

Back To School Principal's Message

Dear Parents/Guardians of Westcott's Middle School Students:

Welcome to Westcott Elementary School! As the principal of the school, as well as the faculty and staff, we welcome you to the Westcott Family. We are a Track E school and we are determined to enjoy a successful year! Our scheduled breaks are indicated on the Calendar of Events page, and our school-wide events will be posted on our website.

Parents, please take a few minutes to review the contents of this handbook together with your family. There are many important dates, policies and procedures found throughout. The handbook should answer most questions; however, after reading it, if questions remain please call the school office at (773) 535-3090. We feel it is important to keep the lines of communication open and clear between school and home.

The Westcott Middle School Student Handbook was created to assist your child in organizing his/her daily, weekly, and long-term assignments. This is a great planning tool that will help to improve your child's organizational skills. In addition, we feel the handbook will serve as a reference for parents as you seek to provide academic support at home. Westcott parents are our partners in providing the best opportunity for students to grow academically, socially, and emotionally. Together we can help each student reach his/her fullest potential.

We encourage you to visit our school and solicit your membership in our parent volunteer programs such as our Parent Advisory Council and Local School Council. You are also welcome to monitor the playground and lunchroom, or even read to our students to support our literacy programs. As cooperative partners working together, we will reach our collective and individual goals. We look forward to celebrating with you the achievements of our students.

Remember, together we can make an excellent school even better. Westcott is always "Raising the Standards of Excellence!"

Educationally committed,

**Mrs. Monique N. Dockery
Principal**

WESTCOTT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

VISION: Westcott School is committed to providing a positive learning environment that will ensure all students have the educational tools necessary to achieve a higher level of academic performance. Students will have multiple opportunities to develop into critical thinkers, lifelong learners, and productive citizens of the broader community.

MISSION: Westcott School stakeholders are committed to improving teaching and learning to increase academic achievement for all students. As part of a nurturing and caring community that fosters self-awareness that builds self-esteem, students are empowered with skills that produce lifelong learners through supportive and engaging academic opportunities.

We, the Westcott Family, pledge to:

- **Wear school uniforms as a symbol of our pride.**
- **Maintain a clean and safe facility, inside and out, creating a climate conducive to student pride and progress.**
- **Work diligently toward and maintain an atmosphere of total involvement and mutual respect among the entire school community.**
- **Recognize and reward the individual efforts and achievements of the entire school community.**
- **Maintain a well-equipped library, classroom computer clusters, and centers for hands-on learning.**
- **Help students achieve at or above national norms.**
- **Motivate students toward good attendance and positive attitudes.**
- **Instill in our students the importance of completing classroom and homework assignments as an integral part of their educational process.**

Westcott's Expectations

C.A.R.R.

C—Be Caring (i.e., listen to adults and peers when they talk, return items, keep halls, restrooms, and lunchroom clean)

A—Be Academically Engaged (i.e., raise hand in class, be prepared with materials, have homework/class work)

R—Be Responsible (i.e., know discipline code, be in uniform, be a responsible mail carrier, come to school on time, complete your task/errand and return to class)

R—Be Respectful (i.e., use appropriate language, listen to staff when they talk with you, keep your feet, hands and other objects to yourself-KYFHOOTY)

Daily Schedule and Attendance

Breakfast Program

Westcott School offers the Breakfast in the Classroom program. Students may begin arriving at 8:30 a.m.; they must enter the doors located on the southwest side of the building. Students must arrive to school promptly if they wish to participate in the breakfast program. All students arriving for breakfast must enter through the doors located on the southwest side of the building. Students arriving before 8:30 a.m. cannot be properly supervised. Parents will be notified if their children do not adhere to this arrival time.

Daily Attendance

Daily attendance and promptness are vital for student success and promotion. Students not involved in the breakfast program should arrive at 8:50 a.m. The school day starts at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 2:45 p.m. It is expected that your child attends school regularly in order to receive a quality education. Please make every effort to have your child at school each day. Any time your child is absent you must write a note to be given to his/her teacher on the following day. A note from home must accompany a tardy student. A student who is absent from school for three (3) days or more because of illness must bring a doctor's statement.

