibit: Authorization to Provide Diabetes Care, Release of Health Care Information, and Acknowledgement of Responsibilities).

Students are prohibited from having medications on their person or in their lockers. All medications, including non-prescription medication, will be kept in the Principal's or the Nurse's office and dispensed to the student in accordance with a physician's instructions and/or parent's/guardian's instruction if non-prescription. The medication must be in the original container and labeled with

the student's name. The school WILL NOT supply over-the-counter medication. Cough drops may be provided by the parents and will be kept in the Nurse's office and distributed only with a written permission slip.

If the parent(s)/guardian(s) do not pick up the medication by the end of the school year, the certified school nurse will discard the medication in the presence of a witness.

Food Allergies

If a student has a dangerous or life threatening food allergy, his/her parent or guardian is responsible to notify the school in writing prior to the first day of school or as soon as the student has been diagnosed. If the food allergy is resolved, the parent/guardian is responsible for notifying the school in writing before the student will be allowed to be served that food at school.

Illness/Injury at School

Accidents must be reported immediately to the teacher in charge of the area where the accident occurred. In the case of serious accident or illness, notify the Principal's Office immediately. Students who become ill or are injured at school will be given first aid. Personnel in the office will make the decision to send a student to the nurse or to send the student home. Students must have permission to sign out before leaving the school building. Parents will be notified. In case the parents cannot be contacted, the school will use the name of the "emergency contact" on the emergency form. If no one can be reached, in extreme emergencies, emergency personnel may be notified.

Growth and Development (Elementary)

Fourth and Fifth Grade students may be shown a short video on growth and development. This video talks about the normal changes the body goes through during puberty. Boys will be shown the boys section of the video, and the girls will be shown the girls section. After the video, the presenter may answer questions and talk to the students about hygiene. A note will be sent home 1-2 weeks prior to the video being shown. If a parent wishes for their child to not participate, a written note will excuse them from the activity.

Concussion Policy

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly. In other words, even a "ding" or a bump on the head can be serious. You can't see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away. The complete concussion management plan can be accessed on the district website or by calling the office.

STUDENT AGREEMENT FOR INTERNET/NETWORK ACCESS

We now have the ability to enhance education through the use of the Internet. The Internet links thousands of computer networks around the world, giving West Central C.U.S.D. #235 teachers and students access to vast, diverse, and unique resources. In providing this service to teachers and students, it is the District's goal to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

Students have access to:

1. Limited electronic mail communication with people all over the world.
2. Information and news from government sources, research institutions, and other sources.
3. Public domain software and shareware of all types.
4. Selected discussion groups on a wide range of topics.
5. Many public and private libraries and the Library of Congress.

West Central C.U.S.D. #235 does not have control of the information on the Internet. Some sites accessible via the Internet may contain material that is inappropriate for educational use in a K-12 setting. An Internet Use Agreement will be provided to all students. In order for students to have access to the Internet they, along with their parents, must read, sign, and return to the school the Internet Use Agreement prior to Internet usage. Misuse of the Internet or our computer system carries serious consequences. Violating the Acceptable Use Policy by accessing network resources that are objectionable, adult-oriented, or that would be disruptive to the district or its students, would negate the purpose of the district, or would materially interfere with district discipline or operation may result in:

- Restricted network access and privileges
- Loss of network access and privileges
- Legal action

In order to ensure smooth system operations, the system administrators/technology coordinators and administrators have the authority to monitor all computer usage and e-mail or any information on the network to the same extent that a student's locker may be searched or school personnel desks, offices, or classrooms may be searched. Every effort will be made to maintain privacy and security in this process.

Computer and Internet Terms and Conditions

1. **ACCEPTABLE USE-** The purpose of the Internet was, and largely still is, to support research and education in and among academic institutions in the United States by providing access to unique resources and the opportunity for collaborative work. The use of school computers must support education and research that is consistent with the Learning Outcomes of West Central C.U.S.D. #235. Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret.
2. **STUDENT EMAIL ACCOUNTS** – West Central District #235 offers email accounts for student use (grades 8-12). The email system has been established for a limited education purpose to include classroom activities. Some web-based educational activities require a user to have an e-mail account. The email account has not been established as a general public

access or public forum. West Central District 235 has the right to place reasonable restrictions on accessing or posting of email using our email system. This email system may not be used for commercial purposes to offer, provide, or purchase products or services through the system or use the system for any other purpose except for the purpose defined by the classroom project. The school district reserves its right to review/copy any email message sent using its email system as prescribed by law. Each student is responsible for his/her individual account and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use his/her account. The student should have NO expectation of privacy of materials found on a school supplied or supported email service. Under no condition should a student give his/her password to another person. It is the student's responsibility to immediately notify a teacher or the system administrator if a possible security problem has been identified. This document will serve as permission to use the student email service as well as other education web tools that may require the use of the email account.

3. **USE OF PERSONAL TECHNOLOGY DEVICES** – The use of personal technology devices (cell phones, computers, laptops, tablets, e-readers, etc.) to provide access to educational resources is not a necessity, but a privilege. A user does not have the right to use his or her device while at school. Approved use of devices by users during the instructional day is restricted to educational related internet access. When abuse occurs, privileges may be taken away.
- a. Users take full responsibility for their personal devices at all times. The school is not responsible for the security of the device. West Central District 235 and its staff are not liable for any device stolen or damaged at school. If a device is stolen or damaged, it will be handled through administrative procedures in the same manner as other personal property that is impacted in similar situations.
 - b. The device must be in silent mode during the instructional day unless otherwise directed by the teacher.
 - c. The device may not be used to record, transmit, or post photographic images or video of a person or persons on campus during school activities unless this action is part of an assignment by a teacher.
 - d. During instruction time the device may only be used to access internet resources which are relevant to classroom curriculum. Non-instructional games are not permitted.
 - e. Students must comply with teacher's instructions regarding use of devices in their classroom.
 - f. While at school all internet access shall occur using the district's wireless network. The school's network filters will be applied to their internet access using personal devices and should not be circumvented. Students will not use their own data plans for internet access during the instructional day.
 - g. The school may collect and examine any device at any time for the purpose of enforcing the terms of this agreement and the student code of conduct, including investigating student discipline issues.
 - h. Students should not depend upon access to electrical power at school for use of personal devices. Device batteries should be charged prior to bringing the device to school.
 - i. District personnel will not be responsible for the repair or update of personal technology devices.
 - j. Students remain subject to all school code of conduct rules when using personal

- technology devices on school premises.
4. **NETWORK ETIQUETTE**- Users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. Be polite. Do not become abusive in messages to others.
 - b. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language. Illegal activities are strictly forbidden.
 - c. Do not reveal personal information, including the addresses or telephone numbers, of students or colleagues.
 - d. Recognize that the District's electronic networks are not private. People who operate District technology have access to all email and other data. Messages or other evidence relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
 - e. Do not use the network in any way that would disrupt its use by other users.
 - f. Consider all communications and information accessible via the electronic networks should be assumed to be private property.
 - g. Student subscriptions to electronic mailing lists are not allowed on West Central C.U.S.D. #235 accounts.
 - h. Downloaded material is not allowed unless permission is given by the supervising teacher.
 - i. From time to time, West Central C.U.S.D. #235 system administrators will make determinations on whether specific uses of the network are consistent with the acceptable use practice.
 5. **ACCURACY OF INFORMATION**- Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at your own risk. West Central C.U.S.D. #235 specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through district accounts. Information (including text, graphics, video, etc.) from Internet sources used in student papers and reports should be cited the same as references to printed materials.
 6. **SECURITY**- Attempts to gain unauthorized access to system programs or computer equipment will result in cancellation of user privileges. Downloading of information onto the hard drives of West Central C.U.S.D. #235 computers is prohibited, unless authorized by a teacher or administrator. If a security problem on the Internet has been identified, a teacher or administrator must be notified. Do not demonstrate the problem to other users. Users shall not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users, or misrepresent other users on the network. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to district computers.
 7. **VANDALISM** - Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges and other disciplinary action. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy the networks, software, hardware, and data of the District, another user, the Internet, or any other network. This prohibits degrading or disrupting of equipment, software, or system performance. It also includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses. The introductions/use of disks, thumb drives or CD's and laptops from outside sources is prohibited unless approval is obtained and the disks/drives are scanned for viruses before allowing access to the District's network. User is responsible for any and all costs related to the repair or restoration of any damage done through vandalism or failure to follow proper procedures. The District will use the legal system to seek restitution.
 8. **UNACCEPTABLE USE**- West Central C.U.S.D. #235 administrators and teachers will

