WESTBROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENT & FAMILY HANDBOOK

2026-2027

We are SAFE, RESPECTFUL and RESPONSIBLE citizens of WMS

We are ENGAGED learners

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Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians,

Welcome to the 2026–2027 school year at Westbrook Middle School! We are thrilled to welcome our returning families and extend a warm greeting to those who are joining our community for the first time.

Our mission at WMS is to cultivate a safe, inclusive, and academically engaging environment where every student can thrive. Throughout the summer, our dedicated teachers and staff have been diligently preparing interactive lessons, enriching activities, and collaborative projects designed to inspire curiosity and personal growth.

We strongly value the partnership between home and school. Clear, consistent communication is vital to supporting student learning, and we encourage you to stay informed through our regular announcements, school website, weekly memo, and parent-teacher conferences. You can also subscribe to the WMS Public Google Calendar for real-time updates on school events and important dates.

To our students: approach this year with enthusiasm and courage. Embrace new opportunities, ask thoughtful questions, and remember that mistakes are simply stepping stones in the learning process. Our teachers, administrators and support staff are here to guide and encourage you every step of the way.

Thank you for sharing your children with us and for your continued dedication to our school community. Together, we look forward to a memorable year ahead!

Warm regards,

Pattie DeMaria

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Common Understandings

The foundations of all that we do here at Westbrook Middle School are our Common Understandings in Citizenship and Academic Work Habits.

CITIZENSHIP

As citizens of the WMS community, we agree to make a commitment ourselves, to each other and to our community at large. In order to meet that commitment, we will be:

Respectful

Respect: a feeling that someone or something is important and should be treated the right way

Responsible

Responsibility: being answerable or accountable for one's own actions and words

Safe

Safety: To ensure that there is no danger of harm or hurt to self and others

ACADEMIC WORK HABITS

In order to be productive, successful students, we commit to having excellent academic work habits, and will be Engaged Learners.

Students and staff are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner conducive to the learning environment at all times. With mutual respect and understanding, we can cooperatively sustain a positive school climate here at WMS. We expect all students will choose to act in accordance with the standards laid out in our Common Understandings. Students are expected to converse with and respond positively to all reasonable requests from any member of the staff in a respectful, responsible manner.

The School Committee recognizes that appropriate student conduct is best achieved by clear expectations that promote self-discipline, self-respect, and respect for others. The Committee also recognizes the right of the teachers to take such reasonable action as any parent might take in securing compliance with the established code. Teachers are the first level of student management and are authorized to utilize consequences to include the following:

- Issuing warnings
- Assigning detentions
- Removing the student who is disruptive to the educational process from the classroom
- If necessary for safety reasons, restraining a student who is physically violent
- If warranted, denying specific privileges granted to other students.

The entire Westbrook Middle School faculty, staff and administration are committed to the belief that all students are entitled to a learning environment free from all forms of harassment. **We encourage any student who believes that he or she is being unfairly treated or subject to harassing behavior to bring such acts or conduct to the and/or counselors to aid them in the process of resolution. Confidentiality will be observed as appropriate.**

WMS COMMON UNDERSTANDINGS

	Classrooms	Hallways & Stairways	Cafeteria	Recess	Bus/Bus Stop
CITIZENSHIP					
We are Respectful **Respect: A feeling that someone or something is important and should be treated the right way**	• **Ask** permission to use others' belongings • **Listen** with an attentive, open mind • **Use** respectful language even if you disagree with peers or teacher(s) • **Think** before you speak • **Keep** classroom and other personal spaces clean	• **Use** an appropriate voice level • **Support** others during transitions • **Have** positive interactions with peers and adults • **Respect** locker neighbors	• **Clean** up the table and floor area even if you didn't make the mess • **Use** please and thank you • **Dump** food in the appropriate places • **Remind** my neighbor to be quiet and/or follow directions • **Use** an appropriate voice level	• **Share** • **Welcome** all other students into games and activities • **Use** appropriate, supportive language • **Practice** sportsmanship • **Line up** when the whistle blows	• **Be** positive with my peers/friends • **Use** appropriate language • **Use** appropriate voice levels
We are Responsible **Responsibility: being answerable or accountable for one's own actions and words**	• **Use** classroom materials appropriately • **Ask** for help when it's needed and accept help when it's offered • **Be Prepared** with all materials that are required for class • **Stay** on task • **Participate** appropriately • **Arrive** to class on time • **Complete** assignments on or before the due date to the best of my ability	• **Keep** my locker/hallway area clean • **Transition** to my destination, without wasting time • **Manage** time at locker efficiently • **Use** assigned stairwell	• **Choose** and stay in your seat for the entirety of lunch • **Take** ownership of personal interactions with peers and adults	• **Wear** appropriate outdoor gear • **Interact** kindly with others • **Line Up** when the whistle blows	• **Be** on time • **Ensure** belongings are with you at all times • **Stay** seated • **Be** mindful of your surroundings on and off the bus • **Follow** directions from your driver
We are Safe **Safety: To ensure that there is no danger of harm or hurt to self and others**	• **Have** a quiet, calm body • **Provide** others with personal physical space	• **Walk** • **Have** a quiet and calm body • **Stay** to the right	• **Follow** directions the first time you're asked • **Respond** to the quiet signals quickly • **Follow** the sign out procedures when leaving the cafe	• **Respond** to the signal to return to the building quickly • **Be** mindful of being safe with others during play • **Have** a safe body	• **Stay** a safe distance from the road and cars • **Follow** all directions from the bus driver • **Keep** hands and head inside the bus at all times • **Stay** in my seat during the entire bus ride

ACADEMIC WORK HABITS	
We are Engaged **Engaged: To be actively involved in the learning environment**	• **Show** active listening (sitting up, looking at the speaker, show an interest, follow directions) • **Bring** a willingness to learn and a positive attitude • **Resist** distractions and do not distract others; I use my time effectively • **Make** positive contributions to classroom learning activities • **Strive** to produce quality work • **Work** in multiple learning environments, both independently and collaboratively, as instructed