The four valid reasons for being absent are:

- Death in the family
- Illness
- Family Emergency
- Religious Holiday

Early Dismissals

Everything we do at Westcott School is for the purpose of providing a quality education for our students. Allowing students to leave school early undermines the effective learning environment we are attempting to create.

If you have a compelling emergency, please notify the main office at (773) 535-3090. Students will be released only to the immediate care of a parent, guardian, or authorized person. Proper identification will be required to release a student.

Tardy

Just as taking a child out of class early has a negative effect on the educational climate, so does arriving late to school. Effective schools start on time and end on time. The first bell rings at 8:50 a.m. The second bell rings at 8:55 a.m. Students arriving after 9:00 a.m. must get a tardy slip before going to class. If a parent knows that a student will be tardy, for safety reasons, the school office should be notified. When the first bell rings at 8:50 a.m., the students should line up in their designated areas. At the sound of the second bell, students will proceed into the building under the direction of school personnel.

Student Evaluation Procedures

Progress Reports

Students will receive Mid-Quarter Progress Reports at the end of the 5TH, 15TH, 25TH, and 35TH week of school. Parents should sign and return the forms to the classroom teacher.

Report Card Pick Ups and Distributions

Every ten weeks, students receive report cards. Academic and behavioral evaluations are included on the report cards. *The Chicago Board of Education* requires parents to pick up their child's report card the first and third marking periods. The report card pick-up and distribution schedule will be as follows:

First Marking Period/Report Card Pick-Up: Wednesday, November 2, 2011

Second Marking Period/Report Card Distribution: Wednesday, February 1, 2012

Third Marking Period/Report Card Pick-Up: Wednesday, April 18, 2012

Fourth Marking Period/ Report Card Distribution: Thursday, June 14, 2012

****Westcott will host an additional Report Card Pick-Up on February 1, 2012; parents of students who need additional instructional support will be invited.***

If your child has received a D or F in any subject area, including discipline, or several checks in the work habit and/or citizenship section, please request a conference with your child's teacher.

Westcott's Grading System

A-----	100-93
B-----	92-87
C-----	86-78
D-----	77-70
F-----	69 & below

Parent Portal:

Chicago Public Schools allows parents the opportunity to securely view their children's grades and attendance online. Parents can even register to receive email or text notifications when a student is absent or if their grades drop below a parent specified threshold. The Parent Portal requires parents to log in to their account with a unique personal identification number (PIN) designated by the school.

Homework

Homework is an extension of your child's learning experiences and is planned to enhance his/her progress. It is the student's responsibility to see that homework is completed neatly and turned in on time.

The following are approximate allocations for homework assignments:

- Grade 6 -- 45 minutes per day
- Grades 7-8 -- 90 minutes per day

Students should record daily, weekly, or long term assignments in their new Premier Agenda Notebook. This book will help your child manage his/her time and homework assignments. Parents, please provide quiet time and space for your child to complete his/her homework each night.

Promotion Policy

In addition to receiving passing grades in all academic areas, benchmark grades 3, 6, and 8 are also required to meet the CPS Promotion Policy. You will receive the CPS Promotion Policy at a later date for 2011-2012.

Graduation Policy

All students are expected to meet the following graduation requirements:

- Pass the State and Federal Constitution test (given in seventh grade)
- Receive passing grades in all academic areas
- Meet the CPS criteria for the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT)
- Completion of a research paper
- Display excellent conduct
- Maintain good attendance
- Complete a Science Fair Project

An eighth grade parent meeting will be scheduled in September.

Specialized Services

Federal and State Legal Requirements

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1973 (Section 504), and Illinois statutes and regulations, all students with disabilities ages 3 through 21 have a right to receive a free appropriate public education. These legal requirements provide procedural safeguards regarding the identification, evaluation, and placement of students with disabilities.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

The IDEA is a statute that authorizes funds to states and public school systems, such as Chicago Public Schools (CPS), under certain conditions. To receive these funds, school systems must ensure they will comply with specific mandates regarding the education of students with disabilities.

