

# Westhill High School

## Student/Parent Handbook 2024-2025

4501 Onondaga Boulevard  
Syracuse, NY 13219  
[www.westhillschools.org](http://www.westhillschools.org)

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**DAILY SCHEDULE     2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR**

1 Period 7:40- 8:21		
Homeroom 8:21 – 8:25	<b><u>IN 1<sup>ST</sup> PERIOD CLASS</u></b>	
2 Period 8:29 – 9:10		
3 Period 9:14 – 9:55		
4 Period 9:59 – 10:40		
5 Period 10:40 – 11:10		
6 Period 11:14 – 11:25		
7 Period 11:25 – 11:55		
8 Period 11:59 – 12:10		
9 Period 12:10 – 12:40		
10 Period 12:44 – 1:25		
11 Period 1:29 – 2:10		
2:15 – 2:55	INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANCE	

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September 2024

Dear Parents and Students:

On behalf of all staff, we welcome you to Westhill High School. This handbook is designed as a guide regarding Westhill High School's program and expectations. It contains general information, a brief school history, and our policies and procedures. It also contains a description of our building facilities and our Code of Conduct. It is important to review this handbook with your child.

This handbook is an important communication tool between the home and school. Please stress to your child the learning process and the importance of being involved with the Westhill High School community of learning. Encourage your child to work diligently to meet the New York State learning standards, to meet the expectations of a high school student, and to participate in extracurricular activities. A healthy balance of studies and activities increases student success. Please feel free to call our office at (315)426-3100 extension 3101. If we are not available, please leave your name and number with the office staff and we will return your call as soon as possible.

We welcome any suggestions you may have regarding how we might improve this handbook in future years. We look forward to a positive partnership and a successful school year. The very best success is achieved when the school, the student, and the guardian(s) all work together cooperatively. We look forward to a very exciting year!

Sincerely,

Daniel Dolan  
Principal

Meghan Snell  
Assistant Principal

## SECTION ONE

### THE WESTHILL CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Westhill Central School District officially came into existence on July 1, 1958. Earlier that year the citizens in three common districts voted to centralize and form one school district with the purpose of improving educational opportunities for their children.

The three former common school districts forming the centralization were: Geddes No. 1 (Westvale), Onondaga No. 3 (Avery), and Onondaga No. 6 (Onondaga Hill). The district is bound on the east by the city of Syracuse, on the south by the Onondaga Central School District, on the west by the West Genesee School District, and on the north by the village of Solway. Geographically the District runs approximately north and south with former Common District Onondaga No. 5 forming a narrow connecting link with Geddes No. 1 to the north and Onondaga No. 6 to the south. The district covers an approximate distance of seven miles north to south and its greatest width is about two and one half miles.

Westhill Junior–Senior High School opened in September 1961, offering programs for grades 7–10. The first graduating class received its diplomas in June 1964. In September 1964, Westhill was officially registered by the Education Department of the University of the State of New York. In September of 1973, the Westhill Junior–Senior High School became the Westhill High School serving grades 9–12.

In 1990, the New York State Education Department named Westhill as one of the most outstanding schools in the state, and in 1992 we were selected by Redbook Magazine as one of the 140 finest high schools in the United States, honored for our overall excellence. Our greatest honor came in 1993 when Westhill High School was named as a Blue Ribbon School by the United States Department of Education.

As we begin the 2023-2024 school year, we continue to put forth the effort as teachers, administrators, and students that brought us national recognition in the nineties. Westhill continues to maintain its reputation as one of the finest high schools in the state through our varied achievements: an educational record second to none, combined with successes in sports, music and drama, art and photography, and academic competitions. Many of you have already been a part of these achievements:

The remainder of this handbook explains our expectations and guidelines, designed to ensure that all of you continue to have the best opportunities to obtain an education that will serve you well beyond high school. Enjoy the year!

### *Westhill High School* *2024-2025 Highlights*

#### **Fine Arts Department**

##### **Visual Arts 2023-2024**

- 3 art students created portraits of 3 orphaned children in Syrian refugee camps
- 1 art student won an art contest run by Veterans Affairs
- Studio Art students created scratchboard art based on vintage photographs of Native Americans
- Students competed in the annual Scholastics Art Competition earning 1 Gold Key award, 3 Silver Key award and 5 Honorable Mention Awards
- All 9 Scholastic Award Winners had their artwork on display at OCC from January through March
- Ceramics students traveled to the Everson Museum on May 3rd to compete in the annual Feats of Clay competition with 30 other schools.
- Ceramic students' artwork was awarded first place at the New York State Fair
- Students in Art Club created dozens of different T-shirt designs for extra curricular activities.
- The Art Department with help from the Portfolio Club put on our annual High School Art Show on May 21st from 6-7pm

##### **Music 2023-2024**

- Westhill named as a NAMM Foundation Best Community for Music Education in the Nation for 2024
- Music Students selected to instrumental and vocal honor groups including:
  - NYSSMA Area All-State
  - Syracuse Youth Wind Symphony
  - Symphoria Youth Orchestra
  - OCMEA All County Band, Chorus
  - NYSBDA Honor Band
- 66 students performed more than 1400 hours of musical service through their participation in the Tri-M National Honor Society for Music.
- Via large ensembles (Band and Chorus), small ensembles (Jazz, Percussion, Small Vocal Groups, Chamber Music Groups), and Tri-M solos, Westhill High School provided our local community with more than 200 performances this year alone.
- The Westhill High School Music Department traveled to New York City where the Wind Ensemble and Symphonic Band performed in a festival at White Plains High School with Nationally renowned clinicians Dr. Andy Pease and Dr. Reed Chamberlain, attended Broadway shows (*Six*, *Blue Man Group*, *Wicked*), visited the Natural History Museum, and took guided tours at the 9/11 Memorial and Museum.

- The Westhill Instrumental Music Department now has a Modern Band program: Modern Band is a school-based ensemble that features contemporary and popular styles and rock-style instruments. Our Modern Band is student led and advised by Mr. Van Epps - the group meets on Fridays after school at the same time as our Audio Production and Engineering Club, advised by Mr. Riley, so the groups can work in parallel and also collaborate on projects! Modern Band performed at the LaFayette Rock Fest, Funk and Waffles, Crazy Daisies, and a variety of other local venues. The year culminated in a recording session at SubCat studios funded by the Westhill Education Foundation.
- More than seventy WHS Music students performed NYSSMA Solos for state adjudication.
- The Westhill Education Foundation sponsored our Day of Jazz featuring Jack Brass Band. JBB led our grade 7-12 Jazz Ensembles in a day of masterclasses, concerts, and clinics. They performed for students at OHMS, WHS, and also the greater community in an evening concert.

#### **Science Department:**

- Planned field trips to several locations to extend classroom & community learning
  - Salmon River Fish Hatchery, Wastewater Treatment Plant, Zoo, Onondaga Historical Society, & Redlining Tour.
- First year offering AP Biology and AP Environmental Science.

#### **Business/Computer/DECA/Yearbook Highlights**

##### **DECA**

- NYC trip in November to tour DirecTv
- Regional and state competitions in December and March were extremely successful!
- Many winners at both the regional and state level!
- Yearbook - Created/designed another outstanding book full of memories. This continues to be an excellent real-life opportunity for learning.
- Graphic Arts & Media - designed the literary magazine for the year including the cover and table of contents.
- Business and Computer Awards winners this year were Sam Smithers and Dominic Zawadzki, and well as senior breakfast winners Gavin Borne and Sophia Petrone!

##### **Technology**

Project Lead The Way End of Course Assessment Results:

- Design and Drawing for Production
  - 25 Students are eligible for College Credit at RIT
- Principles of Engineering
  - 7 Students are eligible for College Credit at RIT
- Civil Engineering & Architecture
  - 5 Students are eligible for College Credit at RIT
- Engineering Essentials
  - 10 Students are eligible for College Credit at RIT
- Digital Electronics
  - 5 Students are eligible for College Credit at RIT
- Computer Science Principles
  - 18 of 19 students taking the class took the class for AP credit.
- In the previous year, 2022\_2023, 20 students applied for college credit which gave us \$400 of Grant Money from RIT.

##### **Student Awards:**

- Outstanding Engineering Student
  - Cade Caloia
- Outstanding Technology Student
  - Michael Kurgan and Nathan MacLachlan
- The following students earned PLTW certificates for taking 5 or more PLTW classes.
  - Connor Knohl
  - Nathan MacLachlan
  - Gianna Spasevski
  - Cade Caloia
  - Steven Medeiros
  - Michael Fanelli
- Eight other students achieved newly designed awards for their achievements in our Technology curriculum.