A Diverse Community, Learning and Growing Together

WMS COMMON UNDERSTANDINGS CLASSROOM RUBRIC					
	In My Classrooms	**1 Seldom (about one day a week)**	**2 Sometimes (a couple of days a week)**	**3 Consistently (most days, most weeks)**	**4 I meet most of the criteria for a 3 AND I serve as a role model for my peers by encouraging:**
I am Respectful	❑ I ask permission to use others' belongings ❑ I listen with an attentive, open mind ❑ I use respectful language even if I disagree with peer or teacher(s) ❑ I think before I speak ❑ I keep classroom and other personal spaces clean	❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑	❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑	❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑	respectful behaviors throughout the classroom ❑
I am Responsible	❑ I use classroom materials appropriately ❑ I ask for help when it's needed and accept help when it's offered ❑ I bring all materials that are required for class (determined by specific teachers) ❑ I stay on task ❑ I participate appropriately ❑ I arrive to class on time ❑ I complete assignments on or before the due date to the best of my ability	❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑	❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑	❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑	responsible behaviors throughout the classroom ❑
I am Safe	❑ I have a quiet, calm body and voice ❑ I provide others with personal physical space	❑ ❑ ❑	❑ ❑ ❑	❑ ❑ ❑	safe behaviors in the classroom ❑
ACADEMIC WORK HABITS					
	In My Classrooms	**1 Seldom (about one day a week)**	**2 Sometimes (a couple of days a week)**	**3 Consistently (most days, most weeks)**	**4 Student meets most of the criteria for a 3 AND I serve as a role model for my peers by having:**
I am Engaged	❑ I show active listening (sit up, look at the speaker, show an interest, follow directions) ❑ I bring a willingness to learn and a positive attitude ❑ I resist distractions and do not distract others; I use my time effectively ❑ I make positive contributions to classroom learning activities ❑ I strive to produce quality work ❑ I work in multiple learning environments, both independently and collaboratively, as instructed	❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑	❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑	❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑	strong, engaged academic work habits in the classroom ❑

The above Classroom Rubric is the basis for all Habits of Work and Learning (HOWL) scores. All students will be assessed on the basis of this rubric.

Mission Statement

A Diverse Community Learning and Growing Together

The primary goal of Westbrook Middle School is to educate students from diverse backgrounds through a variety of learning opportunities in a safe, healthy, challenging learning environment which fosters the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development of responsible and productive citizens.

Your Rights and Responsibilities

All students in Maine have the right to a free and full education from ages 5-20 in grades K-12. The law requires you to attend school until age 17 unless conditions specifically listed in Maine Statute (20MRSA/911) are met. In general, Maine state law requires that students attend classes for 177 days of the year. All public schools that receive federal funds must provide free, appropriate education to each qualified handicapped student regardless of the nature or severity of the person's handicap (20MRSA/3111, Ch.403 and P.L. 94-142).

Attendance

Regular school attendance is absolutely essential to every student's academic achievement and connection to school. At WMS, we take student attendance very seriously and will follow up with students and parents when attendance has reached levels of concern. Teachers, School Counselors and Administrators will contact families in order to arrange meetings at which plans of support can be developed. We want to be partners with our families in ensuring that students are at school, on time, as much as possible.

Maine state law allows absences for the following reasons: 1.Personal illness, 2.Appointments with health professionals, 3.Observation of religious holidays, 4. Family emergencies and 5. Planned absences for personal or educational purposes which have been approved in advance by an appropriate administrator. When your child needs to be absent, **please call the school before 9:00 a.m. If a parent/guardian is unable to call, please send a written notification documenting the reason for the absence with the student when he/she returns to school.** This written notification should be given to a secretary in the Main Office. Notes from home concerning absence should contain the following information: 1) Date(s) of absence, 2) Full name of student, 3) Reason for absence, 4) Signature of parent or guardian. If a student is absent for the first part of the day, the student must bring a written excuse to the Main Office unless a parent has called in advance. If a student is marked absent and we have not heard from a parent or guardian, an automated call notifying the parent/guardian of the absence will be sent after 10:00 a.m. In order to attend a sporting event as an athlete or a dance or other evening event, a student must be in attendance that day.

Early Dismissals

Approved reasons for absences also apply to dismissals. If a student is to be dismissed from school, he/she needs to be signed out of school in the Main Office. The school maintains the right to speak to a parent prior to dismissing a student to someone who is not on the approved contact list and to ask for identification to verify the identity of anyone picking up a student from school. If a student becomes ill during the school day, he/she must report to the nurse. **A student will not be dismissed unless a parent/guardian or emergency contact can be contacted**. **Please do not dismiss your child after 2:00 p.m.**

Privacy

Student files are periodically scanned to make sure that they only contain appropriate material. From time to time, Westbrook Middle School celebrates its students' accomplishments by publishing pictures, quotes, writings, and other articles of interest through local media, Westbrook Middle School publications, the school web page and school Facebook page. These may also include television, radio, newspaper, yearbook, Westbrook School Department web page, and local bulletin boards. We feel this is an excellent way to promote positive school happenings, develop self-esteem in our students, and instill a sense of school pride within the communities we serve. **If you choose NOT to give permission for your son's or daughter's picture to be made public, please complete the media use form sent home with your student on the first day of school and turn it into the attendance office.**

Daily Schedule

The regular school day at Westbrook Middle School begins at 7:30 a.m. with the pledge of allegiance and morning announcements in homeroom. We will begin dismissing students to buses at 2:15 p.m. Students who stay after school to participate in activities should always be under the supervision of a school employee.