The IDEA, which was reauthorized in 1997, and again in 2004, applies only to students having specific disabilities that are identified in the Act. If a student, ages 3 through 21, is determined to have one or more of these disabilities and is determined to need special education to obtain some benefit from an education, the student is entitled to receive a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment.

Under both the IDEA and Section 504, students with disabilities are entitled to a free education. “Free” means the provision of educational and related services without cost to the parent, except for those fees that are imposed on students without disabilities.

Least Restrictive Environment

Students with disabilities should receive instructional services in the general education classroom with supplemental aids and services, curricular modifications, and accommodations, to the fullest extent possible.

Full and Individual Evaluation

A full and individual evaluation (FIE) is the process used to determine a student's eligibility for special education and related services. Some children, however, may display behavior problems or learning difficulties related to a range of disabilities that substantially affect learning. Providing education services under Section 504 plans may be appropriate to serve these students, rather than addressing their needs through IDEA special education and related services. The same process used to initially evaluate the needs of students under the IDEA may be used to evaluate the needs under Section 504. Students with disabilities identified under Section 504 may be eligible to receive special education and related services. However, where appropriate, supplementary aids and services identified to meet students' needs as part of Section 504 plans may be provided without the assistance of special educators.

To ensure that students are not inappropriately evaluated and identified as having a disability, CPS has adopted a team approach that informally addresses student strengths and weaknesses and provides assistance to the student's regular education teacher. In many cases, the School Based Problem Solving Team (SBPS) should address student learning and behavioral needs. The SBPS team monitors intervention recommendations and, as appropriate, will initiate a student's referral for a full and individual evaluation to determine whether the student has a disability that may be addressed through Section 504 supplementary aids and services, or through IDEA special education and related services. If it is determined that the student is eligible for services under the IDEA or Section 504, the team shall develop an IEP or Section 504 Education Plan for the student.

Evaluation Request Process

The following persons may request a full and individual evaluation:

School personnel, parent(s) of the student, community service agency employee, persons having primary care and custody of a child, other professional persons having knowledge of the student's problems, the student, an employee of Illinois State Board of Education, or any other concerned person.

Process for requesting an evaluation:

Evaluation requests must be in writing, signed, and dated. The request must be given to the case manager or the principal.

Timeline for initial determination of eligibility:

Within 60 school days of the date of written consent to conduct the full and individual evaluation, the IEP (individualized education plan) team must meet to determine the student's eligibility for special education.

Information to be obtained:

The case manager will ask parents to provide any applicable information, including reports, evaluations, health records, non-CPS school records, etc., to assist the school in determining whether the student requires an evaluation, to avoid duplication of assessments and to assist in making appropriate decisions regarding the FIE process.

Determination that an evaluation is not warranted:

If it is determined that a full and individual evaluation is not warranted, the case manager must give the parent and/or the person who made the request written notice of this decision.

School-Wide Expectations

In an effort to promote a safe and positive learning environment, Westcott School adheres to the CPS Student Code of Conduct as well as our Behavioral Resolution Plan and School-wide Expectations (C.A.R.R.). Each student will receive a copy of the codes and the plan.

Parents and students should carefully study and adhere to the following list of expectations.

School Conduct

1. Rough play and physical contact of any kind is forbidden.
2. Students must speak respectfully to all school personnel and to one another.
3. Students should not take, damage, or in any way vandalize school property or the property of others.
4. Throwing rocks, snowballs, or other objects is forbidden.
5. Food may be consumed only in the lunchroom.
6. Students must walk orderly and quietly in the halls.
7. Students may not be in the halls without a pass.
8. Radios, beepers, pagers, iPods, CD players, and electronic games or equipment brought to school will be confiscated until a parent comes to claim those items.

9. Students may not bring bottles or cans of pop, cookies, candy, bags of chips, gum, or other snacks into the school building. They will be confiscated and destroyed.
10. **CELL PHONES**-The Chicago Board of Education requires that students bring a letter to school indicating the reason why a cellular phone is necessary. This letter must be signed by the parent/guardian and approved by the principal. Cell phones brought to school must be turned off during the school day. Students who fail to adhere to the CPS cellular phone policy will face consequences as outlined in the CPS Student Code of Conduct.