##### **Special Events:**

- Nicholas Scheel and Zane Eldred participated and came in 1st place in the Most Embedded design contest.

##### **ELA Highlights:**

- Students in OCC English gained newfound perspectives this year. In particular, they researched and wrote about the emergence of current issues to analyze how speculative fiction has real merit in their lives, and continues to dictate societal "new normals" on multiple levels.
- Using both "We Video" and "i-Movie" platforms, students in "Documentary Film Studies" spent time developing ideas and researching current issues to become stakeholders to produce their own documentary films.
- The True Crime class at Westhill High School listened to a local podcast entitled *Firecracker, The Murder of Carol Ryan* and had the opportunity to talk about the local cold case and obtain expert advice from its creator Katrina Tulloch, a journalist for Syracuse.com. The students then explored a true crime case of their own choosing, uncovering the facts through in-depth research, and with a visit to LeMoyne College's Keenan Center for Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Creativity, they learned the art of storytelling and created their own True Crime podcasts, developing research, storytelling, and ethical communication skills in the process.
- Ninth-grade Honors English students engaged in a "History Remix" project. To spark their creativity, the project kicked off with presentations by Robert Searing, Curator of History at the Onondaga Historical Association, and Vanessa Johnson, a local griot/storyteller. Inspired by their expertise, students transformed into detective teams, researching fascinating local figures and events that shaped their communities. Crafting books aimed at engaging young minds in 3rd grade, students then visited Cherry Road Elementary to gather feedback from their target audience. This valuable collaboration helped them refine their first drafts, ensuring the historical journeys would spark the imaginations of young readers. This combination of expert guidance and hands-on experience nurtured research, writing, and storytelling skills, bringing the "History Remix" projects to life.
- Tenth-grade English classes were involved in a research project on racial profiling cases followed by a field trip to The Keenan Center at LeMoyne College, where they learned the skills of writing for an audience and recording a podcast on their subject matter.
- Tenth-grade students visited the Onondaga County Courthouse where they listened to closing arguments in a civil trial and took a tour of the Courthouse. Students were treated to a luncheon with a question/answer panel of attorneys and support staff at Hancock Estabrook, LLC law firm.

- The WHS Literary Magazine represents the WHS student body's fantastic creativity and showcases various artistic formats. Congratulations to all who submitted work for this year's magazine: *Visionaries!*

#### **Social Studies Department:**

The Social Studies Department had a monumental year for implementing new state mandates and participating in Westhill Community Service. We organized and facilitated the St. Lucy's Food Drive for the 39th year! We began our work on the Seal of Civic Readiness Program for the Class of 2024 last summer and it was a huge success. Mrs. Johnson created a new club for Westhill: HOSA for students going into the medical field. She also hosted the legislative breakfast with the AP Government class. Furthermore, Mrs. Johnson was recognized by Principal Dan Dolan as 'Offensive Player of the Year!'; an honor that is well deserved! Mr. Rahme continued a successful program for students called "AP Mentors" with the purpose of navigating the rigors of AP United States History. We also organized an amazingly successful baby shower for two of our department members!

#### **Special Education Department:**

- Huge shout out to Mrs. Kurro for:
  - Coordinating all of the CDOS paperwork and helping get graduation requirements for our students
  - Communicating with and arranging field trips and job sites with companies around CNY
- The new 12:1:1 Career & Life Skills and Self Management classes were a huge success and taught our students valuable skills they will use the rest of their lives
  - Students went on 10 field trips to learn about careers at businesses around CNY
  - Students had weekly job site visits where they worked with a job coach to complete various tasks and gain hands on experience
  - Students cooked almost weekly on Tasty Tuesdays.
  - Syracuse University PRE-ETS program came to provide students with vocational training
  - The students provided staff with a holiday lunch with pasta, etc.
- The Special Olympics send-off was expanded and celebrated by all students in the building, which highlighted our athletes and their accomplishments

#### **Math Department:**

- The math department welcomed a new teacher, Harrison Rosenburgh. This year Mr. Rosenburgh taught Algebra II Regents, Topics in Math, and Algebra 1 AIS labs, all of which he has never taught before.
- This year was the first administration of the Next Generation Algebra 1 standards. Mrs. Cerio, Mrs. Galey, and Mrs. Hatt put in hours of work over the summer to analyze the standards and create unit outlines.
- This year was also the first year for our Financial Algebra course taught by Mrs. Warne. She felt that it went well and that students were interested in the content; there's more buy-in from students when math is presented in a context that's meaningful to them. She looks forward to continuing her work on making higher-level algebra concepts more accessible to her students.
- Mrs. Hatt attended a BOCES math leadership conference, which focused on changes to standards, graduation pathways and seals, and on the 8 standards for mathematical practices. This was a great opportunity to connect with teachers/administrators from other districts as well as initiate good conversations with Meaghan Stanton, our K- 8 instructional coach, which she hopes continues with the new coach.
- Mr. Rosenburgh attended a BOCES Career and Technical Education External Program Review to serve as a math representative. He has also been approved by OCC to teach OCC Precalculus next year and attended their new-instructor professional development

#### **World Language Department:**

##### **Spanish II**

Students continued to hone their skills with vocabulary and grammar acquisition along with developing new interpersonal skills to help with communication. We studied the topics of school, hobbies, special events and their childhood. Students wrote a short children's book about a Superhero and learned about different cultural aspects of the Spanish speaking world.

##### **Spanish IV Honors**

All students were able to receive OCC credits through their completion of the course. Students showed major growth as they participated almost exclusively in the Spanish language. We studied the topics of personal identification, life in the city, media and communication, family and the environment. In addition, students researched cultural topics throughout the year to improve their world understanding and further honed their vocabulary, grammar and communication skills.

#### **French Club and FNHS activities**

- Ciné Club throughout the year
- Top Chef French cooking competition
- Correspondence with Belgian Penpals
- French Club X-mas party with crepes and games
- Syracuse Crunch game : French night at the CRUNCH!
- The Belgian Visit ! 42 Belgian students spent 3 amazing days with us!
  - presentation of our experience to the Westhill Foundation
  - Cirque du Soleil: Corteo performance
- French National Honor Society induction in April with the help of all of the previous year's Members.
- AP « graduation » ceremony: cords, certificates, berets & cake
- AP French dinner at Joelle's French Bistro
- Peer Tutoring : Quarters 2 and 3
- Launching of OCC French 201 and 202

#### **Spanish Club**

- Participated in the Pulsera Project where we sold handmade bracelets and purses and all proceeds went back to the communities that made the products. We raised \$440 that pays for 6.29 months of schooling, 3.52 months of fairtrade employment, and 22% of a house for an artisan. We also received a donation of \$100 from the Literary Magazine to add to the cause as a commitment for artistic expression.
- Bake sale around Halloween to raise funds for the club.
- Cultural music
- Movies
- Games
- Cultural holidays and traditions
  - Día de los Muertos

- Los Reyes Magos
- Caga Tío
- Cinco de Mayo

#### Spanish National Honor Society

- The Induction Ceremony for the Class of 2025 was held in May in the new library with parents and families in attendance for the first time in three years! The event was a success, led by our Senior members.
- Senior members planned and executed the Peer Tutor Program, meeting with students from lower level Spanish classes once a week for over ten weeks.
- Investigated cultural differences and similarities between the Spanish speaking world and our own community.
- Investigated and presented Study Abroad opportunities at the students college of their choice.

#### Spanish V Honors (AP Spanish Language and Culture/ OCC SPAN 202)

- Students prepared all year for the AP Spanish Language and Culture exam by studying the different cultural aspects and traditions from the Spanish speaking world and comparing them to our own communities.
- Students also received OCC credit through their completion of the course.
- Students left the year with a clear understanding of the customs and traditions that define identity. Their language skills allow them to communicate at an elite level interpersonally through writing and speaking, further setting them up for success in the next chapter of their lives as global citizens.