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday				
	5th	6th	7th	8th
7:30-7:45	Homeroom			
Period 1 7:49-8:50	Math/ELA	UA	CORE 1	CORE 1
Period 2 8:54-9:55	15 min recess/SS or Sci	CORE 1	CORE 2	UA
Period 3 9:59-11:00	Math/ELA	CORE 2	UA	CORE 2
Period 4 11:04-12:05	Lunch/Recess 11:04-11:32 WIN 11:36-12:05	CORE 3	WIN 11:04-11:32 Lunch/Recess 11:36-12:05	CORE 3
Period 5 12:09-1:10	SS or Sci/15 min recess	Lunch/Recess 12:09-12:37 WIN 12:41-1:10	CORE 3	WIN 12:09-12:37 Lunch/Recess 12:41-1:10
Period 6 1:14-2:15	UA	CORE 4	CORE 4	CORE 4

Wednesday				
	5th	6th	7th	8th
Homeroom 7:30-7:45				
Period 1 7:49-8:40	ELA/Math	UA	CORE 1	CORE 1
Period 2 8:44-9:35	15 min recess/SS or Sci	CORE 1	CORE 2	UA
Period 3 9:39-10:30	ELA/Math	CORE 2	UA	CORE 2
Period 4 10:34-11:25	Lunch/Recess 10:34-10:59 WIN11:00-11:25	CORE 3	WIN 10:34-10:59 Lunch/Recess 11:00-11:25	CORE 3
Period 5 11:29-12:20	SS or Sci/15 min recess	Lunch/Recess 11:29-11:54 WIN 11:55-12:20	CORE 3	WIN 11:29-11:54 Lunch/Recess 11:55-12:20
Period 6 12:24-1:15	UA	CORE 4	CORE 4	CORE 4

Daily Dismissal

School dismissal will begin at 2:15 p.m. Students will be called to buses by floor and buses will be dismissed when all students have boarded. The next group of students called for dismissal will be our pickup students. These students will meet their rides in the front parking lots only. Staff will be on hand to help facilitate pickup and cross students on the crosswalk. Students should use the crosswalk only when meeting cars in the parking lots and not cross between cars in the driveway.

After School

Students may stay after school if they are with a teacher, administrator, or other adult. This could be with one of their regular teachers, a coach, club advisor, or intramural activity supervisor. The late bus leaves the school at 4pm. Students need to have a signed late bus pass to ride the late bus. Under no circumstances should a student remain on school grounds after school, unless he or she is participating in a WMS sport or activity or is under the direct supervision of a staff member. If a student stays after school without having a designated activity, a parent/guardian or emergency contact will be called to come to school to pick the student up.

Athletics and Co-Curriculars

There are a wide variety of competitive, interscholastic sports available for students in grades 6-8. Announcements are made prior to each new sport season indicating sign-ups and try-out information. Student athletes are required to have a physical examination every 2 years from their family physician. Student-athletes who are suspended as a consequence for inappropriate behavior will not be allowed to participate in interscholastic competition or performances on the day(s) they are assigned in-school suspension or suspended from school. Out of school suspensions and in-school suspensions may impact eligibility.

WMS Co-Curricular Code of Expectations

At Westbrook Middle School, we encourage all students to be active members of the school community. By being more involved in their school, students increase their academic, social, physical, and emotional development while having fun, trying new things, and making friends. Beginning in grade six, one way that students are active is through athletics and competitive activities. As representatives of their school, students learn the value of pride in themselves, their school, and their community. Because it is a privilege to participate, students are expected to meet the expectations outlined in the district's Code of Conduct policy during seasons in which they are active or throughout the duration of an activity.

List of WMS Athletic and Co-Curricular Activities

The following is a list of some of the activities available to students at WMS. Please note that some activities are grade specific and we have new activities and clubs start up during the year so students and families should keep an eye on the announcements.

Activities

- Leadership Club (6,7,8)
- Yearbook Club (5,6,7,8)
- Student Council (6,7,8)
- Math Team (5,6,7,8)

- PAWsitive Club (5,6,7,8)
- Robotics (5, 6, 7 & 8)
- Kaleidoscope Club (7, 8)
- Honors Band
- Jazz Band
- Drama Club (5,6,7,8)
- Garden Club (5,6,7,8)
- Equity Leaders (7,8)
- Other clubs/intramural activities available based on student/staff interest

Interscholastic Sports

Fall

- Boys/Girls Cross Country (6,7,8)
- Field Hockey (6,7,8)
- Boys/Girls Soccer (7,8)

Winter

- Boys/Girls Basketball (7, 8)
- Cheering (6,7,8)
- Boys/Girls Indoor Track (6,7,8)
- Boys/Girls Swimming (6,7,8)
- Wrestling (6,7,8)

Spring

- Boys/Girls Baseball (7,8)
- Boys/Girls Lacrosse (7, 8)
- Boys/Girls Outdoor Track (6,7,8)
- Softball (7, 8)

Attendance in Athletics/Activities

Absent: A student must be present, in school, for the full day in order to participate in any after school activities that afternoon or evening, or on Friday for a weekend competition. Absences may be excused for the following reasons only: 1. An appointment with a healthcare professional that MUST be made during the regular school day with documentation provided by the doctor's or dentist's office; 2. Observance of a recognized religious holiday when the observance is required during the school day; 3. A disclosed family emergency, at the discretion of the administration; 4. A planned absence for educational or personal reasons which has been approved in advance and with documentation by school administration. Daily attendance includes being on time and present for the school day.

Tardy: Administration and School Counselors monitor tardies and may meet with students and families if students are chronically tardy to school.

Eligibility

Participation in athletics is considered an extension of the educational experience at Westbrook Middle School. Student-athletes are expected to demonstrate academic responsibility, positive citizenship, and strong habits of work in order to represent the school community.

To be eligible for participation in athletics, students may qualify through one of the following pathways:

Pathway 1: Academic Eligibility

Students are eligible to participate if they are earning a grade of **70 or higher in all classes** at the time eligibility is reviewed.

Pathway 2: Habits of Work and Citizenship Eligibility

Students who do not meet the academic eligibility requirement may still be eligible if they demonstrate consistent effort and positive behavior. Students may participate if they:

- Have a **Habits of Work average of 2.3 or higher**, **and**
- Have a **Citizenship average of 2.3 or higher**.