Classroom Expectations:

All students will:

1. Resolve disputes with non-aggressive behavior.
2. Respect school property and the property of others.
3. Always be prepared to work with your own school supplies.
4. Receive permission from the teacher before leaving his/her seat.
5. Be courteous when speaking.
6. Raise his/her hand to be recognized.

Lunchroom Expectations:

All students will:

1. Obey the lunchroom duty personnel and all adults.
2. Remain seated at his/her assigned table.
3. Stay in the lunchroom during entire lunch period.
4. Clear the table before being dismissed.
5. Keep food and other objects on tray and lunch table.

Dress Code

Students are expected to dress appropriately for school. Westcott School's uniform dress policy consists of:

Girls -Grades K-8

Navy blue, light blue, or white blouses and/or polo shirts; navy blue or khaki pants, skirts, jumpers, or capris. Black shoes must be worn daily. T-shirts are not considered part of the school uniform!

Boys- Grades K-8

Navy blue, light blue, or white polo shirts and/or long sleeve shirts with collars; navy blue or khaki pants (belts must be worn at all times). Black shoes must be worn daily.

T-shirts are not considered part of the school uniform!

All students must tuck their shirt into their pants/slacks everyday.

Boys are not allowed to wear earrings, sagging pants, t-shirts or shorts. Girls are not allowed to wear extremely short dresses/skirts, shorts, or crop tops. All students must wear black or brown shoes to school. Gym shoes are only to be worn during physical education classes.

Physical Education Dress Code

All students are expected to wear proper gym attire. Gym uniforms are available for purchase at the beginning of the school year. Alternate uniforms include navy bottoms and white t-shirts.

Rewards and Consequences

Students who adhere to Westcott's expectations (Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports/PBIS) are subject to the following positive rewards:

Invitation to special events
Participation in the Principal's banquet
Opportunities to participate in school raffles
Student of the Week and Student of the Month recognition
Certificates and school supplies
Recognition on the "Student of the Month" board
Pizza parties
Ice cream social
Most improved student recognition

Students who do not adhere to Westcott's expectations are subject to the following consequences:

Student/Teacher Conference
Student/Teacher/Parent Conference
Administrator Conference
Peer Mediation
Detention
Suspension
Arrest
Expulsion

General Procedures

Emergency Forms

Each year two (2) new emergency forms must be completed (August 2011 and January 2012) for each student, signed by the parent/guardian and submitted to the classroom teacher. These forms are extremely important. In the event of a medical emergency, this form will be used to notify parents/ guardians immediately. Contact will also be made if your child becomes ill or hurt during the school day; therefore the school must have current

phone numbers and addresses for all students. Please notify the main office of any changes in your phone number or address throughout the school year.

Immunizations

All students are expected to have a current physical and dental examination. Please make certain that your student has the proper immunization upon entering Kindergarten and 5th grade.

Lunch Forms

Every year parents/guardians must complete a lunch application. Accurate completion of lunch applications help to determine if your child is eligible for free, reduced, or fully paid meals. Paid and reduced price lunches are subject to change. It is extremely important that all lunch applications are completely filled out and returned to school by August 24, 2011.

Phone Messages for Students

The school does not have office staff available to deliver phone messages. The intercom will not be utilized during the day to deliver messages as this interrupts our emphasis on learning. Please convey messages before your child leaves home. If an emergency occurs, please contact the office.

Student Phone Calls

If a student needs to call home due to an emergency, he/she must receive permission from the classroom teacher to go to the office to make the call.

Transfers

Parents should inform the school of their moving plans and the name and address of the new school. This information is essential in expediting the transfer of school records. A transfer will be provided to the parent or legal guardian only. Proof of your new address will be needed.

Parties

While birthdays are extremely important and deserve special attention, instructional time may not be used for parties. However, parents of students in pre-kindergarten to grade two are welcome to bring store bought treats to be distributed at the end of the day.

Custody Issues

If parents are separated or divorced, the school presumes that both parents have access to the child unless one parent can provide evidence that he/she has full custody. Please provide the principal with copies of any court documents pertaining to custody issues.

