

**WESTMINSTER CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
K – 12 GENERAL HANDBOOK**

MISSION STATEMENT

Westminster Christian School exists to serve children from families who are active members of a Christ-centered church by providing a Reformed Christian education, emphasizing excellence in the spiritual, academic, physical, and social training of young people to prepare them to serve their communities as worthy ambassadors for Christ.

PATRIOTISM

Students at Westminster are expected to show respect and esteem for our country and the symbols that represent our nation. Whenever the national anthem is played or the flag is displayed for the Pledge of Allegiance, students are required to stand and participate in a respectful manner.

ADMINISTRATIVE PREROGATIVE

This handbook gives general guidelines for students and parents. The administration reserves the right to exercise its administrative prerogative in responding to situations or circumstances not specifically covered in this handbook.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Communication Process

The school wishes to work with the home and the church in a positive manner for the training of students in righteousness. Problem solving is conducted in a constructive manner protecting the reputation of the school and of those involved in the controversy.

Occasional misunderstandings or problems may arise between an employee and student, or an employee and parent. The school's policy for dealing with these situations is consistent with the teachings found in Matthew 18:15-20.

1. All questions, problems, or complaints will first be brought directly to the employee before involving anyone else.
2. If the situation is not cleared through direct contact, it is then brought to the assistant principal if it involves a disciplinary matter. Non-disciplinary matters are brought to the principal or program director. The principal's decision is final.

Changes in Address/Phone/Custody

In order for our offices to keep accurate, up-to-date records on each family, please notify the Admissions Office and campus office of any changes in address, phone numbers, place of employment, child custody or emergency contacts.

English to be the Official School Language

English is the official language of WCS for all documents.

Grading Scale

<u>3rd - 12th Grades</u>		63-66	D
98-100	A+	60-62	D-
93-97	A	59-	F
90-92	A-		
87-89	B+		
83-86	B	<u>K, 1st, and 2nd Grades</u>	
80-82	B-	O	- Outstanding
77-79	C+	G	- Good
73-76	C	S	- Satisfactory
70-72	C-	I	- Improvement Needed
67-69	D+	NE	- Not Evaluated

Letter grades will be the only ones recorded for a transcript or report card.

Public Relations

The Public Relations Office wants to publicize outstanding achievements received by WCS students and staff. Please share any information that you feel is newsworthy (i.e. accomplishments /awards received within or outside of the school setting, etc.). This information, at the discretion of the PR Office, will then be shared with the local media and/or publicized through the appropriate school publications.

Any information promoting WCS as a school, including students and staff, should be channeled through the PR Office for approval. This is to ensure that all information sent to the media is accurate, verified with the appropriate source(s), and in accordance with the values and mission of WCS.

Home Bulletin

The Beat is a school newsletter which will be mailed to all WCS families on a regular basis. The Beat will include announcements and articles of interest to the school community.

Warrior Weekly

Please read over weekly news on our Warrior Weekly e-news bulletin. Check our website to locate this important communication vehicle at www.wcsmiami.org

Lost and Found

All articles that belong to your student should be labeled with his/her name. Lost articles will be brought to the Lost and Found on each campus. Articles remaining at the end of the year will either be given to charity or used in the used uniform sale.

Lunch Room

A hot lunch program is available. Students may bring their lunch from home or purchase items from the lunchroom. Menus are found on the WCS web page. (Click on Parents, News and Events and Lunch Menu) Every child receives a cafeteria card prior to the beginning of the school year. Lost cards may be replaced in the Business Office. The first two replacement cards are free. Additional cards will be \$10.00 each.

School Visits

In general, WCS is a closed campus during the school day. Exceptions are permitted for:

1. Official business through the Business Office.
2. Parent Volunteers through the Campus Office.
3. Prospective students and families through the Admissions Office.
4. Alumni through the School Receptionist.
5. Special events through the administration.

All parents must register with the campus office when visiting during the school day. The campus Receptionist will provide directions to the appropriate location and permission for the visit. To drive on campus, please enter the security entrance on 152nd Street and display your WCS permit from your rear view mirror.

Supplies

WCS School uniforms may be purchased at the school shop, "Warrior Wear" located in the High School concourse. The High School Spirit Shop provides a variety of supplies before and after school. Please check with HS Office for operating times.

