

**WESTGATE ALTERNATIVE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK**



**3080 Wicklow Road
Columbus, OH 43204
(614) 365-5971 – Phone (614) 365-5149 – Fax
Ms. Angela R. Martin, Principal
Mrs. Janice Bryant, Secretary**

August 2019

Dear Westgate Families,

The staff at Westgate would like to welcome you to the 2019-2020 school year. We are delighted to have the opportunity to work with you and your child.

This PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK has been developed to give some basic information about our staff, policies and procedures. It will provide you with important information about Westgate Elementary. Please review the contents with your child and then sign and return the last page. If you have any questions or comments, please call 614-365-5971.

We would like to encourage you to participate in your child's educational career. Involved parents are a key part of every child's education. Open communication between home and school is a necessary part of your child's success at Westgate.

Let's have a great year as we work together to provide opportunities for our children to be academically prepared for the future.

I am looking forward to an exciting and successful 2019-2020 school year with the students, parents and staff of Westgate Elementary.

Sincerely,

Ms. Angela R. Martin, Principal
Westgate Elementary

WESTGATE STAFF

Angela Martin
Janice Bryant

Principal
Secretary

PRE-KINDERGARTEN

Heather Goodall

PRE-KINDERGARTEN ASSISTANTS

Theresa Hoye, Erin Strauss

SPECIAL NEEDS PRE-KINDERGARTEN

Devin Puttick

PRE-KINDERGARTEN ASSISTANT

KINDERGARTEN

Rebecca Willis
Jessica Washam

INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANTS

Cathy Donnell, Kindergarten
Susan Parsons, Library

Erin Strauss, General Fund
Keyante Watkins, PEAK

SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

Donna Noble (ED)
Brittany Phillips (HI)

ED INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT

Chad Younger, Instructional Assistant

FIRST GRADE

Karen Distefano
Greta Banner

SUPPORT STAFF

Nurse	Amy Thompson
Psychologist	Julie Adams
Counselor	Joyce Smith
Custodian (Head)	Michael Glaze
Custodian (Night)	Andrew Reeves
Food Services	Jody Coup
Gifted and Talented	Trisha Seiler

SECOND GRADE

Darlene Harrison
Sharon Mabry
Rachel Dreher

Instrumental Music	Susan Butler
Vocal Music	Melanie Rogers
Art	Susan Fayaz-Azad
Physical Education	Kelly Marshall

THIRD GRADE

Brenda Bartholomew
Sherri Kiser

Reading LLI	Laura England Diana Oty Erin McLaughlin
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FOURTH GRADE

Ashley Goode
Jessie Turner

Speech Pathologist	Kara Horn
OT	Ann Hatch

FIFTH GRADE

Angela Barnard
Wendy Tyack

Physical Therapist	Lynnette Cosby
Latchkey	Jennifer Herrmann
Latchkey IA	Laurie Grashel

WESTGATE ALTERNATIVE VISION STATEMENT

In collaboration with our families and community members, staff will facilitate students in being active learners at Westgate. Children will explore learning through cooperative, relevant, and rigorous experiences; capitalizing on their curiosity in their pursuit for understanding.

EXPECTATION STATEMENT

The staff at Westgate will provide an environment where each child will feel safe, secure, confident and motivated to learn. Students are expected to work cooperatively and to respect the rights of others to learn. The goal is to accelerate the learning of **ALL** students. The staff will support the home with frequent communication, will welcome volunteers, and will provide parent workshops to share information in reading and math. Each staff member will strive to increase the academic achievement of each student. The Westgate families are asked to reinforce skills taught at school and to see that homework and other school projects are completed thoroughly and on time. Parents are urged to stress the importance of education and to help their child understand that they are going to school to learn. Attendance at parent-teacher conferences is critical. With the Westgate community of parents, students, and teachers working together, our students will have the opportunity to make tremendous academic improvement.

“Educating students at Westgate is a team effort.”

WESTGATE STUDENT VISION STATEMENT

Westgate Gators are:

Responsible Leaders

Safe at all time

Focused on fitness

Respectful to all

and

Ready for Success

BREAKFAST

Breakfast will be provided for all students beginning at 8:35 a.m. each morning. If your child is eating breakfast at school, he/she needs to be at school by 8:45 a.m. to have time to eat breakfast before going to class. Instruction begins promptly at 9:00 a.m. After eating breakfast, students will go directly to their classrooms and prepare for the morning period. **CHILDREN NOT EATING BREAKFAST AT SCHOOL SHOULD PLAN TO ARRIVE TO SCHOOL BETWEEN 8:50 AND 9:00.** We do not have supervision for students before 8:50 unless they are eating breakfast. Students will need to stand outside until they are allowed to go to their classroom at 8:50.