Teacher Conferences

Participating in a parent/teacher conference is one of the most important elements in the success of a student's education. Parental involvement during a conference benefits the child, the parent, and the teacher. Parent conferences are encouraged to take place between 8:30 a.m. and 8:50 a.m. Teachers are not permitted to leave the classroom for conferences, and parents are not allowed to go to the classrooms for conferences during the school day.

You may contact the classroom teacher for additional conference time as it may become necessary.

Principal Conferences

All conferences with the principal will held prior to 8:30 a.m. and after 3:00 p.m. Please contact the main office to schedule an appointment.

Visitors

All visitors must enter through the main entrance on 80th Street and sign in at the security desk. Visitors will then report to the main office to obtain a pass. For the safety of our students, please pick up your children outside on the playground at 2:45 p.m.

Supplies

Remember to check your child's supplies weekly to see what needs to be replaced. Intermediate/Upper: book bag, pencils, pens, notebooks, folders, scissors, colored pencils, and rulers. Classroom teachers will provide a supply list for any additional items.

Textbooks

Students shall return all textbooks to his/her classroom teachers at the end of the school year or upon transferring. Textbooks are furnished to your child by Westcott School on a loan basis and should be treated as borrowed property. Parents will be required to pay the replacement cost for any lost or damaged textbooks. The average cost of a new textbook is \$60.00. Please use book covers when possible.

Assignments

All assignments should have a complete heading:

Name	Date
Westcott School	Room No. / Grade
Subject	

All assignments should be neat, legible, and submitted on time. Students in middle school grades should submit all assignments (except mathematics) in cursive handwriting written in blue/black ink, or typed on a computer.

Extra Curricular Activities

Choir
Basketball Team
Student Council
Cheerleading Team

**Volleyball Team
Track Team
Baseball Team
School Safety Patrol
Technology Club
Peer Tutors
Peer Jury
Beta Club
Book Club**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS
(2011-2012)

KEY DATES

**August 3, 2011 -- School starts for teachers
August 8, 2011--School starts for students
October 14, 2011--Last date to submit proof of children's medical exam
and immunization compliance
June 14, 2012--School ends for students
June 14, 2012--School ends for teachers**

STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAYS FOR SCHOOL
IMPROVEMENT PLANNING
(Non-attendance days for students)

**Friday, September 2, 2011
Friday, September 30, 2011
Friday, November 18, 2011
Friday, February 3, 2012**

HOLIDAYS

September 5, 2011 (Labor Day)
October 10, 2011 (Columbus Day)
November 11, 2011 (Veterans' Day)
November 24 & 25, 2011 (Thanksgiving)
January 16, 2012 (M. L. King's Birthday)
February 13, 2012 (Lincoln's Birthday)
February 20, 2012 (Presidents' Day)
March 5, 2012 (Pulaski's Birthday)
May 28, 2012 (Memorial Day)
July 4, 2012 (Independence Day)

BREAKS

October 3, 2011--October 14, 2011 (Fall Break)
December 19, 2011---January 6, 2012 (Winter Break)
March 26, 2012—April 6, 2012 (Spring Break)

Teacher Institute Days (TID) **Professional Development Days (PDD)** (Non-attendance days for students)

August 3, 4, & 5, 2011 (TID)
October 28, 2011 (PDD)
January 27, 2012 (PDD)
April 13, 2012 (PDD)
June 13, 2012 (TID)

PARENTAL PARTNERSHIPS

Local School Council (LSC)
NCLB Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

The role of the Local School Council is to:

- Give parents, teachers, community residents, and the principal an opportunity to share in the process of arriving at decisions, which affect the school at the local level.
- Make recommendations in order to improve school programs.

- **Participate in discussions regarding the operational effectiveness of the school.**
- **Provide input into the budget expenditures for instructional purposes.**

The purpose of the Parent Advisory Council is to give parents opportunities to discuss concerns and assist in making decisions that affect and impact all facets of their children's educational and social development.

Parents are always invited and encouraged to become involved in their child's education by attending monthly parent meetings, workshops, assembly programs, field trips, parent patrol, and working as classroom volunteers.