### ATHLETIC HIGHLIGHTS

#### FALL

G Soccer: #1 seed in the Class A Sectional Tournament, 1<sup>st</sup> round bye, Quarterfinal round vs VVS – won 4-0; semi's vs IR @ Chitt HS W 4-0, Finals vs NH L 3-2 in double OT

B Soccer: #1 seed in the Class A Sectional Tournament, QuarterFinals vs Whitesboro W 1-0 in OT, Semi's JD @ CBA W in PK's 6-5, CLASS A FINALS CHAMPION vs NH W 1-0 in double OT, SUB-REGIONAL VS ICHABOD CRANE [SECTION 2] W 2-0; REGIONALS VS SECTION 7 PLATTSBURGH W 2-0 Class A REGIONAL CHAMPS, 2023 Large Schools Coach of the Year – Tom Etoll; State semi's vs Aquinas Lost 0-1

B Golf: 3rd at Sectionals. Dan Young qualified for States in May

G Tennis: Class B Section 3 Doubles Champions Kathleen Rogers and Bella Doubles; advanced to state qualifiers

G Volleyball: #1 Class B Seed, Quarter Finals vs ITC W 3-0, Semi-Finals vs Caz w 3-0, Finals vs Skan W 3-0, Sub Regionals vs Ogdensburg Free Academy 3-0, Regional vs Broadalbin-Perth 3-0, NYSPHSAA Semi-Finals vs Center Moriches W 3-0, NYSPHSAA State Finals vs Lansing Lost 0-3.

G XC: 5<sup>th</sup> place at states

B XC: Team came in 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Class C1 race, Drew O'Reilly finished 2<sup>nd</sup> overall and qualified for states, 7th overall at states

#### WINTER

B Basketball: Kam Langdon 1000 points on 1.25.2024, OHSL Class A Liberty League Champions, Class A League Champs, Class A Section 3 Champs, Lost in Regionals to Glens Falls

G Basketball: lost in Sectional SemiFinals to IR

G Indoor Track & Field: Class B1 Sectional Champions

B Indoor Track & Field: Class B1 Sectional Champions, Owen Mullholland qualified for states in the 600m

#### SPRING

Girls T&F: OHSL Champions, Section 3 Class B1 Champions, Emma Murphy and Derricka Trotman Qualified for NYSPHSAA Track & Field States

Boys T&F: Drew O'Reilly 1600m Class B1 Champion

Boys Golf: Dan Young qualified for NYSPHSAA Boys Golf States

Girls Lax: League Champions, Lost in Section 3 Finals to S. Jeff



## WESTHILL HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

### CREDITS

All students at Westhill High School must obtain a total of **22 credits** in order to receive a Westhill Diploma. Each credit is earned by achieving a course average of 70% or more. The minimum number of credits to be earned in each subject is as follows:

**English** - 4 credits (English 9, 10, 11, 12)

**Social Studies** - 4 credits (including Global History, American History, Economics and Government)

**Science** - 3 credits; one must be in a life science course, one must be in a physical science course, and the third may be in either life sciences or physical sciences.

**Mathematics** - 3 credits

**World Language** (language other than English) - 1 credit must be earned by the completion of grade 9; may be earned either by studying the language in seventh and eighth grade and passing the State second language proficiency exam; or by passing a level 1 World Language course or State proficiency exam in high school.

**Visual Arts and/or Music** - 1 credit (see the Course Catalog for a list of courses which satisfy this requirement)

**Health Education** - 1/2 credit

**Physical Education** - 2 credits (1/2 credit per year)

Note: Students may substitute a locally approved technology course for the third Mathematics or Science, but not both (see the Course Catalog for a list of courses which may be used to satisfy this option).

### DIPLOMAS

According to the Commissioner's Regulations, two primary types of diplomas are available to Westhill High School students: the Regents Diploma, and the Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation. The requirements of each are described below:

#### Regents Diploma

Credits – see above

Examinations – must achieve a score of 65 or more on each of the following Regents Examinations:

English – Common Core English Exam (grade 11)

English – Comprehensive Exam (grade 11)

Global History and Geography (grade 10)

United States History and Government (grade 10)

Mathematics – Any Regents Exam in Math

Science – Any Regents Exam in Science

OR 4 Regents Exams + 1 Pathway Option

*(Refer to page 5 of the Course Catalog for a description of the various pathway options.)*

#### Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation

Credits – all coursework necessary for the Regents Diploma, plus World Language – two additional credits (total of three – must be in the same language)

Examinations – scores of 65 or more on all exams required for the Regents Diploma, plus scores of 65 or more on each of the following:

Mathematics: Geometry and Algebra 2

Science: a second Science Regents Exam, one of the two must have been a Regents in a physical science other than a life science

World Language: the local proficiency exam

OR 7 Regents Exams + 1 Pathway Option

*(Refer to page 5 of the Course Catalog for a description of the various pathway options.)*

Students pursuing the Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation may complete a 5-unit “sequence” in occupational (career and technical) education, art, business, or music in lieu of the two additional credits and the Regents Exam in the World Language as described above. These students are still required, however, to earn the one World Language unit listed above as part of the 22 credits necessary for graduation.





## Westhill High School Calendar 2024-2025

August 27	New Student Orientation
August 29	Staff Development Day
September 3	Staff Development Day
September 4	First Day of School
September 18	Open House (parents)
October 4	Bonfire/Homecoming
October 9	5-week interim reports available online
October 8-9	Underclass School Pictures--taken in PE classes
October 14	Columbus Day – No School
November 7	Staff Development Day – No School for Students
November 6	First Quarter ends-reports online 11/13
November 11	Veterans Day – No School
November 15-16	High School Fall Drama Production
November 27-29	Thanksgiving Recess
December 18	National Honor Society Fall Inductions
December 18	15-week interim reports available online
December 23-January 3	Holiday Recess
January 20	Martin Luther King Day – No School
January 21-24	Final Exams for Semester Courses & Regents Exams
January 24	End of Second Quarter – reports online 1/29
January 29	Asian Lunar New Year - No School
February 17-21	Winter Recess
March 1-2	High School Spring Musical Production
March 12	25-week interim reports available online
March 31	Staff Development Day – No School for Students
April 9	Third Quarter ends – reports online 4/23
April 14-18	Spring Break
April 30	National Honor Society Spring Inductions
May 3	Junior Prom
May 20	Academic Awards
May 21	35-week interim reports available online
May 26	Memorial Day – No School
June 12	Last day of classes/Fourth Quarter ends, reports online 7/3
June 13	Senior Ball
June 14-25	Finals and Regents Exams
June 21	GRADUATION for Class of 2025
June 19	Juneteenth - No School
June 30	Summer School registration

## **WESTHILL CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Mr. Stephen Dunham, Superintendent**  
**Mr. Steven E. Smith, Assistant Superintendent for Business Administration**  
**Mr. Richard Chapman, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction**

## **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Mrs. Lisa O'Reilly, President**  
**Mr. Andrew Starowicz, Vice President**  
**Mr. Christopher Haigney**  
**Mr. Patrick Cassidy**  
**Mr. Andrew Hunter**

## **WESTHILL HIGH SCHOOL**

**Mr. Daniel Dolan, Principal**  
**Ms. Meghan Snell, Assistant Principal**

## SECTION TWO

### ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

#### ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Perhaps our most important, collective goal as a school, and critical to the education of all students, is that students master the ever evolving tools of learning. To that end, the following are characteristics of successful Westhill High School students:

- They take personal responsibility for their learning and making up missed assignments.
- They display pride in both learning and academic integrity;
- They bring a positive, collaborative attitude to each learning opportunity;
- They partner with their teachers and peers to create new knowledge and answer difficult questions;
- They leverage study halls and IA time to meet with teachers for extra help or enrichment opportunities.
- They seek opportunities to participate in the larger school community outside of the classroom.

#### REPORT CARDS

Report cards are posted online through the Parent Portal at the end of each ten-week period for grades 9-12. Grades will be based on regular class work, homework, laboratory work, tests and quizzes. By the end of a full-year course, you will have four ten-week grades. For courses that do not end with a Regents exam, each of these grades, and also your final exam grade, will count as 20% of your final average. In other words, add the five grades together and divide by 5. For courses that end in a Regents exam, final averages will be calculated using only the four ten-week grades (each counting 25%). In other words, add the four marks together and divide by 4. Your performance on a Regents exam will not affect your final average for that class.

For semester courses, the method by which the final average will be computed is comparable to the above; each quarter grade is counted twice and the final exam once, and the sum is divided by 5 to determine a final grade. Note that the passing grade at Westhill High School is 70%.