LUNCH IS FREE FOR ALL STUDENTS

If your child packs a lunch, please be sure his/her name is on the lunchbox or bag.

Children are not to bring soft drinks with their lunch. They may bring water or fruit juice to drink.

CLASSROOM VISITATION BY PARENTS

We encourage parents to visit the school and observe their child's classroom while school is in session. Through these visits, you are supporting your child and the school.

Furthermore, you can gain insight to the progress your child is making. There are several requests the school must ask when you plan a visit:

1. Please contact the teacher to schedule a visit. Visits should not last longer than 30 minutes, unless pre-arranged with the teacher.
2. All visitors must check in at the school office to register their presence and intent to visit a classroom.
3. **Please do not use this visit as a conference time.** The teacher is involved with twenty or more children and cannot talk with you while class is in progress. **When visiting a classroom, it is best to quietly take a seat in back of the room and leave when you are ready, without talking to the teacher.** If desired, a special conference should be scheduled at a later time. **You can leave a note with your request with the secretary in the office.**
4. Items which are to be delivered to your child **should be labeled and brought to the school office. They will be delivered by school personnel, protecting valuable teaching time.**

DISCIPLINE

Discipline has two major purposes:

Securing a classroom atmosphere that will make learning possible.

Helping each child develop self-control.

All students will receive a Guide to Student Conduct. **We expect that parents will review this document and send in the form found in the book stating that you have reviewed it with your child/children.**

STUDENT EXPECTED BEHAVIORS

- ☺ Listen and follow all directions.
- ☺ Complete all classwork and all homework.
- ☺ Respect yourself.
- ☺ Respect property.
- ☺ Respect others.

PEAK CENTER (Positive Efforts for Adjustment and Knowledge)

The PEAK Center is staffed by a trained PEAK instructional assistant. A student who cannot control his/her behavior in the classroom or on the playground will be sent to PEAK for time-out. PEAK is used both as a time-out and for in-school suspension.

When a student is in the PEAK Center for **Time-Out**, the key objectives are to provide

space and time for the student to calm-down, reflect on his/her behavior, work on a plan to change the behavior and return to the classroom when it is determined that the child is ready.

When the student is in the P.E.A.K Center for **In-School Suspension (ISS)**, the goal is to keep the student in school to continue his/her education, while focusing on techniques for changing inappropriate behavior. The student will work on assignments provided by the classroom teacher and/or other academic reinforcement assignments provided by the P.E.A.K staff. In addition, a student will work on a plan that addresses changing the behavior and may also participate in other problem-solving, self-esteem and goal-setting activities.

The student completes academic assignments while in PEAK. A letter is sent home with a student who has been in PEAK for time-out. Please sign the letter and return it the next day. This is the school's way of communicating with you, and confirming that you have received the PEAK notice.

PLAYGROUND BEHAVIOR

Students are expected to demonstrate appropriate safety and social behavior. It is also expected that the authority of the adult supervisors will be respected at all times.

Students will not enter the building without permission.

Balls will be provided by the school for basketball and marked playground games.

School playground equipment will be used at all times. Please do not bring your own toys and balls at home.

Actions involving rough play, fighting, pushing, and tripping will not be tolerated and will lead to time-out on the playground or a PEAK visit. Repetitive time-outs from the playground could result in a loss of recess privileges for an extended time.

MEDICINES AT SCHOOL

Only medicines prescribed by a doctor may be given at school. Parents must provide the office with the original paperwork before medicine can be given. A new medical form is required each year. Students may not share or distribute any type of medicine, including cough drops to other students.

If your child has a medical condition which necessitates frequent restroom use, please inform the principal and/or teacher.

BUILDING SECURITY

Your child's safety is our top priority. You entrust your children to us each day, and we want to make sure that we do everything possible to ensure their safety at all times.

Morning Procedures: All doors to the building are locked at 9:00 a.m. each morning. After 9:00 a.m., students must enter the building through the front doors. Students will press the button to call the office for entry into the building and receive a late pass to give to the teacher. To protect the instructional time we have and to foster your child's independence and for safety reasons, parents will not be permitted to escort their students to the classrooms. Parents will be required to sign in at the office and obtain a visitor's pass, if it is necessary to come into the building. I appreciate your

support with this process.

Dismissal Procedures: It would be helpful if parents waited at the front office or the outside doors for students to be dismissed at the end of the day. **We want to monitor all visitors to the building, and it can be very difficult in the mornings and during dismissal.** We appreciate your understanding and support.

WALKERS

Students who walk to and from school should come directly to school. They are directed to remain on the sidewalks at all times and cross only at designated crosswalks.

Westgate has a Safety Patrol on duty before school from 8:35 – 8:50 and after school from 3:30 – 3:40 to assist with busy intersections.