deem what is unacceptable use, and their decision is subject only to confirmation by the West Central C.U.S.D. #235 Board of Education. Some examples of unacceptable use include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Using the network for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright or other contracts, or transmitting any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulation.
 - b. Unauthorized access or downloading of software, electronic files, e-mail, or other data (commonly referred to as “hacking”).
 - c. Downloading copyrighted material for other than personal use.
 - d. Using the network for private financial or commercial gain.
 - e. Wastefully using resources, such as file space or paper.
 - f. Gaining unauthorized access to resources or entities.
 - g. Invading the privacy of individuals.
 - h. Using another user's account or password.
 - i. Posting material unauthorized or created by another individual without his/her consent.
 - j. Posting anonymous messages.
 - k. Using the network for commercial or private advertising.
 - l. Accessing, submitting, posting, publishing, or displaying any defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive, harassing, or illegal material.
 - m. Using the network while access privileges are suspended or revoked.
 - n. Bypassing or attempting to bypass the network firewall or network filtering system.
9. **PRIVILEGES**- Use of the district's Internet and network is a privilege, and not a right, and unacceptable use will result in the cancellation of those privileges. The system administrator/technology coordinator and administrators will make decisions regarding whether or not a user has violated these procedures and may deny, revoke, or suspend access at any time. Their decision is final.
 10. **NO WARRANTIES**- The district makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for services it is providing. The district will not be responsible for any damage the user suffers. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by negligence or the users' errors or omissions.
 11. **INDEMNIFICATION**- The user agrees to indemnify the School District for any losses, costs, or damages, including reasonable attorney fees, incurred by the district relating to or arising out of any violation of these procedures.
 12. **UNAUTHORIZED USE OF THE NETWORK/INTERNET** – Before using the network/Internet, students must have permission from a District staff member who must assume supervisory responsibility for the student's use.
 13. **CHARGES AND FEES**- The district assumes no responsibility for any unauthorized charges or fees incurred from Internet purchases placed by the user, including any per-minute surcharges imposed by vendors on the Internet. (These sites indicate before usage any charges that may be incurred and often require a credit card number to access further information.)
 14. **OFF-SITE ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGY** – West Central C.U.S.D. #235 may discipline a student whose personal web site or other off-site activity involving electronic technology causes, or can reasonably be expected to cause, a substantial disruption of the school environment, without regard to whether that activity or disruption involved use of

the District's Technology System.

15. **CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATIONS** – A student who engages in any of the prohibited acts listed above shall be subject to discipline, which may include: (1) suspension or revocation of system privileges, (2) other discipline including suspension or expulsion from school, and (3) referral to law enforcement authorities or other legal action in appropriate cases.

The failure of any user to follow these procedures will result in loss of privileges, disciplinary action, and/or legal action.

Access to Social Networks

School officials may conduct an investigation or require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is specific information about activities on the student's account on a social networking website that violates a school disciplinary rule or policy. In the course of an investigation, that student may be required to share the content that is reported in order to allow school officials to make a factual determination.

West Central Employee Code of Conduct

All West Central Employees are expected to follow Board Policy 5:120 Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest. This policy, in its entirety, can be found on the district website. As a synopsis of the policy:

- All district employees are expected to maintain high standards in their job performance, demonstrate integrity and honesty, be considerate and cooperative, and maintain professional and appropriate relationships with students, parents/guardians, staff members, and others.
- Employees will comply with the Code of Ethics for Illinois Educators
- Employees are trained on educator ethics, child abuse, grooming behaviors and employee-student boundary violations
- Employees maintain professional relationships with students, including maintaining employee-student boundaries based upon students' ages, grade levels, and developmental levels and following District-established guidelines for specific situations, including but not limited to:
 - transporting a student
 - taking or possessing a photo or video of a student
 - meeting with a student or contacting a student outside the employee's professional role
- Discipline up to and including dismissal will occur for any employee who violates an employee conduct standard or engages in any of the following:
 - violates expectations and guidelines for employee-student boundaries
 - sexually harasses a student
 - willfully or negligently fails to follow reporting requirements of the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act
 - engages in grooming or grooming behaviors - including sexual misconduct. Sexual misconduct is any act, including but not limited to, any verbal, nonverbal, written or electronic communication or physical activity, by an employee with direct contact with a student, that is directed toward or with a student to establish a romantic or sexual relationship with the student. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a sexual or romantic invitation
- dating or soliciting a date
- engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog
- making sexually suggestive comments that are directed toward or with a student
- self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature
- a sexual, indecent, romantic, or erotic contact with the student

ATHLETIC/EXTRA-CURRICULAR POLICIES

This Extracurricular and Athletic Activities Code of Conduct applies, where applicable, to all school-sponsored athletic and extracurricular activities that are not part of an academic class nor otherwise carry for a grade. The following activities are included in this policy: football, volleyball, softball, baseball, basketball, track, swim, bowling, scholastic bowl, cross country, bass fishing, trap shooting, play, speech team, cheer, golf, pep band, FFA, band and chorus (others may be added to the list with administrative approval).

Requirements for Participation in Athletic Activities

A student must meet all academic eligibility requirements and have the following fully executed documents on file in the school office before being allowed to participate in any athletic activity:

1. A current certificate of physical fitness issued by a licensed physician, an advanced practice nurse or physician assistant. The preferred certificate of physical fitness is the Illinois High School Association's "Pre-Participation Physical Examination Form."
2. A permission slip to participate in the specific activity signed by the student's parent/guardian.
3. Proof the student is covered by medical insurance.
4. A signed agreement by the student not to ingest or otherwise use any drugs on the IHSA's most current banned substance list (without a written prescription and medical documentation provided by a licensed physician who performed an evaluation for a legitimate medical condition) and signed agreement by the student's parent/guardian agreeing to IHSA's Performance-Enhancing Substance Testing Program.
5. A signed agreement by the student and the student's parent/guardian authorizing compliance with the School District's Extracurricular Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy; and
6. Signed documentation agreeing to comply with the School District's policies and procedures on student athletic concussions and head injuries.

I. PHILOSOPHY

A. General

1. It is understood that participation in any extra-curricular activity is a **privilege, not a right**. Therefore, students who choose to participate in any extra-curricular activity are expected to maintain habits and behaviors that will reflect favorably on themselves, their families, and the West Central School District #235. These expectations apply all year round (365 days a year, regardless if school is in session).
2. Extra-curricular activities are defined as all athletic teams, clubs, organizations, or events not included in the regular graded curriculum: provided, however, that no event shall be included in the graded curriculum merely for the purpose of avoiding the application of this policy.

B. Goals

These policies are designed to promote the following goals:

1. To abide by the rules of the Illinois High School Association and the Illinois Elementary School Association as well as the policies and regulations that have been set forth by

West Central High School and West Central Middle School.

2. To teach the benefits of teamwork and cooperation as well as to develop a competitive character and to maintain high standards of sportsmanship.
3. To teach and to encourage appropriate health and safety practices in all activities including good nutrition and health habits as well as the use of training rules and regulations which promote personal and team fitness.
4. To promote West Central School District #235 athletic programs and extra-curricular activities within our surrounding communities.
5. To develop elementary and intramural interscholastic programs that enhance and benefit the athletic and extra-curricular programs of the District.