The first three marking periods of a full-year course (or the first marking period of a one-semester course), the grades shown on your report card, must be between 50 and 100%. Should you be legally absent for an extended period of time, your teacher may give you an Incomplete on your report card, which means that you will have five weeks to make up missed work and have the "INC" replaced with a numerical grade. In either case, talk to your teacher, decide together what work you have to make up, and the date on which it is due.

Halfway through each ten-week period in grades 9–12 a special report will be posted online through the Parent Portal with appropriate comments on student progress.

#### CLASS RANKINGS AND GRADUATION HONORS

##### Class Rank

1. Class Ranking will be calculated in two ways:
  - a. *All-Subject*: Based on all courses taken in grades 9-11 (six semesters – to also include high school courses taken in grade 8 such as math, science, and World Language) – *excluding courses taken on college campuses*.
  - b. *Academic*: Based on core courses (English, Social Studies, Math, Science, and World Language courses taken in grades 9-11 (six semesters – to also include high school courses taken in grade 8 including math, science and World Language) – *courses taken on college campuses are excluded*.
2. The cumulative GPA and class rank calculated through August of junior year is the official GPA/rank used in the senior year. GPA/rank is not re-calculated at the end of senior year.
3. Students will be ranked out to three decimal places, and rank is not rounded. Students with identical GPAs out to three decimal places will share the same rank.

4. Students who attend alternative education programs, have been homeschooled any time during grades 9-12, or who transfer into Westhill after their sophomore year will receive a parallel ranking.

### **Graduation Honors**

**Valedictorian:** The academic title awarded to the student(s) earning the highest weighted academic grade point average in their graduating class.

**Salutatorian:** The academic title awarded to the student(s) earning the second highest weighted academic grade point average in their graduating class.

For a student to receive valedictorian or salutatorian, the following apply:

1. Valedictorian and Salutatorian status will be determined at the end of the first semester of the senior year. It will be based on the weighted unrounded academic grade point average based on seven semesters.
2. The valedictorian and salutatorian must be students enrolled in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade and graduating with their cohort class (based on when students entered 9<sup>th</sup> grade).
3. The student must have attended Westhill High School for at least four consecutive semesters immediately preceding the determination of the class valedictorian and salutatorian.
4. If a student has attended an alternative education program at any time during grades 9-12, alternative education grades are excluded and therefore students who have attended an alternative education program will not be eligible for valedictorian or salutatorian honors.
5. If a student was home schooled at any time during grades 9-12, home schooling grades are excluded and therefore home schooled students will not be eligible for valedictorian or salutatorian honors.
6. Only students who have satisfactorily completed the Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation, Regents or Local Diploma curriculum shall be eligible for valedictorian and salutatorian honors.
7. In the case of a tie for valedictorian or salutatorian, co-valedictorians and/or co-salutatorians will be recognized.
8. In order to be considered eligible to be awarded the title of Valedictorian or Salutatorian, a student must take at least one academic course at Westhill High School during their senior year. (Full time Early College Now students at OCC are not eligible for these awards.)

### **Senior Honors**

#### **Outstanding Senior**

The founders of Westhill High School determined that it would be most appropriate to honor those students who not only achieve academically, but also in a number of other areas as well. Accordingly, the tradition of selecting the Most Outstanding Senior was initiated. The recipient of this honor is the student who best represents all that Westhill embodies. If we were asked to send one student to meet with the governor, the Commissioner of Education, or the President of the United States, this would be the student we would send! Westhill's tradition is to have the Most Outstanding Senior speak at graduation.

### **Annual Grade Level Awards**

#### **The Old English "W"**

The Old English "W" is a traditional Westhill award bestowed on the two individual students who have earned the highest weighted academic grade point average (based on the first three marking periods only) in their respective grade levels for the current school year. Students must be enrolled in at least four academic classes at Westhill High School to be considered for this award. The Old English "W" is one of Westhill's most honored traditions.

### Determination of Grade Point Average

In determining the grade point average and rank in class, the following guidelines are in effect:

1. The student's final course grade will be used to determine the GPA.
2. For Honors, Advanced Placement and academic college level courses, six points are added to the final mark for computing the grade point average.
3. Grades will be weighted in direct relationship to the unit value of the course (example: 1/2 unit = 1/2 value).
4. Grade point average and class rank will be computed two ways (academic only: English, Social Studies, Math, Science, and World Language; or all subjects). **The higher of the two results will be posted on each student's transcript.**
5. If a student repeats a course, the initial course grade and the final grade of the repeated course are each counted individually and as separate and unique entries in the calculation of GPA.
6. A Regents or local exam taken without an accompanying and linked course of study will have no bearing on course credit earned or on a student's GPA.

### Posting Grades

If a Regents exam is taken more than once, the highest grade will be posted.

### CLASS MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Students must have completed the following units in order to be officially classified with and entitled to the privileges of the high school classes shown below:

TO BE CLASSIFIED	YOU SHOULD HAVE	AND YOU MUST
<u>ASA</u>	<u>COMPLETED</u>	<u>HAVE PASSED</u>
SOPHOMORE	5 units	English 9, Social Studies 9
JUNIOR	10 units	English 10, Social Studies 10
SENIOR	15 units	English 11, Social Studies 11

NOTE: The above totals include credit for Physical Education.

### HONOR ROLL

The Honor Roll is published in the district *Hill and Vale* at the close of each report card marking period. Its purpose is to encourage scholastic excellence by giving recognition to students who have achieved an above-average record during a given marking period. In order for a student's name to be placed on the Honor Roll, he or she must have met the following criteria:

1. An overall, unweighted, rounded average grade of 85 or above; (Alternate-day courses such as Physical Education count half. Courses that meet after school are not considered for the Honor Roll.)
2. No grades of INC have been given

### NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

The National Honor Society ranks as one of the oldest and most prestigious national organizations for high school students. Chapters exist in three-fourths of the nation's high schools, and since 1921, millions of students have been elected for membership. The selection procedure for the Westhill High School Chapter is as follows:

1. To be eligible for membership, a candidate must be a member of either the junior or senior class.
2. Candidates must first have a cumulative academic (not all-subject) average of 88% or greater (unrounded) after the first semester of Junior year or the first quarter of the Senior year. (Note: A student's academic average is based upon grades in English, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science and World Language.) Students who are eligible shall be notified and told that for further consideration they must complete a Student Activity Information Form. This form will be used to evaluate candidates on the basis of service, leadership and character. Input from the entire Westhill High School faculty is also considered.
3. The following guidelines will further help in the definition of service, leadership and character:

The student who serves...

- is willing to uphold scholarship and maintain a loyal school attitude;
- participates in some outside activity (e.g. – Scouts, church groups, volunteer services);
- volunteers dependable and well-organized assistance, is gladly available, and willing to sacrifice to offer assistance;
- works well with others and is willing to take on difficult or inconspicuous responsibilities.

The student who exercises leadership...

- is resourceful in proposing new problems, applying principles, and making suggestions;
- demonstrates leadership in promoting school activities;
- exercises influence on peers in upholding school ideals;
- contributes ideas that improve the civic life of the school;
- successfully holds school offices or positions of responsibility;
- demonstrates leadership in the classroom, at work and in school activities.

The student of character...

- takes criticism willingly and accepts recommendations graciously;
- constantly exemplifies desirable qualities of personality;
- upholds principles of morality and ethics;
- demonstrates the highest standards of honesty and reliability;
- manifests truthfulness in acknowledging obedience to rules, avoiding cheating in any form, and showing unwillingness to profit by the mistakes of others.

4. A faculty council appointed by the principal shall meet twice a year to select members and to consider dismissal, non-selection, and warning cases. The Student Activity Information Form shall be reviewed by the faculty council, along with any other verifiable information about each candidate. The selection of members shall be by a majority vote of the council, and shall be consistent with the rules and regulations of the National Honor Society.
5. A National Honor Society Member who transfers to our school and brings a letter from the former principal or chapter advisor shall be accepted automatically as a member in good standing.
6. The annual induction ceremony is held in the spring of each year. From time to time, special induction ceremonies are also held in the late fall for seniors.
7. Students inducted into the National Honor Society are expected to maintain an 88.0 cumulative academic grade point average to remain a member. In addition, NHS members are considered leaders in both the school and community and are held to high principles set forth on a national level. The students must remain active in school and chapter activities and continue to be role models.