CAR RIDERS

It is very helpful if parents will park at the Westgate Recreation Center at the end of the day. It is much safer for the students to cross Wicklow Road at the crosswalks with our Safety Patrol. Parking along Huron Avenue is another good option for parking at the end of the day. We appreciate your support in keeping our students safe. **For the safety of our students, please avoid parking in the school parking lot at dismissal time.**

BUS TRANSPORTATION

You should receive a mailer from Columbus City Schools which will include bus information. Your child's bus stop and important times will be given. Help your child learn his/her bus number. **If you are picking up your child and do not want him/her to ride the bus home, please send a note or call the school before 3:00. If we do not hear from you, your child will be placed on the bus.** Many times children will tell us that they are not to ride the bus, but then the parent does not come. **Again, please call before 3:00 p.m. It is very busy at the end of the day, and we want to make sure we have time to deliver the message. Thank you for your cooperation. We want to make sure that your child gets home safely each evening.**

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

We celebrate each child's birthday during our morning announcements. Students will be given a pencil and certificate to celebrate their birthday. **Birthday parties and treats are not permitted** in consideration of our many students with allergies.

FOOD AT SCHOOL

We are committed to providing a safe school environment that promotes and protects each student's well-being. We recognize that food allergies, in some instances, may be severe and even life threatening. **In order to minimize possible food allergy reactions, no food will be distributed by means other than the school breakfast and lunch programs.** On occasion, the administrator may allow a school-wide celebration that may involve food, and teachers may request specific food items for a classroom/grade level

project. **We will always send a notice to parents informing them of the plan to allow outside food on a particular day or event.**

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Please remember that Westgate is an alternative school with a focus in “Academic Excellence and Physical Fitness.” One way that we emphasize our physical fitness focus is requiring our students to exercise for 10 to 15 minutes each morning in addition to their two classes of physical education each week. **Please remember to make sure that your child has tennis shoes for exercise each day.**

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Emergency medical cards are kept on file in the office. If there is new information, such as medical problems, change of address/telephone number, contact person or other important information, please call the office. In an emergency, the office will call both the squad and the parents. Current information is vital for the safety of your child. We want to be able to reach you in an emergency situation.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Decisions on school closing are made by the Superintendent. Listen to the radio or TV for information on school closings. During inclement weather, when the temperature/wind chill is below 23 degrees, or if snow, rain or icy conditions exist, children will remain inside at recess. If weather permits, students will go outside for recess and should have clothing to protect them from the cold. **All students are expected to go outside for recess unless otherwise directed in writing by a doctor.** If school is dismissed early due to the weather, your child should know what plans have been made.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is important to your child's success. The academic progress of each student depends greatly upon the punctuality and regularity of attendance. Students who attend school daily will secure the maximum benefits. **Parents of students who are absent from school must call the school and notify the office of the reason for absence. Parents may provide the school with a written note explaining the absence in order that we may excuse your child's absence (illness, family emergencies, and doctor appointments are considered excused absences).** If we receive no communication from parents or guardians, the absences will not be excused. If the child is absent or tardy frequently, a social worker from the school will contact the home.

⊕ Early dismissal and tardies, (even 5 or 10 minutes) will be reflected upon students' attendance reports

All Westgate students are in session from 9:00am – 3:30pm. It is crucial that your child attend on time every day! If your child arrives at school after 9:00am, the student must enter through the front doors and be signed in by an adult. The student will receive a tardy slip and then be permitted to get breakfast. Please

make every effort to make sure your child arrives no later than 8:50am. It is incredibly important that your child comes to school on time and be prepared to learn. It is very disruptive to the child when they start their day late (even if it's just a few minutes)! Being late by even 5 minutes can impact your child's education. As a reminder, student attendance is no longer measured by days of attendance, but instead by the minutes of attendance according to the Ohio Department of Education. So every minute counts!!!

CONTACTING THE SCHOOL

When calling the school, please let the secretary know what is needed so she can take a message. Teachers are with students from 8:50 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. and will generally have to return your call during their lunch or after school. Teachers will have time from 3:30 – 3:45 to return your calls. The school office is open Monday through Friday from 8:30– 4:00 p.m. Our phone number is 614-365-5971.

ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

In accordance with federal and state laws and district policy, the Columbus City School District will not tolerate harassment against any staff member or student on the basis of sex, race, national origin, religion, age, disability, or sexual orientation. Harassment shall be defined as slurs, jokes, intimidation, or any verbal or physical attack directed at an individual's sex, race, national origin, religion, age, disability, or sexual orientation. This policy is posted in each school. Its existence will be shared with staff and students

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are a critical part of our program. They may be utilized to: tutor, work on classroom displays, help with parties, work in the library, etc.

If you are interested in becoming a school volunteer, please call the school at 614-365-5971.