II. SPORTSMANSHIP

A. General

1. Good Sportsmanship is fundamental to all interscholastic sports and activities. The teaching and practice of good sportsmanship is one of the major goals of all sports and extra-curricular activities at West Central School District #235.
2. The Board of Education expects that good sportsmanship will be exhibited consistently by all representatives of West Central School District #235 (fans, participants, parents, coaches/sponsors and other staff).
3. Both the IESA (Illinois Elementary School Association) and the IHSA (Illinois High School Association) hold the School District and District administrators responsible for good sportsmanship in all athletic and extra-curricular Activities.

B. Good sportsmanship is shown both by attitudes and by actions.

Examples of specific actions that demonstrate good sportsmanship include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Cheering for good effort and performance.
2. Congratulating opponents for good performance.
3. Maintaining a highly competitive attitude without degrading or insulting opponents.
4. Willingly accepting the instructions and judgment of proper officials.
5. Learning the rules and strategies of the game or activity.
6. Playing by the rules of the game or contest.
7. Treating opposing players, coaches, and cheerleaders with respect.
8. Treating judges, referees, and other officials with respect. This does not preclude appropriate questions or challenges to referees or other officials in the manner prescribed in the rules for the activity or event.

C. Poor sportsmanship is shown both by attitudes and by actions.

Examples of specific actions that demonstrate poor sportsmanship include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Inappropriate language directed towards coaches, players, or officials.
 - a. Taunts or insults.
 - b. Obscene or profane language.
 - c. Excessive yelling with the obvious intent to be obnoxious or disruptive to the contest

- or activity in progress.
- 2. Loss of control - For example, throwing or slamming articles around.
- 3. Deliberately committed or "Dirty Play" rule violations.
 - a. Obvious or deliberate violations of rules.
 - b. Major or flagrant violations that result in serious penalties:
 - i. Personal fouls in football deliberately committed.
 - ii. Technical fouls due to deliberate acts.
 - iii. Disqualifications because of deliberate actions.
 - iv. Deliberately rude or insulting behavior.
- 4. Refusal to accept the decisions of coaches or officials.

D. Conduct and Sportsmanship for Athletic Extracurricular Events

Because unsportsmanlike conduct affects not only opponents, but also fellow participants and team members, remedial actions appropriate for all affected parties shall be taken following flagrant or deliberate poor sportsmanship or any action which causes significant embarrassment or damage to the reputation and image of West Central School District #235.

1. Any person, including adults, who behaves in an unsportsmanlike manner during an athletic or extracurricular event, may be ejected from the event the person is attending and/or denied admission to school events for up to one calendar year after a Board of Education hearing. The ejection could be imposed by West Central or host school administration on duty or by game officials. Examples of unsportsmanlike conduct include:
 - a. Using vulgar or obscene language;
 - b. Possessing or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverage or illegal substance;
 - c. Possessing a weapon;
 - d. Fighting or otherwise striking or threatening another person;
 - e. Engaging in any activity which is illegal or disruptive; and
 - f. Harassing participants, coaches, or officials in such a manner as to cause personal embarrassment or serious interference with the normal progress of the activity.

Consequences for a Spectator Ejection (Board Policy 8:30)

1. 1st Ejection - Spectator is banned from attending any West Central events until after the next like contest (for example, ejection from Varsity football, banned from events until after the following Varsity football game). Fans who are ejected are also required to complete the NFHS sportsmanship course online and submit completion to the athletic director prior to returning to events.
2. 2nd Ejection - Spectator is banned from one-quarter (1/4) of scheduled contests in the season the ejection took place
3. 3rd Ejection - Spectator is banned from all West Central contests for a calendar year and a Board Hearing will take place
4. 4th Ejection - Spectator will be required to attend a Board Hearing for further Board Action

The Superintendent may seek to deny future admission to any person by delivering or mailing a notice, sent by certified mail with return receipt requested, at least 10 days before the Board of Education hearing date, containing:

1. The date, time, and place of the Board hearing;
 2. A description of the unsportsmanlike conduct;
 3. The proposed time period that admission to school events will be denied and
 4. Instructions on how to waive a hearing.
2. Poor sportsmanship by coaches/sponsors/staff members and participants:
- a. Coaches, sponsors, and staff members shall not engage in, promote, or condone unsportsmanlike behavior, since they serve as role models for participants and are generally held responsible for the attitudes and behavior of participants. **Poor sportsmanship is never acceptable.**
 - b. Whenever there has been a flagrant or major act of unsportsmanlike behavior by a student (such as a personal foul in football, a technical foul for unsportsmanlike behavior in basketball, or any ejection or disqualification in an activity), the following procedures will be followed:

Player Technical/Personal Foul(Intention/Malicious)

1st Offense - Sit out remainder of contest

2nd - 4th Offense - Sit out remainder of contest and the following contest

5th (and Future) Offense - Removal from the team

Coaches (Paid and Volunteer) Technical/Personal Foul

- After every 3rd technical/personal foul received by a coach, the coach will be suspended from the following contest
- Continued/recurring issues will be addressed in their evaluation and during rehire consideration

Ejection

1st Offense - Removal from contest and suspension from next two (2) contests at that level (and all other contests at any level)

- Players and Coaches MUST complete NFHS Sportsmanship course online and submit course completion to the Athletic Director
- Coaches are required to pay a \$100 fine prior to returning (per IESA requirements)

Future Offenses - Removal from team/coaching position

- c. For students and participants, deliberate or repeated flagrant acts of poor sportsmanship may be considered sufficient cause for suspension or removal from the activity in addition to other discipline that may be imposed by the principal. Consequences can be enhanced if the severity warrants.
- d. As soon as practical following any flagrant or serious act of unsportsmanlike behavior (such as those that result in a major penalty, a disqualification or an ejection), the coach/director will meet with the respective principal to report the immediate actions taken or the consequences determined for the

unsportsmanlike behavior, as well as the circumstances surrounding the behavior.

- e. Following the meeting between the principal and the coach/sponsor, reduced or additional consequences may be imposed as deemed appropriate.
- f. For school personnel, all deliberate or repeated flagrant acts of poor sportsmanship may be considered as violations of contract and sufficient cause for suspension from duty or for termination, as well as sufficient reason for non-renewal of any extra-curricular contract.

III. ELIGIBILITY

In order to be eligible for interscholastic competition, students must meet the eligibility requirements of their respective associations (IESA or IHSA) and West Central Community Unit School District #235.

A. IESA Policies

1. Students can participate through age fourteen (14) at the seventh (7th) grade level and through age fifteen (15) at the eighth (8th) grade level.
2. If a student in either age division turns older from the beginning of the first practice date through the final event of the IESA tournament, he or she will not be qualified to participate at all during that activity season.
3. No student may participate at the same age level for two different school years in the same sport or activity.
4. All students shall be in grades six through eight and shall not have passed eighth grade standing.
5. A student shall be doing passing work in all school subjects according to the local school District grading policies.
6. Grades shall be cumulative for the school's grading period. Students who transfer will become eligible to participate on the eleventh (11th) attendance day, if they meet all other eligibility requirements.

B. West Central Middle School Policies

1. Students must be doing passing work in all subjects.
2. Eligibility will be checked on a weekly basis. Grades need to be turned in to teachers by 3:00 p.m. on Thursday to count toward that week's report. The weekly report is then valid from Sunday through Saturday. Any student failing a class will be ineligible to participate in athletic or other extracurricular activities the following week, even if the grade is raised during that week.
3. Grades will be figured cumulative by quarter.
4. If a player is ineligible for three consecutive weeks, the player will be dismissed from the team.
5. To practice or participate in an extra-curricular activity on a regular scheduled school day, students must be in attendance at school by the end of 2nd period. A student who is absent from school after the start of 3rd hour is ineligible for any extracurricular or athletic activities on that day unless the absence has been pre-approved in writing by the administration. Exceptions may be made by the designated teacher, sponsor, or coach for: 1) a pre-arranged medical absence; 2) a death in the student's family; or 3) a religious ceremony or event. A student who has an unexcused absence for any portion of the school day will not be allowed to practice or participate in competition that day.