Local membership requirements include:

- Attendance at monthly meetings
- Completing required volunteer hours as determined by elected officers
- Peer tutoring program
- Payment of yearly dues

Dismissal from NHS: Students who fail to uphold the standards set forth in the national charter, as well as the school's Code of Conduct, to include suspension from school will be subject to dismissal. Dismissal procedures have been established based on the NHS guidelines. Students have the right to a hearing with the faculty council prior to dismissal.



## SCHEDULE CHANGE POLICY

### Routine Changes in Schedule (drops and adds)

1. Our student registration system incorporates course requests and class balancing, and enables most students to take the courses they wish to take; very few schedule changes should be necessary as late as August.
2. Ninth and tenth grade students must carry the equivalent of six units of work each semester, plus physical education. Eleventh and twelfth graders must carry the equivalent of five units each semester, plus physical education.
3. Any schedule change requests will involve a meeting with your school counselor. In any schedule change, the student must maintain at least the required units of work. **It is expected that the student will attend class until the drop is completed and appears on the schedule.**

### Dropping a Course

#### Full-Year Course Timetable

- Start of year – one week after the 15-week comment report: Such drops during this time result in no entry on the student permanent record and transcript.
- One week after the 15-week comment report – one week after the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter report card: If a student is having great difficulty in any course, they may have their parents call the Counseling Center to schedule a Parent-Teacher-Counselor-Student conference, at which time the request will be reviewed. Any course dropped during this time will result in an entry on the student's permanent record and transcript indicating the course was dropped.
- One week after the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter report card: No changes in a full-year course are to be made unless a true emergency exists. In this case, a parent must call the Counseling Center to schedule a Parent-Teacher-Counselor-Student-Administrator conference. Any course dropped during this time will result in an entry on the student's permanent record and transcript indicating the course was dropped.

#### One–Semester Course Timetable

- Start of the year - one week after the 5-week comment report: Such drops during this time result in no entry on the student permanent record and transcript.
- One week after the 5-week comment report – one week after the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter report card: If a student is having great difficulty in any course, he/she may have his/her parents call the Counseling Center to schedule a Parent-Teacher-Counselor-Student conference, at which time the request will be reviewed. Any course dropped during this time will result in an entry on the student's permanent record and transcript indicating the course was dropped.
- One week after the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter report card – end of semester: No changes in a one-semester course are to be made unless a true emergency exists. In this case, the parents must call the Counseling Center to schedule a Parent-Teacher-Counselor- Student-Administrator conference. Any course dropped during this time will result in an entry on the student's permanent record and transcript indicating the course was dropped.

### Adding a Course

A student may enter a full–year course during the first five weeks of instruction. A student may enter a semester course during the first three weeks of instruction. In doing so, a student accepts the responsibility to make up all work missed, and is expected to reach an agreement with the teacher of the course on a timetable for catching up. After the prescribed time above, a student may enter only under extremely extenuating circumstances, and with permission of the teacher and an administrator.

### Physical Education

All students are required to take physical education. You may be excused from PE class only by presenting a Doctor's note to the school nurse or by seeing the school nurse if you become ill during the day. If you return to PE class after a prolonged period, you must present the school nurse with a physician's note releasing you to resume physical education activities. Students who are excused for a prolonged period will be required to complete a written curriculum or portion thereof. The State Education Department empowers the School Medical Officer to make final recommendations in case of disputes.

If you are ill, report to PE class and to your instructor, then to the Health Office. You are required to wear appropriate athletic footwear and clothing for PE class. Disciplinary action may be taken if you are repeatedly unprepared for class. Any student who fails Physical Education must make it up, since four years are required for graduation.





### SECTION THREE

## STUDENT BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES

### INTRODUCTION

The following pages outline the expectations for student conduct. The consequences for student behavior, which is counter to these expectations, are compiled in a district Code of Conduct (as required by New York State Project SAVE legislation) and are summarized in the Appendix of this handbook. Particular attention should be paid to the Attendance Policy, which was formally adopted by the Westhill Board of Education in June 2003.

### ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Education Law of the State of New York requires that all children between the ages of six and sixteen receive full-time instruction in school. Students who have completed the school year in which they turned sixteen need not attend school; however, those who do so are subject to the laws requiring regular attendance, and are governed too by the policy as stated below.

According to research, regular school attendance is a critical factor in student success. It is our experience, consistent with such studies, that students who are chronically absent and/or late are often not academically successful. We therefore strongly emphasize the importance of good attendance - students are expected to attend school daily, and get every day off to a good start by arriving on time.

It is of the greatest importance that a parent or guardian excuse all student absences and incidents of tardiness. According to law, as well as district policy, the following are acceptable reasons for absence or tardiness: personal illness, illness or death in the family, religious observance, approved school-supervised activities, required presence in court, doctor or dentist appointments, and impassable roads or weather making travel unsafe. Reasons which are not acceptable, and which will result in a notation of "unexcused" on the student record, include but are not limited to: family vacation, working, oversleeping, missing the bus, car trouble, driver's test, hunting and fishing, and being needed at home. Students may face disciplinary action as a result of unexcused absences.

In advance of the written excuse, a parent or guardian is asked to notify the school by phone that the student is absent or tardy. Should this not occur, a staff member will attempt to call the student's parent or guardian for verification.

Upon a student's return to school, the written excuse should be taken to the Health Office. In the case of tardiness, the student should go directly to the Health Office to sign in and get a late pass. The first instance of unexcused tardiness will result in a warning regarding promptness to school. Subsequent offenses will be dealt with as outlined in the Appendix.

If a student is late going from one class to another, the teacher will record the tardiness, and may ask the student to stay after school to make up the time. The student is not to ask any of the main office staff, or any other high school staff member, for a late pass, unless they were in some way responsible for the tardiness to class.

**Early Dismissals** – **Students are ordinarily expected to arrange their appointments with doctors, dentists, etc. outside of school hours.** When emergencies occur that require a student to have an appointment during school hours, they must bring a written request from a parent or guardian and have it approved by the school nurse before first period. Such approval will include a phone call to the parent or guardian for verification of the request. Written requests of this nature must specify the date, time, and place of the appointment, the student's name, an explanation of the reason for the request, the signature of the parent or guardian, and the phone number where they can be reached prior to the dismissal. The note should also specify how the student would get from school to the place of the appointment. Westhill District regulations stipulate that a student is to be picked up by a parent or guardian or other responsible adult designated by the parent or guardian. In the case of an extreme emergency, when a parent or guardian cannot comply with this rule, they may ask that the child be permitted to walk. Such requests must be approved by the Principal or Assistant Principal.

### **CLASS ATTENDANCE POLICY** (Unexcused Absences)

The consequences for cutting classes increase according to the frequency of the offense. For the first class cut, the student is assigned to IA and the classroom teacher sends a letter home. A second cut of the same class will result in an assignment to late detention and a letter from the Assistant Principal. A student who cuts a class for the third time will be assigned to three late detentions and an in-person parent conference will be held. Beyond the third cut, consequences will include additional late detentions, a conference with the Principal, and a possible suspension for insubordination.

### **HOMEROOM**

Homeroom is incorporated into first period. The first period teacher is also the homeroom teacher. The last four minutes of first period will be devoted to the Pledge of Allegiance, morning announcements, attendance and other homeroom activities. A student may not leave homeroom without permission. Students who have obtained a late arrival should report to their assigned homerooms between 8:15 and 8:20 A.M.

### **STUDY HALL**

All Westhill High School students are assigned to study halls during non-class time (excluding lunch). It is expected that they will bring sufficient work and/or reading material to keep busy the entire period. Study halls are to be a quiet working environment - students should not interfere with other students' ability to work without interruption.

If a student wishes to leave study hall to go to the Counseling Center, work with an academic teacher, etc., they must create a SmartPass in advance and have it approved by the staff at their destination. Students should present approved passes to the study hall teacher to be able to leave. Students should understand that the Smartpass system will allow teachers to follow up with other staff members to make sure you arrive at your destination in a timely manner.

### **LATE ARRIVALS**

Seniors without a class scheduled for first period may request a daily late arrival for 8:15 A.M. First period classes will not be changed to accommodate late arrival. A Late Arrival Request Form should be completed and submitted to Ms. Snell. The late arrival will be granted on the condition that the student is regularly on time for homeroom, and with the expectation that the student will remain in good standing academically. A senior whose graduation is felt to be in jeopardy, may have their late arrival revoked and placed back in a study hall. Students with a late arrival must be able to provide their own transportation to school. **Consequently, students requesting late arrival must also present a valid student parking pass with their application.**

### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

A daily early dismissal is available for seniors who do not have a class or classes at the end of the day. Eleventh period classes will not be changed to accommodate late arrival. All seniors who desire a daily early dismissal must fill out an Early Dismissal Request Form and submit it to Ms. Snell for approval. Once granted, end-of-day study hall(s) will be omitted from the student's schedule.