POLICIES

Hurricane Policy

In the event of a hurricane:

1. If the Miami-Dade County public schools close, Westminster will close.
2. Local television Channels 4, 6, 7, and 10 will announce the public school closing or you may listen to radio stations WMCU, 89.7 FM or WINZ-940 AM for Westminster specifically. Additionally, you may call the school phone at 305-233-2030 for a recorded message or check the Westminster web page for the written announcement.
3. Extra curricular activities will be cancelled if school is closed.
4. In the event of Hurricane Warning status issued to Miami-Dade County, Westminster Christian School will close.
5. If the public schools are not in session, the administration will decide no later than 5:30 AM as to the status of the day.

Computer Use Policy

School computers and access to the Internet is provided at Westminster for educational purposes. Vandalism or theft of hardware or software, an attempt at hacking into unauthorized files on the WCS network, or accessing pornographic sites or materials as well as harassing or obscene documents are not allowed on WCS computers. Such actions will result in severe disciplinary action or expulsion, and financial restitution if applicable.

Distribution of Information from WCS Database

The use of any Westminster Christian School database, including parent support groups, for non-Westminster purposes is prohibited.

Employee/Student Dignity

Conduct, whether intentional or unintentional, that subjects another person to unwanted attention, comments or actions because of race, national origin, age, sex, physical characteristic or disability, robs the person of dignity and is not permitted.

Westminster Christian School does not condone harassment of employees, supervisors, students, or others present on our campus.

Any person who believes he or she has been subjected to harassment should report it immediately to a campus administrator for immediate investigation. The following persons are authorized to handle such reports: Superintendent, Principals, Assistant Principals, Counselors, or School Nurse.

Respect is to be shown to both people and property at all times by all persons on the campus. Teasing, harassing or bullying, along with verbal, written or any intentional threat of violence of a personal nature toward students, teachers, staff or Westminster property is prohibited and will result in an immediate investigation by the Administration. Any person who creates a well-informed fear that such violence is imminent will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from school.

Non-Custodial Parents

1. Ordinarily, the school will not resist or interfere with a non-custodial parent's involvement in school-related affairs, or access to the parent's child or the child's records. Unless the school is presented with a court order, the school will not otherwise "choose sides" between parents.
2. A non-custodial parent may not take custody of a child or remove the child from school premises unless the parent presents either a written court order or a written authorization signed by the custodial parent which permits such custody.
3. If the actions of parent(s), custodial or non-custodial, become disruptive to the operations of the school, the school has the right to restrict access by such parent(s) and to take other reasonably necessary action.

4. The school will accept consent to participate in school events only from the custodial parent unless authority to grant consent is given to the non- custodial parent by a court order or comparable legal document.

Private Property

WCS is not responsible for damage or loss of private property brought to school. Students are responsible for securing their private property in a responsible way.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

State of Florida Medical Entrance Requirements

According to Florida Statute 232.032, students enrolling in a Florida school must present HRS FORM 3040 AND HRS FORM 680 to document that immunization and health requirements have been met. These forms must be provided and completed by a Florida physician within 12 months prior to entry date. They are transferable within the State of Florida.

HRS FORM 3040 - health examination and Tuberculin Skin test (including date and result)

HRS FORM 680 - Certificate of Immunization (Part A, B, or C)

State of Florida regulations mandate that students entering Kindergarten and 7th grade meet additional immunization requirements and submit new HRS documentation to the school showing compliance with these requirements.

No student will be allowed in school without up-to-date documentation. See the school nurse for more information.

Clinic

A well-equipped clinic, located on the elementary campus, is maintained for the use of all students during school hours under the supervision of a registered nurse. Care is administered for minor injuries according to the Guidelines for School Health Rooms established by the Florida State Board of Health. First aid will be administered; however, no medical treatment or medication will be given without a physician's consent. If a student is unable to return to class, arrangements will be made for him or her to be sent home according to information on the Emergency Procedure Card.

****Students with any type of infectious illness or condition such as childhood communicable diseases, infections of the skin or eyes, head lice, etc., must receive proper treatment from a physician and be checked by the school nurse before returning to class. In case of surgery, fractures, or prolonged illnesses, a note from the physician should be presented to the school nurse regarding any limitation of activities or special considerations.**

Emergency Procedure/Legal Consent Card

The Emergency Procedure/Legal Consent Card must be completed and returned to the school at the time of registration. This card will only be used when parents are not available to handle the emergency situation.

Special Medication Conditions

Some students have medical conditions such as diabetes, asthma, allergies, etc., which might necessitate special attention during school hours. It is essential that this information be kept on file at the school. Please send this information in writing to the school nurse and include this in the specified area of the Emergency Procedure/Legal Consent card.