6. A student who has been suspended (ISS or OSS) from school is also suspended from participating in all extracurricular or athletic activities for the duration of the suspension. A student with an ISS may attend practice or events, but is unable to participate or dress.
7. A student who has served an in-school suspension during the school day may be allowed to attend an extracurricular or athletic activity but will not be allowed to participate.
8. A student who is absent from school on a Friday before a Saturday event may only participate in a Saturday extracurricular or athletic activity with the Principal's approval.

C. West Central High School Policies

1. Students entering ninth (9th) grade have a clean slate academically upon entrance to high school.
2. Grade eligibility is week to week, starting on Sunday and carrying to the next Saturday evening. Although grades are turned in on Thursday afternoon, ineligibility begins Monday morning and ends on the following Sunday evening. Any student failing ONE subject in one week will be ineligible to participate in athletic or other extra-curricular activities the following week.
3. Grades shall be cumulative from the beginning of the current semester.
4. If a player is ineligible for three consecutive weeks, the player will be dismissed from the team.
4. Any student that does not pass **25 credit hours (5 classes)** in the previous semester will not be eligible to participate in extra-curricular activities the following semester.
5. To practice or participate in an extra-curricular activity on a regular scheduled school day, students must be in attendance by the start of 3rd hour each day. A student who is absent from school after the start of 3rd hour is ineligible for any extracurricular or athletic activities on that day unless the absence has been pre-approved in writing by the administration. Exceptions may be made by the designated teacher, sponsor, or coach for: 1) a pre-arranged medical absence; 2) a death in the student's family; or 3) a religious ceremony or event. A student who has an unexcused absence for any portion of the school day will not be allowed to practice or participate in competition that day.
6. A student who has been suspended (ISS or OSS) from school is also suspended from participating in all extracurricular or athletic activities for the duration of the suspension. A student with an ISS may attend practice or events, but is unable to participate or dress.
7. A student who has served an in-school suspension during the school day may be allowed to attend an extracurricular or athletic activity but will not be allowed to participate.
8. A student who is absent from school on a Friday before a Saturday event may only participate in a Saturday extracurricular or athletic activity with the Principal's approval.
9. The coach/sponsor of students failing a class may arrange 3:15-3:45 p.m. tutoring with the classroom teacher for any athlete failing a class during the time of that sport or activity. Students will attend this tutoring at least three (3) days a week as long as that team member or extracurricular activity participant has a grade below 60%.
10. IHSA policies will be enforced.

D. Physical Examinations/Insurance

1. A current physical must be on file for any student wishing to participate in athletics in West Central C.U.S.D. #235. A sports physical examination is good for thirteen months.
2. A copy of work, family, school (or football) insurance must be on file for each student participating in athletics.

3. No student/athlete may practice or participate without a current physical, baseline concussion test and proof of insurance on file.
4. The head coaches in each sport will ensure complete compliance with these requirements before students may practice or participate.

E. Authority and Responsibility

1. The building principal has ultimate authority and responsibility for all decisions regarding student eligibility.
2. Actions or rulings regarding eligibility do not require a formal hearing for students, only a determination of the actual facts involved in a particular matter.

IV. Use of Tobacco, Alcohol, Other Drugs & Criminal Violations/Serious Misbehavior

A. General Conditions

1. The **use or possession** (in any form) of alcohol, steroids, or other drugs (other than prescription drug prescribed by a physician) is strictly prohibited.
2. The use or possession of tobacco in any form or any other products associated with smoking is strictly prohibited. This includes, but not limited to, the use of E-cigarettes (electronic cigarettes), vapes and chew.
3. Activities of a criminal nature or serious misbehavior which threatens the safety and welfare of others are strictly prohibited under this Policy. Such activities include, but are not limited to: charges of criminal violations; arson; bomb threat; theft (including burglary/robbery); malicious destruction of property; sexual assault/assault; physical threat or attack; possession or use of a weapon, ammunition, or explosive; possession of a firearm; possession of stolen property; forgery; or any felony or serious misdemeanor. Penalties for violations imposed under this policy shall be in addition to all penalties imposed under State or Federal laws and other school rules and regulations.
4. This policy shall apply to all participants on a year-round basis, including summers and vacations, both on and off school premises (365 days a year).
5. Exemption: Students supervised by their parents, grandparents, or legal guardians in public situations (such as in eating establishments, weddings, and similar situations) shall not be deemed to be in violation of this policy merely by their presence. When determining whether this exemption should apply, the Principal may consult with law enforcement personnel.

B. Disciplinary Procedures

1. The principal/coach/sponsor/athletic director will initiate disciplinary action by investigating the infraction upon notification by a school representative. The parent/guardian will be notified of the alleged violation concerning the extracurricular policy.
2. The principal/coach/sponsor/athletic director will attempt to verify the offense by giving the student an opportunity to present information on his or her behalf.
3. The principal, athletic director (if the student involved is a participant in athletics,) guidance counselor (if the student is not a participant in athletics,) and coach/sponsor will meet and make a ruling as soon as possible following any rule infraction.
4. The principal will contact the parent/guardian of any disciplinary action by phone and in writing.

5. The first day of any suspension will be determined upon the finding that rules in this extra-curricular policy were violated. This decision will be done in a timely manner. Students, during the school year, not out for an activity covered by this policy, will begin their suspension when their activity begins. They must miss at minimum one contest or event.
6. If a student plays multiple levels, the suspension will be based on the higher level scheduled contest and the player is unable to participate in any activities (at any level) during that suspension).
7. Cancellation of games due to weather will not change the suspension timeline, the initial return date will remain the same, even if contests are rescheduled.
8. Individuals involved in drama, music, and other Fine Arts programs will be prohibited from participating in the next scheduled contest or performance.
9. Individuals involved in any school sponsored organizations will be prohibited from participating in the next organizational event/activity.
10. Any appeal to any decision regarding enforcement of this policy will follow standards and policies as set by the West Central Board of Education.

C. Penalties- Any violation of the stated policy will result in the following actions:

If the infraction occurs during the time the student is participating:

- a. The suspension will begin from the date the administration is aware of the violation.

If the infraction occurs during off season:

- b. The suspension will begin on the first date of practice. The student will not be allowed participation in at least 1 contest/game.

1. **FIRST OFFENSE** by a participant shall result in the suspension from all extra-curricular activities for 25% of scheduled contests. If a suspension is not completed during a given year, the suspension will be carried over to extra-curricular activities the next year.
2. **SECOND OFFENSE** by a participant shall result in the suspension from all extra-curricular activities for 50% of scheduled contests. The suspension shall begin from the date of the second rule infraction. If the suspension is not completed during a school year, the suspension will carry over into the following school year.
3. **THIRD OFFENSE** by a participant shall make the student ineligible to participate in any extra-curricular activities at West Central High School or West Central Middle School for a calendar year.
4. **FOURTH OFFENSE** by a participant shall make the student ineligible to participate in any extra-curricular activities at West Central High School or West Central Middle School for his/her school career.

Substance Abuse Evaluation – The student will obtain an evaluation and at minimum will be required to complete a brief educational session with behavioral and peer contracts. These contracts, with the required signature of the student and parent/guardian (unless emancipated), will be returned to both the substance abuse counselor and administration. Additional sessions may be needed at the discretion of the substance abuse counselor.

Substance Abuse Program – The student will repeat the process of first offense requirements. At minimum, the student will be required to participate in at least 12 hours of educational/behavioral sessions addressing substance abuse as it relates to personal history indicated by the evaluation.