This pathway recognizes that students who consistently demonstrate responsibility, perseverance, engagement, and positive conduct should have the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities while continuing to work toward academic improvement.

Detention/Suspension

Office/Teacher detentions:

Students must serve detention versus going to practice, game, or performance. Detentions will be reported to coaches and students are also expected to self-report to coaches. Coaches will support students attending detention instead of a practice, game, or performance. Participation consequences for students who are assigned their first detention will be left to coaches' discretion.

In-school suspension:

When students are assigned ISS time in the Student Success Center, they are not allowed to participate in competitions or events during the length of their suspension. If a student has a second ISS in the same season, the student will miss the next competition or event. Students may be allowed to participate in practices.

Out-of-school suspension:

When students are assigned an OSS, they are not allowed to participate in any practices or athletic contests/performances during the OSS time. The student who has a 6-10 day OSS is not allowed to participate in competitions or events for the next 5 school days following the completion of the OSS.

Building Administration, in consultation with the WSD Athletic Director, reserves the right to remove a student from practice or a competition and/or to remove a student from a team based on the student's conduct at any point during the season.

Transportation

Bus Pick-Up/Drop off

All students in grades 5-8 residing outside the defined walking distance will be transported to and from school. A maximum of 1 predetermined bus stop for the picking up and dropping off of students will be allowed for each student each school year. This stop location must be listed on the transportation form at the beginning of each school year. Any alternate transportation arrangements will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian. **Due to limited seating capacity on buses and for safety reasons, students will not be allowed to ride a bus that has not been predetermined on their yearly transportation form**.

If there is only one student assigned to a bus stop and he/she will not require transportation, the Transportation Department should be notified first thing in the morning. If no one is present at the bus stop for three consecutive days, the bus will not return until the Transportation Dept. has been notified to reinstate the bus stop. Bus stop locations are determined according to various safety criteria and will not be altered unless approved by the transportation director.

If a student normally rides the bus home from school, but has made arrangements with their parents/guardians to walk home instead, the Main Office must be notified in advance. The Transportation Department can be reached at 854-0807.

Bus Conduct

The School Committee will provide transportation for all students living beyond a reasonable distance from their school or from a scheduled bus stop as defined by the School Committee. This distance for grades 5-8 is .5 mile. For health and safety reasons, students are expected to follow the rules explained by the bus driver, posted on every bus and listed in the Westbrook School Department transportation guide. Riding the bus is a privilege, not a right. All school rules apply while riding the bus. Failure to comply may result in consequences, including loss of bus riding privileges.

School Nutrition Program

A law passed in spring 2021, calls for the State of Maine to pay for breakfast, lunch and after school snacks for all children, regardless of income. Therefore, breakfast, lunch and after school snacks are **free of charge** for all students. In addition, students at WMS can purchase Smart Snacks using cash or their lunch account. Money can be added to the student's account by cash or check, or online through My School Bucks with a transaction fee of $3.75. We also participate in USDA's Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program where all students and their teachers have a snack of the daily fruit or vegetable to promote lifelong healthy eating habits. **We are still asking our families to complete the meals application since our state funding for education is based on family income information that the meals application process provides. This application needs to be completed each year. Please contact Mary Emerson, our School Nutrition Director, if you have any questions or concerns at anytime at 591-6054 or emersonm@westbroookschools.org.**

Computer Use by Students

Students' use of a school computer will be governed by WMS's computer protocol. Acceptable use guidelines will be provided to all students and parents. Teachers will review the guidelines with their students.

Students will be issued iPads. 7th and 8th grade students can take their iPads home M-Th with a Purpose Pass from a teacher indicating what academic work the student needs to complete. **Without the Purpose Pass, computers will be left in school in the designated charging area overnight.** In the event of a remote storm day, all students will take their devices home for the purpose of engaging in learning on the remote day.

The computer, its charger and carrying case are property of the Westbrook School Department, and then issued to the student. The use of a school-issued computer is a privilege, not a right, and is to be used for school-related purposes only.

WMS Basic School-Issued Computer (iPad) Rules

1. Using any app or website for social communication is not allowed, including using email or google docs to chat with friends.
2. Using the iPad for any personal (not school-related) things is not allowed (this includes logging into personal accounts from the iPad).
3. Games are not permitted.
4. Password protection, private browsing or logging into private accounts is not permitted.
5. Any staff member can review any device at any time, (as well as student google accounts).
6. It is the student's responsibility to care for the iPad at all times. This includes: never leaving it unattended, on the floor or any other location it could get broken, keeping food and drink away from it, keeping it safe in its case when not in use.

infraction: breaking a rule or agreement

Level 1 Infractions

- careless use, minor (example: tossing it on the ground)
- off-task use (examples: non-educational game playing, non-academic chats or messaging using email, google docs or other, logging into personal accounts)
- Leaving computer at home, leaving computer unattended (classroom, bus, cafe, locker, etc.), not putting it on the charger at the end of the day

Next Steps can include:

- warning
- removal of device for class period, situational and per teacher discretion
- parent/guardian contacted

Level 2 Infractions

- taking or posting photos of another person without permission
- persistently off task
- using another person's computer without their permission

- Swapping iPads with another student
- deleting browsing history
- rough handling (example: swinging it against desks, walls, other)
- losing computer, charger or case

Next Steps can include:
- meet with administrator
- parent/guardian contacted
- removal of device, length to be determined by an admin and/or teacher discretion

Level 3 Infractions

- cyberbullying or harassment
- sending, soliciting or sharing explicit electronic messages, photos and/or videos
- accessing inappropriate websites (adult content)
- using device to threaten or incite violence
- intentional damage (loss of computer until payment is received for the damages)

Next Steps can include any of the following:
- loss of take-home privilege for no less than two weeks and/or removal of device from in-class use for a length to be determined by an administrator
- after-school detention or in-school suspension, situational
- parent/guardian notified & student meets with an administrator to create a plan

Supervised computer Use: Students who show an inability to self-monitor responsible use of their iPad will only be able to use it by request from a teacher and permission from an administrator.
The following infractions would automatically place a student on supervised use:
- A second offense of cyberbullying and/or harassment
- Sending, soliciting, or sharing seriously explicit electronic messages, photos and/or videos (determined by administration)
- Visiting seriously inappropriate sites (determined by administration)

Next steps: Loss of computer; if the student has violated the law by downloading and/or viewing seriously inappropriate sites or explicit images, making threats or harassing others, Westbrook Police may be notified.