Medication Policy

1. In some instances students may be under treatment and permitted to be in school at the same time. When medications are needed during the school hours, the nurse or her designee may administer this medication if it is brought to her in bottle labeled by the pharmacist, stating the proper dosage, and full name of the medication. The nurse can provide a form granting parental permission to

- administer medication and stating the time of administration.
2. It is sometimes desirable for children with allergies, asthma, diabetes, etc., to have medicine held in the clinic by the nurse for use in an emergency when immediate treatment is essential for the well being of the child. This medicine must be labeled by the pharmacist stating the proper dosage and full name of the medication. Written permission from the parents directing the nurse to give the medication, and a written order to the nurse from the physician, must be on file in the student's health record. Medication and orders must be renewed at the beginning of each school year.

REMINDER: STUDENTS SHOULD BE FREE OF A FEVER FOR A FULL 24 HOURS BEFORE RETURNING TO SCHOOL.

MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

ATTENDANCE

Absences

Daily attendance is absolutely essential to the progress of a student. It promotes dependability and respect for education as well as a strong character for the future. On any given day, if a student is absent, the school office should be notified in advance or by 9:00 AM of the day absent, as to the reason for the absence. In order to participate in extra-curricular activities (be it sports related, arts, school sponsored recreation, etc.), students must attend a full day of school.

Cutting Class

Students skipping school, i.e. being absent from school without prior parental or school permission, will receive a zero for a daily grade for each class cut. Additional discipline may also be imposed by the administration. NOTE: Being more than 10 minutes late to a class shall be considered a "cut".

Tardiness

Don't be late. Students are permitted three tardies during a nine-week quarter. After a third tardy is recorded, a note will be mailed home notifying the parents. Each tardy beyond the third will result in the student's receiving an after school detention. This is a thirty-minute detention. Each additional tardy in the quarter will result in an additional after school detention.

Make-up Test Regulations

It is your responsibility to make arrangements with your teacher to make up any missed tests.

Make-up Assignments

This is your job too. You need to get your assignments turned in on time. You must turn in work on the day it is due unless you are absent due to illness. All other reasons for being absent do not excuse you from turning the work in. If you miss a daily assignment due to an early dismissal from school or an athletic contest, musical performances, field trip, etc., you must inquire in advance with your teacher what the assignment is or if a test will be given. You are still responsible. In the case of an excused absence, you have the same number of days to make up the work as the number of days you were absent. If you do not make up work, you could receive a zero, or even fail to receive credit for the class. Unusual cases requiring absence from school due to accident or other reasons will be reviewed by the administration. The bottom line is that you need to be responsible and get your work turned in!

EMERGENCY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

While we certainly hope that we never need to take advantage of our emergency protocol, it is always better to be prepared. Should an emergency arise, we will use the media, the school website, and our voicemail system to convey important information to parents. School closure will entail a lock-down mode during the first 60 minutes of the emergency. Once the school is secure, your parents may come to pick you up. If you have prior written permission on the emergency card, you may be dismissed immediately. Any student who has not been picked-up within the first hour will be moved to a common location in or near the auditorium. Snacks and other supplies will be available for the duration of a short-term emergency.

MEDIA CENTER

We have a fabulous Media Center for your use and enjoyment. Our Media Specialists are knowledgeable and friendly. The Media Center has an outstanding collection of books, magazines, audio-visual materials, and on-line databases for research. Access to the Internet is provided for classroom research projects, but not for personal use. Check all of your favorite websites at home. The Media Center is open from 7:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. To visit the library during classroom hours, students must present a pass signed by the classroom teacher and sign in at the circulation desk. Reference books may be checked out overnight only. A fine of .25 cents per day will be charged for books and \$1.00 per day for overdue reference books. Any fine or overdue book which remains outstanding for more than two weeks will result in the loss of library privileges until books are returned and/or fines and replacement costs paid. You may access reference resources and on-line databases from home via the WCS web page at www.wcsmiami.org.

ACADEMIC MATTERS

Report Cards

Report cards will be issued on a quarterly basis. The report cards will be computer printouts and will not be returned to the school office. All parents are urged to check the dates that report cards are distributed and insist on seeing the report card. Parents are asked to sign and return the envelope indicating they received the report card. In addition to academic grades, students will also receive comments in conduct and effort.

Students who have outstanding financial obligations will not receive their report cards or transcripts until they have satisfied these obligations

Homework

Homework will be assigned in such quantities as to provide adequate training in independent study and in practicing the skills covered in the classroom without interfering too much with non-academic activities or with meeting a healthy bedtime hour. If a student has difficulty completing his assignments, parents are encouraged to contact the classroom teacher.