5. Involvement in a situation by a student in extra-curricular activities other than IESA/IHSA recognized:
 - a. If the student is involved in extra-curricular activities not recognized by the IESA/IHSA, penalties will be determined by the principal under the guidelines of the extra-curricular policy and that activity's guidelines or constitution.
 - b. Under the rules of suspension, students must attend and participate in all practices and activities deemed necessary by the coach or sponsor, excluding events such as contests or competitions. Events include games or organization field trips or any other event which is specific to the organization under which the suspension is being served. Students are able to attend competitions, but are unable to dress. Students are expected to participate in fundraisers or work related activities that benefit the organization or the school. Students under suspension may be permitted or expected to participate in local performances or exhibitions such as plays, concerts, etc.; but they may not participate in any official contest sanctioned by the IESA, IHSA, or similar organization.
 - c. Penalties for athletic violations and other violations will be imposed separately. They may run concurrently as determined by the principal.
6. In the event that the violation occurs near the end, or after the end of a season, or between seasons, the period of suspensions shall carry over until the next season in which the student regularly participates.

D. Extra-Curricular Activities

1. Extra-curricular activities or organizations not governed by the IESA or the IHSA or beyond the scope of classroom participation include organizations such as: Student Council, FFA, National Honor Society, Spanish Club, Art Club, Math Club, Science Olympiad, Cheerleading and Dance Squad and AFS.
2. In the event of a Policy violation and suspension, students involved in Student Council, National Honor Society, Science Olympiad, and/or FFA are subject to this policy and the guidelines set forth in each organization's constitution. Written notice, giving details of all penalties imposed, will be provided.
3. In the event of a policy violation and suspension, students involved in Spanish Club, Art Club, Math Club, and/or AFS are subject to this Policy and will be suspended from field trips or events connected with these organizations if the field trips or events fall within the time period of suspension.
4. Students elected to a position of honor or trust, such as homecoming king or queen and prom king or queen, which represent the school, may be required to forfeit these positions upon violation of the Athletic/Extra-Curricular Policy. Such a determination shall be made by a vote of the respective student body under the auspices of the Student

Council. Such vote will be held as soon as practicable following the determination that a violation has occurred.

V. COMMUNICATION

A. Chain of Command/Chain of Communication

1. Whenever a problem or a grievance develops in an extra-curricular activity or sport, the following chain of communication is to be followed by the person who has a problem or grievance.
 - a. Level I - As soon as practical the person who has a problem or grievance will first attempt to solve the problem with the coach or sponsor involved, since the coach or sponsor has primary responsibility for the conduct/control of practices and contests. It is the responsibility of the party in grievance (student, parents, or other person) to contact the coach/sponsor first and then to follow the chain of command/communication if the problem remains.
 - b. Level I **communications will be held at an appropriate time and in an appropriate location (in most situations, this will not be allowed 24 hours before or after a contest).** The grievant should contact the school as soon as practical to contact the coach or sponsor so that an appropriate time and place for a conference can be arranged. Immediately before, during, or immediately after practice, or immediately before or after a contest is not an appropriate time for such communications. Coaches/directors have other duties and responsibilities at such times, and there is not an opportunity for private and open communication.
 - c. This Level I process shall be completed in a prompt and timely manner.
 - d. Level II - If the situation is not resolved at Level I, the grievant may appeal to the athletic director..
 - e. Level III - Principal.
 - f. Level IV - Superintendent
2. If a problem or grievance cannot be resolved at lower levels of the chain of command/communication, normal grievance procedures as outlined in School Board Policies should be followed.

B. Letters and Awards

1. Letters and awards shall be granted according to criteria developed by coaches/sponsors and approved by the building principal (and the Athletic Director when appropriate). The criteria shall specify activities and participation requirements for all awards (letters, plaques, trophies, etc.), as well as any criteria that may cause loss or forfeiture of awards. Students must be in good standing at the end of the season to receive a letter or award.
2. The criteria for each sport/activity shall be prepared in written form and explained to participants and parents before the beginning of the sport or activity, or as soon as practical in the case of new coaches.

C. Relationships Among Participants, Parents, and Coaches/Sponsors and Conduct of Practices

1. General

- a. In any successful program, it is essential that coaches, parents, and participants understand each other's goals and expectations.
- b. For this reason, coaches and sponsors will meet with participants and parents at a start of the season meeting to present and discuss their philosophies, goals, expectations, and contest rules.
- c. At this meeting, schedules of games/contests and practices will be provided to all participants along with a written contract listing expectations and training/practice rules for the participants. Participants and parents will be asked to sign acknowledgment of receiving this information.
- d. At this time, coaches will inform parents and students of any special equipment or requirements for the activity as well as discussing costs that may be incurred by the participants or their parents.
- e. No student will be allowed to practice for or participate in extra-curricular activities until parent(s) have met with the coach/sponsor, contracts and medical releases have been signed, and proof of insurance and physical forms have been supplied, if required. Parents who object to the emergency medical release form for religious or other legitimate reasons may request a meeting on this matter with the coach and the administration who will consider all objections and make written ruling on the objections. This written ruling will include the reasons for the objection, all pertinent related facts, and all agreements that are made by the parties involved. All decisions will be subject to IESA and/or IHSA rules. The athletic/extracurricular policy will be reviewed at least yearly. Parents, participants, coaches, sponsors, and other interested persons may recommend changes to ensure discipline, equity, and fairness to all.
- f. The district allows students to modify his other athletic or team uniform for the purpose of modesty in clothing or attire that is in accordance with the requirements of his or her religion or his or her cultural values or modesty preferences. A student is not required to receive the prior approval of the school board for such modification.

2. Expectations for Participants

- a. Participants will observe training/practice rules.
- b. Participants will give their best efforts at all times - both in practice and in contests.
- c. Participants will represent West Central School District #235 in a positive manner and demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times
- d. Unless excused by the coach or sponsor, participants are expected to be present for and participate fully in all practices and activities.
- e. Participants who know in advance that they will be absent from practice or an event for appointments or other good reasons should discuss their absence with the coach or sponsor in advance.
- f. Participants who have conflicts because of work, family responsibilities, or other activities are expected to discuss those conflicts (in advance when possible) with the coach or sponsor to determine whether they can give sufficient time and energy to each activity or responsibility. Coaches and sponsors are aware of these conflicts and will attempt to resolve them on an individual basis.

- g. Participants are to comply fully with District policies and regulations for participation in extracurricular activities.
 - h. Participants will be encouraged to participate in off-season activities and training.
3. Expectations for Parents/Guardians
 - a. Parents will attend pre-season meetings and support participants by attending events when possible. Non-attendance at these meetings does not disqualify the parent from understanding the rules and expectations.
 - b. Parents will maintain realistic expectations for their children, no matter what their natural or developed ability level.
 - c. Parents should be supportive of their child's participation.
 - d. Parents should refrain from publicly challenging or second-guessing the style, decisions, or philosophy of the coach or sponsor.
 - e. In cases where there is conflict or misunderstanding, parents will attempt to resolve problems through channels as outlined in Section V of this Policy.
 - f. Parents **will** exhibit good sportsmanship both at events and in discussions with others as defined in Section II of this policy.
 - g. Parents will share behavior expectations with family members who attend events for their students.
 4. Conduct of Practices/Miscellaneous Provisions
 - a. When school is not in session due to bad weather or other serious emergency, the following provisions will be observed:
 - i. As a general rule, when school is canceled during the day due to bad weather, all practices, contests, and performances are also canceled.
 - ii. On any day when school is not in session due to bad weather the administration will have discretion to permit practice if it is determined that there is a good reason for the practice, that roads are reasonably well-cleared, and that there will not be serious danger or hardships for parents or students.
 - iii. Using discretionary powers, the principal may permit a contest or performance to be held under conditions similar to those listed above.
 - b. The length, time, and dates of practices shall be determined by the coach/sponsor of each activity.
 - c. Coaches/sponsors must consider participants' ages, physical condition and physical limitations, as well as academic and community demands upon students when determining the length and intensity of practices.
 - d. When setting practice times and schedules, coaches/sponsors shall have respect for and give appropriate consideration to the needs of families and parents, as well as church and community organizations.