Wireless headphones:

Airpods, earbuds or other wireless headphones are not permitted for any student and must be away for the day. Wired-in headphones can be used with school computers under the discretion of the classroom teacher.

Parent – School Communication

It is our experience that students do best when the communication between home and school is timely and consistent. Parent concerns should **FIRST** be addressed with the student's teacher. A team approach between home and school is the most effective way to support your child.

To contact staff or administration at Westbrook Middle School, use the following guideline: lastnamefirstinitial@westbrookschools.org. Example: Christina Boursaw = boursawc@westbrookschools.org

You can also use Reach My Teach, which is a communication tool that the school uses to send emails and text messages to families. You can simply respond to any message sent by a teacher, or log into the parent portal to access all of your child's teachers.

Progress Reports/Report Cards

During the 2026-2027 school year, we will again use Infinite Campus as our comprehensive student information system. Progress reports and report cards will be available through the Infinite Campus Parent Portal, and Report Cards will also be mailed.

To access Infinite Campus throughout the year, families can go to the Parent Portal. This will allow you to log in and see your child's grades. If you need assistance logging in, you can click the "New User?" button, or email icparentpw@westbrookschools.org for help.

Telephone

Students may use school telephones for reasons deemed legitimate by a staff member. When using a school telephone, students must ask for permission and be under the supervision of a staff member.

Email

We encourage parents to use email to contact their child's teachers. Email addresses for all staff follows this format: (full last name first name initial)@westbrookschools.org. For example, the email for principal Christina Boursaw is boursawc@westbrookschools.org. Please allow teachers at least 24 hours to reply. Teachers and other staff are not available by email over the weekends, holidays or vacation. All emails received during those times will be returned when staff are back in school.

You can also use Reach My Teach, which is a communication tool that the school uses to send emails and text messages to families. You can simply respond to any message sent by a teacher, or log into the parent portal to access all of your child's teachers.

Academics

Students are assessed on both their academic proficiency and their Academic Work Habits. Work Habits are specified by the WMS Common Understandings as follows:

Westbrook's Learning Standards

Westbrook's K-12 Learning Standards were adopted in 2014 and revised in 2015. They include content area (academic) standards (known as Learning Standards) and cross curricular standards (known as Guiding Principles). Standards express the broad knowledge, skills, and capacities our school district values and deems essential for success throughout school and in order to graduate from Westbrook High School.

All students are expected to become proficient in Westbrook's Learning Standards and must have multiple and varied opportunities to work toward proficiency. As this is the expectation, accommodations must be provided

through multiple pathways and according to a student's Individualized Education Plans (IEP) and/or Intervention Plans.

The following 8 content areas align with Maine's Learning Standards:

English Language Arts
Mathematics
Science and Technology
Social Studies
Modern and Classical Languages
Visual and Performing Arts
Health and Physical Education
College and Career Readiness

These Learning Standards are assessed using one of the following categories: Summative, Formative or Classwork.

- **Summative** assessments are most like a unit test or a final essay. They are larger assignments that cover larger learning areas and a longer time. They are the final measurement of whether a student met the learning standards for that unit of study. The cumulative scores for Summative assessments are worth 60% of a student's quarter grade.
- **Formative** Assessments are most like quizzes or drafts of essays. They are smaller assignments that help the teacher measure how the student is progressing towards the overall learning standards for the unit. The cumulative scores for formative assessments are worth 30% of the student's quarter grade.
- **Classwork** assignments are typically homework or in-class assignments that students completed as part of a learning activity. The cumulative scores of these assignments are worth 10% of the student's quarter grade.

In grades 5-8, course grades are calculated on a 50 to 100 grading scale. Grades are reported at the end of a quarter, and a final grade is reported at the end of the course (in the case of quarter long Unified Arts classes) and at the end of the school year. Academic and HOWL scores are calculated separately and do not necessarily influence each other. Both reports are essential as academic scores indicate learning development and HOWL scores indicate work habits, social development, and behavior. The following is an outline of the grading system.

Grading scale will be numeric not letter grade as follows:
Passing with High Honors: 93 - 100
Passing with Honors: 85-92
Passing: 79-84
Passing but needs improvement: 70-78
Not passing or not able to assess due to missing work: 50-69

Students will receive a 50 for missing work

Students will be given opportunities to redo or retake graded assessments. Specifics of the criteria and logistics for allowing and supporting redos and retakes will be determined by the content groups and grade level teaching partners.

Every year, teachers will give parents and students a written explanation that includes clear definitions of grading practices. We will commit to consistency between grade level content teachers and among teams.

Habits of Work and Learning (HOWLs)

Westbrook Middle School values the development of the whole child and sets expectations for conduct which supports academic progress. The Habits of Work and Learning (HOWLs) are, in effect, standards for conduct that are taught, practiced, assessed, and reported. Scores for HOWLs are entered into Infinite Campus for individual assignments and on a quarterly basis. Criteria is based on the Common Understandings and scored on a Classroom Rubric (see Common Understandings section).

Homework

The Westbrook School Committee believes homework is an important part of a student's education. The amount of homework assigned should be gradually increased from grade to grade. As a child advances through school, it is reasonable to expect the amount of homework can be increased. Students are expected to make up any homework missed due to absence.

Suggested Guidelines:

Grades 3-5: A maximum of 60 minutes per night for all subjects combined
Grades 6-8: A maximum of two hours per night for all subjects combined.