At that point, it is expected that the student will leave school at the specified time, unless they will be working in the library or with a teacher. Students who have a daily early dismissal but who need to stay IA should report to the library rather than leave school and return for IA.

An early dismissal will be granted with the expectation that the student will remain in good standing academically. A senior whose graduation is felt to be in jeopardy, may have their Early Dismissal revoked and placed back in a study hall.

### **INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANCE PERIOD**

The Instructional Assistance Period is considered to be a regular part of the normal school day. Students must sign up for IA through the online system and receive approval from the teacher. Students are encouraged to take full advantage of the IA period, including seeking extra help from teachers and participating in clubs and other activities. Students are asked not to stay after school unless they will be under a staff member's supervision. As they are during class time, corridors in the academic wing are off limits during IA. Students found loitering during IA will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the Appendix.

Under certain circumstances a teacher may require a student to stay in their room for IA. The student's attendance is mandatory. In addition, and since IA is an extension of our school day, students who misuse the IA period, to include leaving school property and returning for the late bus, may be subject to disciplinary action.

### **SUSPENSION**

If a student's behavior endangers the health, safety, or morals of themselves or of other minors, or significantly disrupts the orderly operation of the school, they may be suspended from school for one to five days by the Principal. Repeated referrals for offenses, which individually might be considered to be minor (as outlined throughout this section and in the Appendix), may also result in a suspension from school. During the period of suspension, suspended students are not to be on school grounds or attend any after school or evening school functions, on or off the Westhill High School campus. In all situations that result in a student's suspension from school, the student's parent or guardian will be notified in accordance with the rules set forth in Article IX of this Code.

### **LATE DETENTION**

Late detention is held on Mondays and Wednesdays from 2:16 to 5:00 PM, and is an alternative to Out-of-School Suspension for certain offenses. Since it takes place after school, it is consistent with our collective purpose of providing students with a quality education for which they need to be in class.

Students who are assigned to late detention will be given at least a one-day notice. Failure to attend late detention may result in a suspension from school for insubordination. The school does not provide transportation home from late detention; students will be required to make their own arrangements. Late detentions can only be rescheduled by a parent contacting a school Administrator. This will only be allowed in rare and extenuating circumstances, including transportation issues.

### **DETENTION**

Detention is assigned in cases of rules violations as outlined in the Appendix, and is held during the Instructional Assistance period. A Westhill staff member supervises the detention room. Students assigned to stay for detention must arrive on time and are expected to work on homework for the entire period. Disruptive behavior in detention (eating, talking, getting out of your seat) may result in immediate dismissal from detention and referral to the Assistant Principal for further disciplinary action.

Once an administrator has assigned a detention, usually one day or more in advance of the assigned period, it may not be rescheduled except in an emergency. In such a case, a written parental excuse should be submitted to the office prior to the detention, and the detention will be reassigned. Having to go to work or attend an athletic contest is not an acceptable reason to miss detention. **It is best to avoid the behavior, which resulted in the detention in the first place.**

### **SMOKING/USE OF ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES**

In acknowledgement of the harmfulness of smoking, consistent with Federal and State law (to include recent New York State regulation banning vaping in public schools) and as a protection of our non-smokers' rights to a smoke-free school environment, all students are prohibited from smoking anywhere in the school, on school property, or on school buses. This includes evening events sponsored by the school. A student is considered to be smoking if he/she is involved in any part of the act of smoking including using or possessing vaping devices or paraphernalia. The penalties for smoking are set forth in the Appendix. Likewise unacceptable are any actions by a student who, in the judgment of a staff member, is enabling others to smoke (i.e. acting as a lookout).

### **HARASSMENT**

In an effort to ensure that all Westhill students and staff are able to perform their respective roles free of intimidation and discomfort due to the physical or verbal conduct of others, all such harassment is prohibited. Specifically prohibited by a policy of the Westhill Board of Education is any form of sexual harassment. Students who are guilty of harassment will face immediate corrective action, which may include suspension or exclusion from school.

Students who feel that they have been harassed, or who have a concern about someone else's conduct, may inform a staff member of such. All such information will be kept confidential. Incidents of sexual harassment will be dealt with according to the Board of Education policy.

## ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Copying a fellow student's work with or without their permission, and without the authorization of the teacher to work together, is a serious offense, whether it involves homework assignments, tests, lab or research projects, art or photography work, or work being shared on software platforms like Google Classroom. Likewise serious is the use of someone else's ideas or writings (ChatGPT, Bard, AI platforms) without proper documentation within an essay or research paper (plagiarism), or the unauthorized use of notes or other aids during a test. All of the above are examples of academic dishonesty, which is in some cases simply referred to as cheating.

The penalty for academic dishonesty may range from a warning to an assignment to late detention. The student should receive a zero for the work in question, and the teacher will notify the student's parent. Students should keep in mind that to provide another with the means to cheat is likewise dishonest. If a student needs assistance with methods of proper documentation, he/she should consult a faculty member.

## WEAPONS

At no time may a student possess a weapon in school, on school property or on a school bus. This includes concealment in one's locker or school bag. Any student found to be in possession of a weapon will face a suspension from school and a Superintendent's hearing. Law enforcement authorities may likewise be involved. The penalty may include exclusion from school for one year. **Please note that mace, pepper spray, and other noxious sprays are classified as weapons in the District Code of Conduct.**

Should a student be aware of anyone who is concealing a weapon, he/she is asked to inform a staff member immediately, with the assurance that all information will be kept confidential.

## INAPPROPRIATE CLOTHING

In accordance with Project SAVE legislation, all school districts were required to adopt a Code of Conduct (see Appendix) to improve school safety and to promote an effective learning environment in the schools.

Included in the Code are general provisions regarding appropriate dress in school and at school events. Clothing should be safe, appropriate, and not disrupt or interfere with the educational process. Tops should cover the midriff (front and back) and bottoms should fully cover the upper thigh and buttock areas. Clothing which promotes or endorses the use of alcohol, tobacco, or illegal drugs, or which encourages illegal or violent activities is not allowed. Similarly, clothing which includes items that are vulgar, obscene, libelous, or that denigrate others in any manner is also not allowed. All underwear is to be completely covered with outer clothing, and footwear is required at all times. Students may wear hats in common areas. Wearing hats in the classroom is at teacher discretion. Failure to comply with a teacher's request will be considered insubordination.

Students who come to school wearing inappropriate apparel will be required to cover or change the offending garment and given a verbal warning. Repeated incidents will be addressed with parents/guardians and may result in disciplinary consequences.

## VANDALISM/DEFACING SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students or other persons who knowingly damage the school building, on-campus vehicles, or the school grounds are subject to penalties, which range from financial restitution to suspension from school. Such actions on the part of non-students will result in criminal prosecution. Damage from reckless behavior (e.g. - a broken window) will likewise result in the student or students being held financially responsible for the repairs, to the limit set by Education Law. Any accidental damage to school property should be reported to the main office immediately.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Personal electronic devices may be used in common areas. Use in the classroom is at the discretion of the classroom teacher. Students must abide by the direction of the teacher. Failure to do so will constitute insubordination. Teachers may confiscate devices if students fail to comply with the teacher's request.

## **FIRE DRILLS**

Fire drills are announced by the sounding of the fire alarm bells. These drills are conducted at various times during the year to acquaint pupils with the correct procedures to follow in case of fire. The prescribed fire drill route for each room is posted near the door of the room. Students should be aware of the proper route for each class. During a fire drill, students are expected to remain with their class during the exit and return to the building. Students should remain silent. Talking during a fire drill makes emergency instructions on the PA system impossible to hear and follow. Move quickly along the drill route and away from the building, far enough to be safe in the event of a true emergency. No one should block fire lanes; they may be needed by fire equipment. Unauthorized use of fire safety equipment or the fire alarm system is a very serious offense. Unauthorized use of the fire alarm system by a student will result in a five-day suspension from school and a hearing with the Superintendent of Schools. Law enforcement authorities may be likewise involved.