D. Changing from One Sport to Another

1. A student may change from one sport to another (including cheerleading and poms) under the following conditions:
 - a. The student must have approval from the coach of the new sport.
 - b. The student must have parental and administrative approval for the change.
 - c. The change must be made before the first contest or performance in either sport.
2. No change will be allowed if the above conditions are not met.

E. Transportation to and from Events

1. Participants are expected to use school-provided transportation both when going to and returning from contests events.
2. If a student misses the bus they are not eligible to participate in that contest unless the coach permits an exception due to a serious emergency or unusual hardship.
Note: Failure to be on time for the bus is not ordinarily considered a hardship or emergency.
3. Coaches/sponsors will ordinarily permit participants to go home with their own parents/guardians (rather than returning to school) after a contest or event. Participants **MUST** be signed out by their parent or guardian at the event before leaving.
4. After an away contest or event, participants may be permitted to go with other parents/guardians (rather than returning to school) provided they have written (or personal) permission from the participants' parents/guardians. Normally, approval for this option shall be given by the coach/sponsor or administration in advance.
5. Participants are unable to go home with another student.

F. Concussion Policy

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, **all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly.** In other words, even a “ding” or a bump on the head can be serious. You can’t see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away. Symptoms of a concussion may include one or more of the following: headache, ‘pressure in head’ nausea or vomiting, neck pain, balance problems, dizziness, vision issues, sensitivity to light or noise, irritability, confusion or concentration/memory problems. Please see the full concussion management plan for more information or contact the coach/athletic director/building office.

West Central CUSD #235 has partnered with Southeast Iowa Regional medical Center to develop a comprehensive program for rehabilitation and athletic training services. Southeast Iowa Regional Medical Center has licensed athletic trainers who are trained in prevention, physical evaluation, emergency care, and physical reconditioning relating to injuries and illnesses incurred through sports-induced trauma. This program will support West Central CUSD #235 priority of student safety and support by providing baseline concussion testing for all athletes in grades 6th - 12th and facilitating and communicating with appropriate personnel during concussion protocol/management. The complete concussion management plan can be accessed on the district website or calling the office.

Student athletes must comply with Illinois’ Youth Sports Concussion Safety Act and all protocols, policies and bylaws of the Illinois High School Association/Illinois Elementary School Association before being allowed to participate in any athletic activity, including practice or competition.

A student who was removed from practice or competition because of a suspected concussion shall be allowed to return only after all statutory prerequisites are completed, including without limitation,

the School District's return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols, as outlined in the Concussion Management Plan.

If you think your child has suffered a concussion

Any athlete even suspected of suffering a concussion should be removed from the game or practice immediately. No athlete may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without medical clearance. Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours. IHSA/IESA Policy requires athletes to provide their school with written clearance from either a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches or a certified athletic trainer working in conjunction with a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches prior to returning to play or practice following a concussion or after being removed from an interscholastic contest due to a possible head injury or concussion and not cleared to return to that same contest. In accordance with state law, all IHSA/IESA member schools are required to follow this policy. You should also inform your child's coach if you think that your child may have a concussion. Remember it's better to miss one game than miss the whole season. And when in doubt, the athlete sits out.

For current and up-to-date information on concussions you can go to:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports/>

West Central C.U.S.D. #235
Extracurricular Activity Eligibility
Random Drug Testing Administrative Procedure

Philosophy/Purpose

The Board of Education believes that the use of prohibited substances: alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs including performance enhancing drugs by students who participate in extracurricular activities presents a particular hazard to the health, safety, and welfare of students and those who compete with the student. The Board encourages students to participate in extracurricular activities, but believes the opportunity to try out for and participate in school sponsored activities is a privilege and not a right. To be eligible to try out for, or to participate in any extracurricular activities, students must agree to submit to testing for the use of prohibited substances, if selected, in accordance with this policy.

This policy has been adopted by the Board of Education of West Central C.U.S.D. #235 and applies to all students who participate in extracurricular activities in grades 6-12. This policy is in addition to the West Central C.U.S.D. #235 Extracurricular Code of Conduct and all other policies regarding student conduct.

The District recognizes that there is a high incidence of alcohol and drug abuse by students nationwide. The District also recognizes that some West Central students, and in particular, participants in extracurricular activities have used alcohol and have or will experiment with illegal drugs, alcohol, and/or tobacco during their high school years. Because participants in extracurricular activities are especially respected and looked up to by the student body, our community and the communities we compete in, they are expected to be good examples of conduct, sportsmanship, and training, which include abstaining from the use of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. Moreover, participants in extracurricular activities who use drugs can be a danger to himself/herself or others, both in and out of the extracurricular activity.

In order to provide for the health and safety of the individual participant and other extracurricular participants, as well as, provide a legitimate reason for the students to say “NO” to drug use, and to provide an opportunity for those taking drugs to receive help in locating programs which can provide assistance, the District is conducting a random drug testing program for extracurricular participants. The program is not punitive. It is designed to prevent drug, alcohol, and tobacco usage, to educate extracurricular participants as to the serious physical, mental, and emotional harm caused by drug, alcohol, and tobacco use/abuse, to create and maintain a safe, drug free, environment for student athletes and to assist them in getting help when needed.

The purpose of this policy is to deter the use of prohibited substances, not to provide a means which the district may punish a student other than by disqualification from participation in extracurricular activities. Accordingly, the results of any drug test administered under this policy shall be used only for determination of eligibility to try out for and participate in extracurricular activities and for no other disciplinary purpose.

Definitions

A. ***Extracurricular Activities***

School sponsored activities outside the regular school day, conducted by and representing West Central C.U.S.D. #235 where participation is voluntary, no academic credit or grades are awarded, and are competitive in nature in Grades 6 - 12, including but not limited to the following list of extracurricular activities: Interscholastic Athletics, FFA, Speech, Scholastic Bowl Team, Cheerleading, Pom Pon, WYSE, ICTM, and Science Olympiad.

B. ***Extracurricular Participant***

Any student who is trying out for or participating in any school sponsored extracurricular activity. Should any student be unsuccessful in trying out for a given activity and not choosing to be involved in any other activity for the remainder of the school year, parents should send a letter so indicating and requesting the removal of the student's name from the random list.

C. ***Alcohol***

Any liquor, wine, beer, and other drink containing alcohol.

D. ***Illegal Drugs***

Any substance considered illegal or controlled by the Food and Drug Administration.

E. ***Tobacco***

Any tobacco product including but not limited to cigarettes, vapes, e-cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco, or pipe tobacco.

F. ***Self-Referral***

Process of a student coming forward, voluntarily, seeking help for a problem with an illegal drug, alcohol or tobacco. This is done before a violation of the Extracurricular Code has been verified by notifying staff or administration.

G. ***Testing Cycle***

Time period for random tests is determined by the District and Testing Organization. Cycles may be weekly, monthly, quarterly, or by semester.

H. ***Dilute Specimen***

Specimen with a specific gravity of less than .023. Individual has more fluids in their body limiting the testing ability of the sample.

I. ***Testing Organization***

Organization selected by the Board of Education to conduct the random drug testing program and all required testing activities and/or tasks.

J. ***School Year***

For the purpose of this policy, the school year will begin on the Wednesday of week 6 of the IHSA calendar until week 49 of the IHSA calendar for high school students. Middle school students will start on Monday of week 4 of the IHSA calendar and conclude on week 47 of the IHSA calendar.