Homework Request Procedure

- When a student is going to be absent for a single day, teachers, upon the return of the student, will review with the student the work that was missed.
- If a student is going to be absent for more than one day, homework can be picked up after school in the Main Office **if a request was made to the teacher(s)**.
- Please contact any of your student's teachers by e-mail or phone for clarifications of homework requests.

Academic Honesty

Honesty in schoolwork requires that students do their own work. To be honest, students must give credit for any ideas, language, or thoughts, which are not their own. If they do not credit the source of the idea, it is plagiarism (academic dishonesty). It is dishonest, of course, to copy someone else's test or homework. However, it is also dishonest to:

1. use an AI program without teacher knowledge and approval
2. copy from a book or online resource without giving the name of the source
3. paraphrase (put in your own words) without giving credit to the source
4. use all or part of someone's paper word-for-word
5. rewrite someone's paper for them or for your own use
6. use another's ideas, pretending they are yours
7. use an idea or a clever expression without crediting the original author
8. give work to others
9. do the work for others

Academic dishonesty of any sort is unacceptable. Students caught cheating may not use the assignment as evidence toward meeting the standard. Teachers will notify their team leader, an administrator, and parents/guardians any time cheating occurs. Students will not receive credit for the plagiarized work and may be asked to complete an alternate assignment.

Gifted and Talented Program

The Westbrook School Department offers Gifted and Talented education services in four academic areas and in the visual arts. Identified students receive services through the Challenge Plus gifted and talented program in Humanities, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and/or Visual Arts in grades 5-8. The screening process begins with a student, parent, or teacher nomination for the academic programs and includes further screening through the use of a nationally normed test and a teacher recommendation. The visual arts screening process includes the use of nomination forms and an art task.

Student Health

School Nurse

WMS has a full time school nurse who monitors and responds to student health issues, evaluates students who say they are ill, communicates with families on any student health issues or questions and administers prescribed and over-the-counter medication as needed and directed. The nurse is available throughout the school day. Her office is located next to the Student Services offices on the 1st floor. Her name is Jessica Simmons and she can be reached at: simmonsj@westbrookschools.org or by calling our Main Office.

Illnesses

The health of all students is of vital concern. Your support on the following guidelines will help keep a healthy school environment.

- Parents of children who become ill, or have symptoms of illness at school, will be contacted to pick them up. If parents are not at home, the person designated on the emergency information sheet is called to care for the child until a parent can take over. **It is IMPORTANT to notify the school of any changes that need to be made on the emergency information sheet at any time during the school year.**
- Children should not be sent to school when ill or showing the following symptoms: nausea, rash, fever, or diarrhea.
- Please note that if a child is well enough to be in school, he/she is expected to participate in all classes (unless a written note from your physician is provided).
- It is a school policy that parents notify the Main Office when their child will be home sick. If a child is not at school and we have not been notified, the child will be marked with an unexcused absence.
- Students who wish to be dismissed from school because of an injury or illness are required to see the nurse who will determine whether or not a dismissal is warranted. Students may be dismissed into the custody of a parent/guardian or emergency contact person only.

Medications

Keeping the nurse informed of students' health concerns is critical. The only medications considered necessary to be taken at school are those prescribed by a physician to be taken on a schedule that cannot be adjusted to outside school hours. The student ID sheet (given out at the beginning of each school year or at registration) needs to state any medications that are necessary to take at school, including aspirin, Tylenol, ibuprofen, inhalers etc., and must be signed by the parent/guardian. Students who possess, take, or distribute any

form of medication outside of these guidelines are subject to the consequence as spelled out by school committee policy.

- **All medications will be kept in the clinic and taken only under adult supervision**. The medication must be brought into school by a parent or guardian in a pharmaceutical bottle that is clearly labeled with name of medicine, name of child, dosage, frequency, and physician's name.
- Medication to be used on an as-needed basis, such as bee sting kits, asthma medication, etc., must also be accompanied by a signed medication permission form available through the clinic.

Immunizations

Maine State Law requires that all children meet certain immunization requirements. If a child is not in compliance with the state law, the school nurse will notify the student's parent(s) or guardian (s). Students must be in compliance with the immunizations state law in order to attend school.

Sprays, perfumes, colognes or other scented products

OSHA regulations restrict the use of many chemicals and cleaning agents in school. Therefore, for health and safety reasons Westbrook Middle School does not permit students to bring spray bottles and aerosol cans to school. **This includes perfumes, colognes, deodorants, or other scented products**. If brought to school, the student will be directed to take the product home. If the student continues to use the product, it will be taken and returned to a parent/guardian.

Student Services

Library

The Library provides various forms of print and non-print materials to support the middle school curriculum and to encourage recreational reading among young adults. We support students and teachers by meeting their various needs such as studying, individual and class research, browsing, book selection and suggestion, and reading to name a few. Library hours are from 7:40 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays during the school year.

School Counselors

The Student Services department has 4 full-time school counselors and an administrative assistant. Referrals to counselors are received from staff members, students or parents. All referrals are handled confidentially. The school counseling department offers the following services:

- Consultation with teachers, parents & community resources
- Individual & group achievement testing
- Crisis intervention
- Classroom instruction, academia, personal/social issues, career topics
- Coordination of programs such as tutoring

School Social Work Services

- The school social worker provides support for students and their families when issues arise which may impede the student's social, emotional or academic development.
- Casework services may be provided on an individual basis or in a group setting.
- The school social worker is a resource for referral to a wide variety of community resources.

Spurwink Counselor Services

WMS has two Spurwink Counselors who work in the building. These counselors are available to establish regular outpatient mental health services typical of Spurwink Services. Any parent/guardian wishing to access these services should contact your child's school counselor to make a referral.