## **THEFT**

Stealing District property or the property of other students, school personnel, or any other person lawfully on school property or while attending a school function is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Students engaging in this behavior will receive consequences ranging from detention to suspension. Additionally, parents will be notified of the infraction as well as law enforcement, if deemed necessary. Students may also be required to pay restitution.

## **VISITORS**

All visitors are required to sign in at the main office and obtain a visitor's pass. Students should never open a door to let someone in the building. Doing so could lead to disciplinary action. Please do not plan to invite other students to visit this school without making arrangements in the main office at least one day in advance. Such a request, however, will not be granted if it is judged to be frivolous in its purpose and potentially disruptive to the school situation. Students from neighboring school districts with a day off when we are in session will not be allowed to visit Westhill.

## **GAMBLING**

Gambling is prohibited on school grounds. This includes dice games and card games associated with the exchange of money or goods.

## **BUS RULES**

The afternoon bus dismissal is at 2:16 PM for all students. Following the end of 11<sup>th</sup> period, students wishing to ride a bus home should go directly to the front bus loop, as buses will leave promptly. Bus rules are posted in each bus; they should be read and obeyed. If parents want a student to ride home at night on a bus different from the one that brought him/her to school, the student must bring a written request to the main office. If the request seems in order, a special bus pass will be issued, good for one day only.

Bus drills are conducted each year so that all students will be familiar with the location and operation of emergency equipment on the buses. Listen to directions carefully so that you will know what to do in case of an emergency.

## **TRANSPORTATION FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

Our policy requires that all transportation of students to school-sponsored activities away from school must be by school-owned vehicles or by adult-operated cars and approved by the Principal. If a student is competing in an away contest and wishes to ride home with another student's parent, a note must be written by the first student's parent, presented to the Principal or Assistant Principal for approval, and then presented to the coach. (A student does not have to have a note to ride home with their own parent. However, it is expected that the student will inform the coach of the ride arrangement.) The school will not, and cannot, approve a student request to drive him/herself to such activities.

## **DEFIBRILLATORS**

The high school has three Automatic External Defibrillators (AED) installed and accessible in case of an emergency. One is located outside the Learning Commons on the second floor, a second is on the wall near the door to the Athletic Director's Office, and the third is outside the gymnasium near the training room. A defibrillator is only to be used by a person who has had appropriate training, to include several high school staff members as well as coaches. Obviously, and as is the case with Fire Alarm equipment, defibrillators are not to be tampered with. Rather, it is imperative that they be kept in perfect working condition in order to perhaps someday save someone's life.

## **PROM/BALL DANCE RULES**

Students are not admitted to the building before the announced starting time nor later than one hour after the dance has begun. Dances terminate promptly and no later than 11:00 PM. Please do not plan to leave the building during a dance. Students leaving before a dance concludes will not be readmitted.

The Prom/Ball are ordinarily restricted to Westhill High School students unless special permission has been obtained from the main office and a Westhill student has obtained a guest pass. For the past several years, the Ball has been a senior-only event with no outside guests permitted. Such will be the case this year. The Westhill student is responsible for the conduct of their guest. Middle School students are not invited to high school dances. Additionally, guests over the age of 20 on the day of the event are not permitted at high school dances.

Adult chaperones will monitor students upon their entry to a dance. Students will be required to sign in; tickets should be sold on a pre-sale basis only, if appropriate. No book bags, backpacks, etc. should be brought into school during a dance.

It is the understanding that all attire worn to a school dance is to be "in good taste". Guidelines for such dress will continue to be communicated to students and parents. Any questions should be directed to an administrator prior to the night of the event.

Dancing that is deemed to be unsafe will not be allowed. A student who is dancing inappropriately will be warned and told to stop. Should the behavior then continue, the student would be required to leave the dance following the notification of a parent.

The District Drug and Alcohol Policy (see below) is in effect for all school events, including school dances. Its terms and consequences apply to all students, regardless of quantity of substance used or possessed. A breathalyzer and a police officer will generally be present at all school dances. The breathalyzer will be administered to any student who exhibits behavior, which creates suspicion of alcohol use. Refusal to take a breathalyzer test may, in any case, result in a determination of guilt. A parent will be contacted in all cases.

## **DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY**

The Board of Education of the Westhill Central School District acknowledges the need for the entire school community to provide an educational environment that is healthy and safe for its young people. To do so requires the prohibition and elimination of drug use and abuse by our students, to be facilitated by an increased awareness for parents, educators and students alike of the physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and legal consequences of such actions.

### **Prevention and Awareness**

The following are among the components of our prevention program, the purpose of which is to have our young people refuse to begin the use/abuse of drugs:

1. A K-12 curriculum which provides accurate and age-appropriate information to students about drugs, including alcohol and tobacco; also, skills and techniques are discussed and developed which will enable them to make good decisions and thus refuse to participate in the use/abuse of these substances.
2. Both within and outside of the curriculum described above, efforts will be made to develop and promote positive student self-esteem, which is recognized as critical for resistance to negative peer pressure and the temptation to use drugs and alcohol.
3. The district promotes and encourages communication with parents, community agencies and legal authorities in an effort to maintain a consistent message to our young people, both in and out of school. In addition, school programs in which the consequences of substance abuse and the promotion of positive self-esteem are discussed, and substance-free

alternative activities are to be encouraged. Parent involvement in such activities, to whatever extent it is practical, is beneficial and desired.

### **Disciplinary Measures**

If students should become involved in the use of, be under the influence of, possess, or distribute drugs or alcohol on school premises or at school events, the following procedures shall result. Such use is defined as the consumption, possession, or distribution of drugs or drug paraphernalia.

1. Information received by school officials concerning the use of drugs or alcohol by students in school or at school-supervised activities will be communicated to parents.
2. Students determined to be involved in drug or alcohol use and/or distribution on school premises or at school events will be suspended immediately for five (5) school days, such suspension being in accordance with Section 3214 of the New York State Education Law.

When appropriate, the matter will be referred to the legal authorities. In all cases the following requirements must be met as a prerequisite for readmission:

- a. a parent/student conference with the Superintendent of Schools, which may take the form of a Superintendent's Hearing.
- b. evidence that a satisfactory program of action has been developed to prevent recurrence of the problem, and periodic reviews will take place.
- c. other conditions for reinstatement may be established by the Building Principal or Superintendent of Schools if deemed necessary to secure the health, safety or welfare of the student or of others.
- d. if the above requirements are not immediately met, the Superintendent may call for a formal hearing according to law.
3. If the student is involved in drug or alcohol use or distribution on a second occasion during the same school year, the Superintendent will conduct a formal hearing.
  - a. If the student is 16 years of age or older, the suspension will be for a minimum of twenty (20) school days.
  - b. If the student is under 16 years of age, the suspension will be for a minimum of twenty (20) school days and home tutoring will be provided.
4. If the infractions occur over a period of more than one school year, the student will be suspended for a minimum of five (5) days and a Superintendent's hearing will be held, at which time a determination of any further consequence will be made.

### **INTERNET USE GUIDELINES**

1. Students are to use the Internet for educational purposes only. Internet use is a privilege, not a right. Student misuse of the Internet is a form of insubordination resulting in discipline procedures currently outlined in Westhill Board of Education Policy on student conduct.
2. Students are encouraged to evaluate the information obtained through the Internet with regard to accuracy and quality. Students are to document all Internet sources when used for research.
3. Students are to adhere to proper use of any copyrighted material in accordance with the guidelines for fair educational use.
4. During class time, students must have permission from the classroom teacher in order to access the Internet.
5. Students are not to access sites that are questionable in nature (i.e. pornographic, threatening, gratuitously violent, and/or obscene). While the district does provide filtering software, the district cannot guarantee that all potentially objectionable sites are restricted.
6. Students are to report accidental entry into an unacceptable site immediately to the teacher, librarian, or staff member on duty.
7. Students are not to access non-school/personal Internet accounts from school for e-mail purposes or other purposes unless a teacher has set up an email situation as part of the curriculum.
8. Students are not allowed to access chat rooms unless a teacher has set up a chat room situation as part of the curriculum.
9. Students are not to share their own or others' confidential information including last name, address, and/or telephone number.
10. Students are not to download software to any computer's hard drive.
11. Students are not to play games on the Internet.