Tests

Students are not required to take more than two tests per day. If a student has more than two tests assigned, s/he should take the first two assigned.

Adding or Dropping a Course

To say that scheduling over 300 students into over 100 courses is a tedious process is, at best, an understatement. The Registrar's Office spends hundreds of hours and pours over thousands of options to help you plan your individual schedule. You receive personal attention and every effort is made to provide you with your selections. If, for some reason, you feel that a change is absolutely necessary, please see the Registrar. You have two weeks from the start of the quarter to complete any schedule changes.

Honor Roll

An honor roll is published each nine weeks containing the names of students who have sufficient averages to warrant this honor. The criterion for honor roll status is an overall 3.33 point average. Students earning a 3.67 grade point average will qualify for the "High Honor Roll."

Retention

Retention of students in Middle School is an educational decision made by the administration and teacher(s), after careful examination of academic progress and contributing factors. Parents will be consulted in an effort to add input to the decision. The following are reasons for this decision: Insufficient Attendance, Unsatisfactory Achievement, or other mutually agreed circumstances.

APPEARANCE AND DRESS

WCS School uniforms may be purchased at the school shop, "Warrior Wear" located in the High School concourse. The dress code enforcement will begin when a student arrives on campus and will remain in effect until the dismissal bell for the end of the day.

Clothing for Girls and Boys

Shorts	Khaki, Black
Slacks	Khaki, Black
Polo	Khaki, White, Hunter, Black
Mock Turtle	White
Sweatshirt	Hunter, Black with WCS logo
Jacket	Black fleece zip pullover, Varsity
Warm-ups	Hunter, Black with WCS logo
PE T-shirt	White with screen print
PE Shorts	Hunter with screen print

Clothing for Girls

Culottes	Khaki
Capri	Khaki, Black

Shirttails must be tucked in and belts worn at all times. Hats, caps, or bandanas may not be worn. Sandals, flip-flops or shoes that expose the toes are not to be worn. Clothes worn under the uniform shirt may not extend below the sleeve line or hemline. Boys' hair should be neatly groomed so that it does not reach over the eyes, ears or collar. Please comply with the dress code. Let's not make it an issue.

Cold Weather Policy

Some winter days can be cold so be prepared early! On cold days, WCS jackets, WCS sweatshirts, WCS warm-ups, or college/pro logo jackets may be worn with WCS uniformed long pants. Only college/pro or WCS warm weather wear may be worn. Uniform shirts must be worn under the jacket or sweatshirt. On RARE severe weather days, sweaters, heavy coats and non-uniform pants can be worn. An announcement will be made before the severe weather dress day.

STUDENT CONDUCT

Student Rules

We could make a long list here, but let's keep it simple, shall we? You are here at great expense to someone, and you are surrounded by people who care about you and want the best for you. Please behave in a manner that reflects your appreciation of your circumstance. Don't use bad language or chew gum. Don't take something that doesn't belong to you. As difficult as it may be, try not to display your heartfelt affection for your boyfriend or girlfriend while at school. Leave the ipods, MP3s, and any other musical at home. If we see them, we'll take them. Except during lunch, keep the cell phone turned off and in your backpack.

We work hard to keep our school attractive. Please don't vandalize it. Graffiti is an offense that can result in expulsion. If you damage school property or the property of a school employee, you are strongly stating that you do not wish to be here. These are expulsionary offenses. Fighting, win or lose, will result in up to a five day suspension the first time. The first time is one time too many. Any student arrested or taken into custody for a felony will be indefinitely suspended from WCS until the matter is cleared up through the legal system. The following items (and common sense says there are things not mentioned that qualify) should be left at home for your enjoyment there: water pistols, matches, stink bombs, laser pointers, noise makers (possession of these items will result in suspension), guns, knives, or fireworks (possession of these items will result in expulsion).

Each teacher determines the environment for his or her classroom. It is your responsibility to meet the expectations of the teacher. Directions are to be respectfully followed. If you fail to comply with what your teacher asks of you, you may be issued a lunch detention or an after school detention, depending on the teacher's judgment. Continued misbehavior will result in additional disciplinary action.

Dishonest – Cheating - Lying

Honesty is a Christian virtue to be displayed by all students. Do your own work. You are extremely capable of doing so or you wouldn't be here. The consequences for cheating or plagiarizing are severe and include, but are not limited to the following: removal from positions of leadership, review of National Junior Honor Society Membership in accordance with that organizations guidelines, suspension and a possible zero grade on the work in question (first offense), and expulsion (second offense).