School Safety

School Resource Officer

WMS shares a School Resource Officer with the city's three elementary schools. His role is first and foremost to support a safe and peaceful environment and culture. In addition, he is a resource for students, parents and staff who might have questions about law enforcement related matters. He may also participate in student activities and support classroom instruction about law enforcement and safety. Finally, he participates in our safety drills and consults with us on matters of school safety. Westbrook Police Officer Jeremy Ruggiero, who has been with us for the last two years, will continue as our SRO. He can be reached at ruggieroj@westbrookschools.org or by calling the Main Office.

Evacuations and Lockdowns

Westbrook Middle School has worked closely with state and local law enforcement officials, fire and rescue personnel, and other schools in our district to develop a comprehensive crisis response plan. Several safety drills including lockout, lockdown and evacuation drills are conducted throughout the school year. Parents/Guardians will not be notified of these drills before they are held. In the event of an evacuation, lockout or lockdown that is NOT a drill, notification will come from school and/or district administration as soon as there is useful information to share. In the event of a secure lockdown or evacuation, we ask that parents/guardians not come to the school to dismiss your child. Public safety personnel will be on site at all times and it may not be possible to safely dismiss students. In the event that students are to be sent home, families will be notified as soon as the decision has been made by the superintendent of schools.

Theft

During the course of any school year, students will report items being lost/stolen. Unfortunately, the school cannot take responsibility for these items. **To protect personal property, the school strongly recommends that students ask their homeroom teachers to provide them with a school-issued lock to secure their belongings.** Administrators and teachers investigate these matters and administer consequences when appropriate. The police may be notified. **Students should not bring valuable possessions to school (i.e, Ipads, collectible cards, cameras, electronic gaming systems or large sums of mone**y). It is recommended that you write your student's name with a permanent marker in his or her jacket, hat, backpack, sneakers, etc.

Visitors

All visitors must check in at the main office to sign in and obtain a visitor's pass. To reach the main office, visitors will request entry to the school using the intercom system located to the right of the front doors. Upon identification, administrative assistants will buzz visitors into the front entrance. Visitors are asked to sign out and return visitors' passes upon completion of their visit. Students may **NOT** bring visitors to school without prior administrative permission.

Misc. School Wide Policies and Procedures

Textbooks and Library Materials & School Issued Items

Students are held responsible for the proper care and return of textbooks, library materials, and other school issued items. Textbooks are to be covered. **Students may be charged for damage to or loss of school property.**

Passes and Pass Restrictions

All students leaving class will be issued an electronic hall pass. These passes will assist staff in knowing where students are in the event of an emergency. They will also generate useful information about when and how long students are out of classes. Any student who leaves class without a properly issued pass will be considered to have left class without permission. Administration may assign students pass restrictions if there is a pattern of leaving class or being absent without permission. Pass restrictions will limit the number of times students can leave class during the school day for a period of time or they may require that a student be accompanied when leaving class.

Dress Code

A student's choices about clothing constitute one of the most important ways they can express personality and individuality. Appropriate dress sets a tone for the entire educational setting. The school administration will make the final decisions as to whether a student is properly dressed. Student dress should not disrupt the educational process or constitute a possible threat to the safety or health of the student or their peers. Appropriate dress should be worn during the instructional day as well as to all school activities. All aspects of the dress code apply equally to those who identify as male, those who identify as female, and those who identify as non-binary. The following items should not be worn to school:

- Extremely short skirts or shorts
- Clothing which reveals underclothes
- Clothing that exposes completely bare stomachs or backs
- Shoes which mark/damage floors or are unsafe for walking in crowded hallways or up and down stairs.
- Clothing which implicitly or explicitly refers to illegal substances (including controlled substances such as alcohol and tobacco), profanity, violence, harassment, or sex.
- Jewelry which promotes illegal use of controlled or illegal substances or which could be considered unsafe in some way.
- Clothes with tears or holes which inappropriately expose skin or undergarments due to style or condition
- Dark sunglasses inside of the school building unless there is a documented medical need to wear them.
- Hoods or head coverings that obscure the student's face and that are not serving a documented religious purpose. Baseball-type hats with a brim are allowed.

Parents may be contacted and asked to bring appropriate clothing to school or students may be asked to wear clothing provided by the school.

Backpacks and Bags

Students may use backpacks to bring books and possessions to and from Westbrook Middle School. Students must store them in their lockers at all times while they are in the building. Backpacks and other bags (i.e. string bags, crossbodies, etc.), other than computer cases, cannot be used during the day. Having backpacks in the hallway makes it harder to safely transition between classes, and backpacks on the floors of classrooms present a safety risk. Administration and school counselors will work with students to resolve any issues or challenges that may arise.

Lockers

Lockers are the property of the Westbrook School Department. At no time does the Westbrook School Department relinquish its exclusive control of lockers provided for the convenience of students. School authorities may conduct locker inspections for any reason, at any time. The school is not responsible for any personal or school issued property that is lost or stolen. Students requesting a combination lock will be issued one by the school. Personal locks are not allowed. Students are not allowed to use tape or stickers to hang or attach items to their assigned lockers.

Electronic Devices and Cell Phones

The intent of the Westbrook School Committee's policy is to support a focused learning environment, minimize distractions, and promote student social and emotional well-being by prohibiting the use of students' personal cellphones, smart watches, and other personal electronic devices (PEDs) during the school day.

A Bell-to-Bell Prohibition

The following provisions apply to all students, Pre-K through Grade 12, and align with the statewide mandate:

- Students are not permitted to carry/wear or access any personal cell phones, smart watches, or other PEDs during the school day
- Upon arrival at school, devices must be powered off and stored in designated areas
- Cell phones, smart watches, or other PEDs may only be used after dismissal
- Cell phones, smart watches, or other PEDs may be used during bus transportation
- Exceptions to the prohibition on use may be granted for monitoring or management purposes of a health condition in accordance with a health-care provider's order as incorporated into the student's individual health plan (IHP), for example, glucose monitoring; implementation of a student's IEP, a documented Section 504 accommodation for an individual student (use of assistive technology) or in emergency situations as authorized by staff.