Consent Form

To try out for or to participate in any school sponsored extracurricular activities, the student must read this policy and sign a consent by which the student agrees that as a condition of participation in extracurricular activities, he/she will consent to the drug testing program outlined in this procedure. This consent form must also be signed by the student's parents or guardians at the beginning of the school year prior to tryouts for a specific activity. Students deciding to participate in an extracurricular activity after the first sign-up deadline will be required to be tested after the signed consent form is returned. This testing will occur on the next scheduled test date and the extracurricular participant will then remain eligible for random testing for the remainder of the school year.

Withdrawal of Consent

Consent for participation may be withdrawn under the following conditions:

1. Student fails to make the team/activity under tryout procedures outlined.
2. Senior student will not be participating in any additional qualified extracurricular activities for the remainder of his/her school career.
3. Parents must submit written request for withdrawal of consent indicating intentions in #2 above.
4. Withdrawal of consent must be sent to the appropriate building principal who will verify student is no longer participating in any qualified extracurricular event.

Should the student elect to resume participation in any qualified activity again in his/her school career, the student will be required to be tested on the next scheduled test date prior to activity tryout or participation.

Noncompliance

If the extracurricular participant, his/her parents or guardians refuse to sign the consent form, the student will not be permitted to be a member of the activity until such consent form is signed. Also, if the extracurricular participant refuses to be tested or does not complete the test as instructed, the extracurricular participant will be considered in violation of this policy

Confidentiality

The results of any test administered under the terms of this policy shall be kept confidential and disclosed only to the extracurricular participant, his/her parent or guardian, and school officials designated by the Superintendent. The results of the testing shall not be used as a basis for any disciplinary action other than disqualification as provided for in the West Central C.U.S.D. #235 Extracurricular Code of Conduct. The test results will not be part of the extracurricular participant permanent record, but will be kept in a secure file in the school office. The results for testing, negative or positive, will be kept until the student graduates. At that time all results/records of this policy, related to individual students will be destroyed.

Under this drug testing program, no staff, coach, or sponsor shall divulge any information to anyone about a particular student or disposition of the student involved, other than by order of a court of competent jurisdiction.

Random Selection of Extracurricular Participants for Testing

At the beginning of each school year, each extracurricular participant shall be assigned a number by the Superintendent or his/her designee. The selection of numbers will be made by the Testing Organization. The numbers will be computer generated. Students will be eligible for random testing starting on the Wednesday of week 6 of the IHSA calendar until week 49 of the IHSA calendar for high school students. Middle school students will start on Monday of week 4 of the IHSA calendar and conclude on week 47 of the IHSA calendar.

Notification of Extracurricular Participant Selection/Absence

The selected extracurricular participants will be notified to report to the Principal's Office as needed on test day. The student will then be escorted to the test site.

After testing an extracurricular participant's number will be returned to the testing population and subject to reselection during the next testing cycle. Extracurricular participants will be subject to random testing throughout the school year.

Student Transfers

A student transferring to West Central C.U.S.D. #235 schools, grades 6 -12, will be provided a copy of this policy/procedure. Transfer students and parents will be given a reasonable period of time (not to exceed 5 school days) to determine whether or not the student intends to participate in extracurricular activities. If, within the period of time given, the consent form is signed appropriately, the student's name will be added to the random list. If a decision is made to participate after the original timeline for a consent, the student will automatically be tested on the next scheduled test date, prior to activity tryout or participation.

Program Details

Testing Procedures

1. Superintendent or designee shall assign a number to each extracurricular participant on a random basis and shall develop a master list of assigned numbers. The testing Organization shall then, from time-to-time throughout the school year, randomly select extracurricular participants for drug, alcohol and/or tobacco testing from the pool of numbers submitted by the Superintendent or designee. Testing may occur on any school attendance day. Each student participant may be tested at any time during the year.
2. No student will be given advance notice or early warning of the testing.
3. Drug and/or tobacco testing may be performed by urinalysis. Upon being selected for a urinalysis test, the student shall provide a sample of "fresh" urine according to the quality control standards and policy of the collection facility conducting the urinalysis.
4. A member of the Testing Organization will accompany the student until he or she produces an adequate, verifiable urine specimen. The student will not be under direct visual observation while providing the sample, unless there is a reason to believe the extracurricular participant will alter or substitute the specimen to be provided. If unable to produce a specimen, the student will be given up to 40 ounces of fluid. If unable to produce a specimen within 2 hours, the student will be taken to the Building Principal's Office and told he/she is ineligible for participation in any extracurricular activity. In addition, the

parent(s)/guardian(s) will be telephoned and informed the student is unable to produce a sample for the testing procedure and he/she must be tested at a later date in order to be eligible.

5. Any specimen determined by the collecting agency to be adulterated (tampered with) or not belonging to the student being tested shall be considered as a positive test sample.
6. Immediately after the specimen is taken, the student may return to class with an admit slip or pass with the time he/she left the collection site.
7. Each specimen is given to the laboratory for testing for tobacco, or controlled substances (which may include all drugs listed as controlled substances under Illinois law, or defined by the Food and Drug Administration), and “performance enhancing” drugs, such as steroids on a suspicion only basis.

Chain-of-Custody

1. The testing organization will provide appropriately trained staff members, set up the collection environment, guarantee specimens, and supervise the chain-of-custody.
2. A District or testing organization staff member will escort students to the collection site. No student is allowed to go to his or her locker. The staff member should minimize classroom interruptions. Athletes may be called after school, perhaps during practice time.
3. Before a student’s urine is tested by the laboratory, he or she must sign any form that may be required by the testing laboratory. If a student chooses, he or she may notify the administrator that he/she is taking a prescription medication.
4. A sanitized kit containing a specimen bottle will be given to each student. The bottle will remain in the student’s possession until a seal is placed upon the bottle and the student signs that the specimen is sealed. The seal may be broken only by the lab testing specimen.
5. If the seal is tampered with or broken, after leaving the student’s possession and prior to arriving at the lab, the specimen is invalid. The student will remain eligible for extracurricular activities subsequent to a retest.
6. The testing organization staff member will obtain the urine specimen. Students will be instructed to remove all coats and wash their hands in the presence of the staff member before entering the restroom stall. The stall door/curtain will be closed while the student provides a urine specimen. The staff member will wait outside the restroom stall/curtain.
7. After it is sealed, the specimen will be transported to the testing laboratory by testing organization personnel. The testing organization will report the results to the Building Principal or designee.

Testing Results

1. The Forensics Laboratory will notify the testing organization of a positive test that shows the drug residues are in the student’s system after using at least two different types of analyses. The Licensed Medical Provider (LMP) of the testing organization will notify the student’s parent/guardian of the results of a possible positive drug screen. The student or his/her

parent/guardian may submit any documented prescription or explanation of a positive test result. The LMP will discuss any possible physical/medical history with parent/guardian. If such a condition/history exists, within the physician's guidelines, he will deem the drug screen negative. When no condition/history exists in the physician's guidelines, he will deem the drug screen positive. The results of the drug screen will be given to the school district's designated confidential contact. The Building Principal or designee will notify the students and his or her parent/guardian of confirmed test results and any effects on student's eligibility status.

If the testing organization and LMP are unable to reach the parent/guardian after three documented attempts, the school district's designated confidential contact will be notified to have the parent/guardian call to speak with the Licensed Medical Provider to complete the verification of the positive drug screen.

Breath alcohol positive tests are confirmed at the time of the testing with a second test. Results are given immediately to the school district's designated contact.