Regular Disciplinary Procedures

You may be assigned a lunch detention by the teacher at the teacher's discretion. They are to be served during your lunch period and failure to serve will result in another lunch detention being assigned. Each instance of four lunch detentions will automatically earn a student a 2 hour after school detention. Students are responsible to communicate any minor (lunch detention) infraction to their parents. At the discretion of the teacher or administrator, you may be assigned an after school detention. In that case the teacher or administrator will also inform the parent of the detention. Detentions are served on Thursdays from three to five p.m. Extra-curricular activities do not preempt a scheduled after school detention (this includes Athletic contests). Failure to serve a detention will result in another after school detention. During the school year, any after school detention beyond the second will necessitate a suspension.

While we all strive for excellence, we also all make mistakes. If you make a poor choice that leads to a suspension from school, you may not be on campus at anytime for any reason, including after school and evening activities. You are responsible for making up any missed work and you may receive a zero for a participation grade. You may forfeit your right to receive any type of public recognition for earned awards at the various award functions at school or school related assemblies. Club or organization officers may also be suspended or removed from office depending upon the offense. In chronic cases of a disciplinary nature, the consequences only get worse, so let's work together to stay on the right path. If you incur three suspensions in one school year, you face the probability of expulsion.

Drug and Alcohol Use

Put simply, drug and alcohol use cannot be tolerated given the mission of our school. A first offense of use, possession, transportation, or involvement in the purchase of drugs or alcohol at school or at a school sponsored function will result in expulsion. A first offense of use, possession, transportation, or involvement in the purchase of drugs or alcohol at any time or place other than school or a school function may result in disciplinary action and possible expulsion depending on the circumstances. In addition, drug counseling and drug testing may be required. A second offense involving drug or alcohol abuse will result in expulsion from school.

If a student chooses to voluntarily disclose personal drug use with a genuine attitude of seeking help, such conduct will be dealt with according to the wisdom of the administration. This is a difficult step to take, and you will not face the same consequences you would if you did not voluntarily disclose. Obviously, voluntary disclosure is not defined as coming forward after the school has been made aware of an incident of drug or alcohol use.

The school reserves the right to question students about suspected or actual drug abuse. Further, a school official will contact the parents to discuss the matter. School officials may search a student's locker, or personal belongings at any time without prior notification.

With the goal of working to make WCS a drug free environment, the school will conduct random drug testing and testing of specific students where probable cause warrants. Random testing will be done at school expense on an intermittent basis at the discretion of the administration. All drug test collection will be conducted on site by WCS employees trained to follow authorized collection, handling, storage and transfer protocols. The testing will be by urinalysis, hair, or other appropriate measure. The student will be given an opportunity before testing

to voluntarily disclose any relevant information.

ATHLETICS AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

We are aware of the role that athletics plays in the total spiritual, physical, and mental growth of the young person at Westminster Christian School. We also realize that our athletic program and the participants have a lot to do with the reputation the school enjoys. Therefore, the Athletic Department has drawn up the following guidelines which are for all students participating in varsity or junior varsity sports and cheerleading. The current regulations are as follows:

WCS & FHSAA Student Academic Eligibility Rules

1. Incoming 6th grade student must have been regularly promoted from fifth grade. S/he must earn at least a C (2.0) GPA for their first semester to remain eligible.
2. Incoming 7th and 8th grade students must have a cumulative C (2.0) GPA at the end of each semester in order to be eligible for the following semester.
3. Students not maintaining a 2.0 cumulative average are ineligible the entire next semester.

Sports Offered

Westminster offers a number of avenues and opportunities for students to be involved in the arena of athletics. The following sports are available:

FALL	WINTER	SPRING	FALL	WINTER	SPRING
<i>Boys</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Girls</i>
Football	Basketball	Baseball	Volleyball	Basketball	Softball
Swimming	Soccer	Track/Field	Swimming	Soccer	Track/Field
Cross Country	Wrestling	Tennis	Cross Country	Cheerleading	Tennis
Golf		Volleyball	Cheerleading		

Student Activities and Organizations

We would love to have you join the fun!

- A. Student Council
- B. Bible Club
- C. Chess Club
- D. National Junior Honor Society
- E. Girls Bible Study

National Junior Honor Society member who transfers from another school to Westminster Christian Middle School and brings a letter from the former principal or NJHS advisor shall be accepted once previous participation and status has been verified. Transfer students must meet the new standards within one semester in order to retain membership.

Violation of school rules and policies may result in the suspension or revocation of leadership positions held by a student. This decision will be handled by the Administration upon consultation with the club or organization by-laws and sponsors.