MISUSE OF CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The use of a cell phone, smart watch, or any other electronic device in any manner that violates the School Committee policy or school rules is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to bullying, harassment, cheating, and other violations of the student code of conduct.

Use of cell phones and other devices with camera and/or voice-recording capabilities is strictly prohibited in bathrooms, locker rooms, and other areas where privacy is generally expected. In all other school locations,

permission must be granted before photographing or recording another person. Student cell phones and other electronic devices may be subject to search by school administrators when there is reasonable suspicion that a law or school rule has been violated. Any search will be limited in scope to the suspected violation

At all grade levels, violations of this policy will result in:

● 1st offense - phone or other PED is taken for remainder of the day and held in the main office
● 2nd offense - phone or other PED is taken for remainder of the day, and after-school detention is issued
● 3rd offense - phone or other PED is taken and must be picked up by a parent/guardian and after-school detention is issued
● Repeated or serious violations may require a parent/guardian meeting and/or may result in additional disciplinary actions including but not limited to in-school suspension and individual PED plan

At all levels, parent communications regarding their child should be directed to the school office
In the event of a school emergency, the school/district will communicate with parents as promptly as possible in accordance with the school/district's Health & Safety and Emergency Management Plan.

The Westbrook School Department will not be responsible for the loss, theft, or damage to student cell phones, smart watches, or other PEDs that students bring to school or onto school property, including school buses/vans.

Dances and Social Events

Westbrook Middle School student events, including dances, movie nights or fun nights, are intended to be positive opportunities to socialize and enjoy each other's company. Staff ensures that music is appropriate and chaperones help to guide behavior so that the socializing is positive in all ways. It is, however, important that all students understand that attending student events is a privilege. Appropriate behavior in school is a requirement in order to be granted the opportunity to attend. The following list explains the rules in place to support a healthy, positive experience.

- Students are not allowed to attend an event if they:
    - were absent from school that day (unless excused by an administrator)
    - had an unexcused arrival after 11am the day of the event
    - had a suspension, either in or out of school, the week of a dance
    - per administrative discretion
- Students can be sent home from an event at the discretion of an administrator at any time should they have difficulty following school-wide behavioral expectations.
- Events are for WMS students only.
- Phones are not allowed at events and have to be turned in upon arrival.
- When they arrive, students must check in at their grade-level table.
- Students must remain in the gym, the cafeteria, the lobby or other designated space during the event. They are not allowed anywhere else in the building without express consent from a staff member.
- At dances, students are not allowed to engage in competitive dance-offs.
- Students must remain in the building the entire length of an event unless a parent/guardian arrives to pick them up. A student who leaves the building will not be allowed back in.
- Students must be picked up at the end time of the event.

Westbrook School Department Policies

Some of the more important district policies related to Westbrook Middle School are highlighted below. You can view all school policies on the policy web link located on our school website: www.westbrookschools.org

The following is a list of important policies and their corresponding links on the WSD website:

Policy Number	Policy Title	Link to the WSD Website
ACAA - R	Student Discrimination and Harassment	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wURKEZZLeJSdH-y1uZdJO4ZSXA94w-8d/view
ACAA	Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RhEswvVlrD1JRy2LFHAv3SKdmgw_frLi/view
ACAB	Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Staff	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zhx8xhXJsoixXvhGbXnzEFoqgLWaXzhq/view
ACAB-R	Employee Discrimination and Harassment Complaints Procedure	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zbjUD-zLUlA0gdNvrSXKB-nsAAgxhSef/view
ACAD	Hazing	https://drive.google.com/file/d/17cih-k7vw3IdCU79us8VWISfFtVWx-_V/view
EEAEF	School Cameras on Vehicles	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Y35vIu_RUClL_v5mAhbJwb3thA5673rO/view
EEBC	Student Transportation in Private Vehicles	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1w8KUWrkV95ilIOzscd_qny5IuFLK6AWW/view
GBEEB	Employee Volunteer Student relationships	https://drive.google.com/file/d/14jFZtNBF1IYveIqc0lxtSB60Qnm9xjGr/view
GCSA E	Employee Internet Use	https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ms6o4sqdUNlV1AP_1kQt9VTSCqZDAcfq
IJOC	School Volunteers	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RvsPWlxRVx9-5ktn3vC5ZfcpTrlmu-Ot/view
JIC	Code of Conduct	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_mTv-EpSrSOsKWv8NVLXWjBaSkmkgl4V/view
JICH	Substance Use	https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1CoeMUsRONEdsp5JJhmxlxXfWplbcixCI
JICIA	Weapons Violence and School Safety	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cYz9crtGuoh2rhzCKMF0uyPN0RYusvlh/view
JICK	Bullying	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oGTmmdQhe0df1tvkgoX-FXCZ2Ng3jRlt/view
JICK E1	Bullying Reporting Form	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yr0lly-euZjtk2x-3v4xhojY3EeS0xe4/view
JICK E2	Bullying Responding Form	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xA7VM0IZ0taXxIAv-43aOaNtXaEK-NTx/view
JICK E3	Bullying Remediation Form	https://drive.google.com/file/d/12eU4eskub2kj5FVCDhzTD4gwcZa5R2Ka/view

JIH	Questioning and Searches of Students	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1q8QGXktRw9cLKU3ri0rW_6BCkJWr-LLM/view
JKAA	Physical Restraint of Students	https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1CoeMUsRONEdsp5JJhmxlxXfWplbcixCI
JL	Student Wellness	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EU3MaYwhBE_7A2JmfHCjcqd7QN9ny8Zk/view
JLF E	Reporting Suspected Child Abuse	https://drive.google.com/file/d/160E_GVLOg4mfGlhjjnd8YkmqKua8WUVL/view
JLF	Suspected Child Abuse	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NBkYDbAvfBUjtwYJJrj7WLyVYhxi8R9T/view
JRA	Student Records	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1K0VJK3d1oF2xpXO1mKVwdKZ06ivK1i2f/view