2. In addition, the student or parent/guardian may request that the split sample of the original urine specimen be tested again by a certified laboratory at the parent/guardian cost. Only the original sample will be retested. This request should be made within twenty-four (24) hours of the notification of the first positive test results to have the specimen tested. The testing organization can request the testing laboratory to send the specimen to another certified lab. The request must be made by the Licensed Medical Provider (LMP) to the testing laboratory upon request of the parent/guardian to the LMP. The family cannot directly contact the testing laboratories, as this would break the confidentiality of the specimen being tested. The testing organization will bill the family for the cost of the split specimen analysis. Should the test be confirmed as positive, and there is not a satisfactory explanation for the positive results, the student will be considered to be in violation of the Code of Conduct. If it is determined by mutual consent of both testing facilities that the first test was invalid, the parent will be reimbursed the cost of the retest. The student will be reinstated if the test is determined valid.
3. If the test is verified "positive," the Building Principal or designee will meet with the student and his or her parent/guardian. The student and parent/guardian will be given the names of counseling and assistance agencies. The student may not participate in extracurricular activities until the required "follow-up" test is completed.
4. A "follow-up" test may be required after the suspension period is served or after such an interval of time that the substance previously found would normally be eliminated from the body, whichever comes first. The testing organization will be contacted to set up the "follow-up" test.

If this "follow-up" test is negative, the student will be allowed to resume extracurricular activities. If a "positive" result is obtained from the "follow-up" test, or any later test, it will be considered a subsequent violation. In addition, the School District reserves the right to continue testing at any time during the remaining school year any participating student who had a verified "positive" test.

5. In case of a positive test, the coach or sponsor shall not be directly informed of specific results; they shall only be notified of the student's eligibility status. The results of "negative" tests will be kept confidential.
6. Drug testing results sheets will be available to the Building Principal or designee. Names will not be kept in open files or on any computer. Result sheets will be locked and secured in a location to which only the Building Principal or designee has access.

Financial Responsibility

1. Under this policy, the School District will pay for all initial drug tests and all "follow-up" drug tests requested by the District if student signs up by the fall deadline.
2. Students deciding to participate in an extracurricular activity after the first sign-up deadline will be required to be tested after the signed consent form is returned. The cost of this test would be the financial responsibility of the student's parent-guardian.
3. A request for another test of a split sample specimen is the financial responsibility of the student's parent/guardian.
4. Counseling and subsequent treatment by non-school agencies is the financial responsibility of the student or the student's parent/guardian.

Other Rules

Apart from this drug testing program, the Illinois High School Association/Illinois Elementary School Association, as well as each activity's coaching staff or sponsor may have their own training rules and requirements. Coaches and sponsors have the necessary authority to enforce those rules. Any student participant who violates a team or activity rule or requirement, is subject to the consequences as defined in those rules and requirements.

Testing Negative

The parents or guardians of the extracurricular participant who tests negative will be notified by mail as soon as practical of the district's receipt of the information.

Testing Positive

If the test results are positive, the extracurricular participant will be considered in violation of West Central C.U.S.D. #235 Athletic/Extracurricular Policies. The student and parents will be notified as soon as practical. The consequences of this violation are outlined in the Athletic/Extracurricular Policies in the school handbook.

Enforcement

The provisions of this policy are considered an addition to all other rules and regulations governing student conduct and discipline in extracurricular activities.

Expenses

Funding for this program will be by Board of Education action.



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School Medication Authorization Form

To be completed by the child's parent(s)/guardian(s).

This form is to be used for medication other than medical cannabis. (See 7:270-E2, School Medication Authorization Form - Medical Cannabis.) A new form must be completed every school year for each medication. Keep in the school nurse's office or, in the absence of a school nurse, the Building Principal's office.

Student's Name: _____ Birth Date: _____
Address: _____
Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Emergency Phone: _____
School: _____ Grade: _____ Teacher: _____

To be completed by the student's physician, physician assistant with prescriptive authority, or advanced practice RN with prescriptive authority:

Prescriber's Printed Name: _____
Office Address: _____
Office Phone: _____ Emergency Phone: _____
Medication name: _____
Purpose: _____
Dosage: _____ Frequency: _____
Time medication is to be administered or under what circumstances: _____

Prescription date: _____ Order date: _____ Discontinuation date: _____
Diagnosis requiring medication: _____

Is it necessary for this medication to be administered during the school day? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Expected side effects, if any: _____
Time interval for re-evaluation: _____
Other medications student is receiving: _____

Prescriber's Signature _____ Date _____

For only Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of students requiring asthma inhalers and/or epinephrine injectors:

Is the asthma inhaler and/or epinephrine injector required under a qualifying plan pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/10-22.21b, amended by P.A. 101-205, eff. 1-1-20?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) please attach prescription label (asthma inhaler) and/or written statement (epinephrine injector) here:

For asthma inhalers, attach the prescription label with the name of the asthma medication, the prescribed dosage, and the time at which or circumstances under which the asthma medication is to be administered. 105 ILCS 5/22-30(b)(2)(i).

For an epinephrine injector, attach a written statement from the student's physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse containing the name and purpose of the epinephrine, injector; the prescribed dosage; and the time or times at which or the special circumstances that the epinephrine injector should be administered. 105 ILCS 5/22-30(b)(2)(ii)(A)-(C).

For only parents/guardians of students who need to self-administer medication required under a qualifying plan:

I grant permission for my child to self-administer his or her medication required under an asthma action plan, an Individual Health Care Action Plan, an Illinois Food Allergy Emergency Action and Treatment Authorization Form, a plan pursuant to Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or a plan pursuant to the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.21b, amended by P.A. 101-205, eff. 1-1-20.

Medication(s) other than asthma inhalers and/or epinephrine injectors (complete section above) required under a qualifying plan that student is permitted to self-administer:

Prescription date: _____ Order date: _____ Discontinuation date: _____

Diagnosis requiring medication: _____

Is it necessary for this medication to be administered during the school day? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Expected side effects, if any: _____

Time interval for re-evaluation: _____

Other medications student is receiving : _____

Prescriber's Signature

Date

If the medication is an asthma inhaler or epinephrine injector, be also sure to complete the section above and attach the required label and/or written statement as required above.

Please initial to indicate (1) receipt of this information, and (2) authorization for your child to self-administer medication under a qualifying plan.

Parent/Guardian Initials

For only parents/guardians of students who need to carry and use their asthma medication or an epinephrine injector:

I authorize the School District and its employees and agents, to allow my child to self-carry and self-administer his or her asthma medication and/or epinephrine injector: (1) while in school, (2) while at a school-sponsored activity, (3) while under the supervision of school personnel, or (4) before or after normal school activities, such as while in before-school or after-school care on school-operated property. Illinois law requires the School District to inform parent(s)/guardian(s) that it, and its employees and agents, incur no liability, except for willful and wanton conduct, as a result of any injury arising from a student's self-carry and self-administration of asthma medication or epinephrine injector. 105 ILCS 5/22-30, amended by P.A.s 100-726 and 100-799, eff. 1-1-19.

Please initial to indicate (1) receipt of this information, and (2) authorization for your child to carry and use his or her asthma medication or epinephrine injector.

Parent/Guardian Initials

For all parents/guardians:

By signing below, I agree that I am primarily responsible for administering medication to my child. However, in the event that I am unable to do so or in the event of a medical emergency, I hereby authorize the School District and its employees and agents, on my behalf, to administer or to attempt to administer to my child (or to allow my child to *self-administer* pursuant to State law, while under the supervision of the employees and agents of the School District), lawfully prescribed medication in the manner described above. This includes administration of undesignated epinephrine injectors, opioid antagonists, or asthma medication to my child when there is a good faith belief that my child is having an anaphylactic reaction, opioid overdose, or asthma episode, whether such reactions are known to me or not, and if applicable, undesignated glucagon when authorized by my child's diabetes care plan and if my child's glucagon is not available on-site or has expired. 105 ILCS 5/22-30, amended by P.A.s 100-726 and 100-799; 105 ILCS 145/27, added by P.A. 101-428. **I acknowledge that it may be necessary for the administration of medications to my child to be performed by an individual other than a school nurse and specifically consent to such practices, and**

I agree to indemnify and hold harmless the School District and its employees and agents against any claims, except a claim based on willful and wanton conduct, arising out of the administration or the child's self-administration of medication.

Parent/Guardian Printed Name

Address (if different from Student's above):

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Emergency Phone: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date