12. Students are responsible for the appropriate use of the computer. Vandalism is a serious offense and includes damage to computer equipment, software or files.
13. The school district and its employees are released from the liability associated with inappropriate use, copyright violations, or inaccuracy of information found on the school computer system.
14. Students may not use the Internet in school for any of the following activities:
  - Commercial activities, including solicitation
  - Revealing material protected by trade secret
  - Political or special interest lobbying
  - Proselytization (converting others to your beliefs)





### **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that the school corrects records, which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
  - ⇒ School officials with legitimate educational interest;
  - ⇒ Other schools to which a student is transferring;
  - ⇒ Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
  - ⇒ Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
  - ⇒ Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
  - ⇒ Accrediting organizations;
  - ⇒ To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
  - ⇒ Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
  - ⇒ State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system;
  - ⇒ Pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

## SECTION FOUR

### THE SCHOOL BUILDING AND FACILITIES

#### COUNSELING CENTER

Counseling and student services are available to support all students at Westhill High School.

School counselors are available during the school day for assistance. Conversations with a counselor are considered confidential, as long as the health or safety of a student is not in jeopardy. Students are seen immediately if a crisis arises. Our goals are the same as that of our school as a whole - to help each of our students reach their maximum growth, learn to get along with others, and become increasingly independent and responsible.

Counselors help students cope with personal and psychological issues that affect their school performance, behavior and socialization. They are trained to assist with a variety of mental health and behavioral concerns in the school setting. The counseling staff focuses on early identification of students in need, assessment, and short-term individual counseling. Students who would benefit from more intensive or highly specialized services are referred to appropriate community resources. Students may self-refer or be referred by parents, school personnel and others. These services are offered to enhance the social and emotional growth and academic outcomes of all students.

Each counselor has students from all four grade levels, and students are assigned a counselor based on their last name and grade. Students keep the same counselor throughout high school. Counselors are located in the Counseling Center and can be reached at 315-426-3130.

Counselors 24-25:

Kelly Fifield	Tracy Bitner	Jonathan Pridmore
09 - A - F	09 - G - N	09 - O - Z
10 - A - D	10 - E - M	10 - N - Z
11 - A - G	11 - H - R	11 - S - Z
12 - A - JG	12 - H - P	12 - Q - Z

The following includes some of the typical reasons for visiting your school counselor:

- a. discuss social and/or personal concerns, i.e.: conflicts with other students, teachers, or parents
- b. academic planning and advisement
- c. college and career planning
- d. course selection and scheduling

#### School Counselors

- Assist students in coping with emerging personal, social and emotional problems.
- Annually review with each student their educational progress and career plans.
- Conduct presentations each Spring to all students regarding graduation requirements and course offerings for the upcoming school year. Assist students with elective course requests.
- Provide information to assist students with post high school planning.
- Manage college applications/submission of supporting documents - initial, mid-year and final reports
- Provide Case Management to students with a 504 Plan.
- Encourage students to benefit from the curriculum and extracurricular programs.
- Coordinate parent/teacher/student/counselor conferences as requested.
- Refer students and families to resources in the community that are available to meet their needs.
- Maintain a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.

## Programs

### Naviance

College and career exploration software for students. Counselors annually review and utilize Naviance with all grade levels, and the software provides access to:

- Career exploration and planning activities
- Resume builder to document student accomplishments
- Personality and learning style inventories
- College search and comparison tools
- Submission of student documents to colleges/universities (i.e. transcripts, counselor letters of recommendation)

### Counseling Center Google Classrooms

The Counseling Center maintains a Google Classroom with News & Resources for each grade level. Important announcements and opportunities for students are posted regularly.

### Counseling Center Website

Comprehensive resource for students and families, where you can find information regarding:

- BOCES CTE Program Offerings
- Community Mental Health and Crisis Intervention Resources
- Course Catalog
- Driver's Education
- Employment
- Graduation Requirements
- New Student Information
- Post High School Planning
- Scholarships
- Summer Opportunities
- Summer School Programming
- Transcript Requests
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Working Papers

## CAFETERIA

Compiling menus based on good nutrition and variety is the responsibility of our school's cafeteria manager. You, as a student, have the following responsibilities in the cafeteria:

1. Keep tables and chairs clean. Neatness is especially important.
2. Avoid unruly behavior. Loud talking and running around have no place in the cafeteria.
3. Use good table manners.
4. Take your place at the end of the line when entering the cafeteria. "Cutting in" on the line is not allowed.
5. Dispose of debris in waste cans when you are finished eating.
6. Eat your lunch in the cafeteria. Do not take food to any other part of the building, although on days of good weather you may eat outside in front of the school. (Trash goes in the receptacles provided.) The privilege of eating lunch in the cafeteria will be denied to those who misuse the facility.

Students are required to stay in the cafeteria during their lunch period. Students are permitted outside, in front of the cafeteria, as weather permits.

Snacks are available during periods 1 through 4 in the cafeteria. However, students may not be late to class as a result of stopping to buy food; as with any situation involving tardiness, the consequence of such may include assignment to a teacher's detention during IA. Students may be dismissed from study hall, with a pass, to come to the cafeteria for a snack.

### **ELEVATOR**

An elevator is located at the north end of the academic wing. Its primary purpose is to provide students on crutches or in a wheelchair to gain access to the second and third floors. Students who need to use the elevator will be assigned a key by the School Nurse, and will be allowed to have one student accompany him/her on the elevator to assist with books. The key must be returned to the Health Office at the end of the day, unless specific arrangements have been made with the nurse. A \$10.00 charge will be assessed for a lost elevator key.

### **LAVATORIES**

Students may use school lavatories either during passing time or at other times by creating a SmartPass. Teachers' expectations around Smartpass usage must be followed. Loitering and socializing are not appropriate. Smoking is prohibited, as is any action, which enables another student to smoke. The bathrooms on the first floor are available for your use during lunch periods. .

### **LOCKERS**

Each Freshman is assigned a hall locker by the homeroom teacher. Upperclassmen can request a locker using an online form. These lockers are used for the storage of coats, hats, books, etc., and the student has the responsibility of keeping the locker clean and neat. It should be understood, however, that lockers remain the property of the school and as such are subject to inspection by school officials.

There is a potential for loss of students' property. You are responsible for your own books, etc. and should keep your locker locked at all times. Do not disclose your combination to anyone or share your locker with anyone. Disclosing or sharing your combination with others or intentionally defeating the locking mechanism to provide easier access to your locker places your personal property at risk of being stolen. You are strongly cautioned against this behavior.

### **DRIVING TO SCHOOL/PARKING LOTS**

Driving to school is a privilege, which is extended to **Westhill juniors and seniors**. Sophomores who get their driver's license and have parent approval will be issued parking passes on a case by case basis and will be parking at St. Ann's. Student parking on campus are limited to yellow lined spaces only. Students are not allowed to drive their cars unless their parents have sent a written request to the main office for approval. Forms are available in the main office. Any student who does receive approval for driving to school must purchase a \$4.00 numbered sticker. This is to be placed on the driver's side rear door window. Students may receive permission to drive a motorcycle to school and park in a specially designated area. Student cars should be registered as soon as possible. Students who are not registered to park are not to drive to school; after one warning, the penalty for driving to school without permission will be an assignment to one late detention.

Cars may be used only while driving to and from school. Once you arrive at school, you may not hang around in the parking lot; similarly, at no time during the day may any student sit in a car parked in the parking lot. If you are observed coming in from the parking lot, or going out to the parking lot, during the school day and without permission, it will be a fair assumption that you left or were attempting to leave school illegally, and appropriate penalties will be imposed. The parking lot is generally off limits, except for arriving at and leaving school, unless further permission has been granted in the main office.

Those who drive cars or motorcycles to school must use extreme caution while on the school grounds or near the school. Evidence of any reckless driving will be reported to the authorities. Parking of student cars on private property is in violation of school policies.

Any violations in these expectations may result in your driving privileges being revoked.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Articles found should be brought to the main office, where they will be stored until claimed. Students should avoid bringing valuables and large amounts of money to school. All personal property is the sole responsibility of the student.

## **OUTSIDE PRIVILEGES**

Students are allowed to be outside the building on the Onondaga Blvd. side (between the building and the driveway - not out in the parking lot) or the courtyard during days of favorable weather for lunches. All other outside areas of the campus are off-limits during school hours. The outside noise level must not be a distraction or disturbance to the classrooms adjacent to the area.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

The Westhill Central School District furnishes your basic textbooks. They represent an investment of thousands of dollars. You are responsible for loss or damage to the textbooks assigned to you. Keep them clean and handle them carefully. Make sure your name and teacher are written in the books in case they are misplaced.

While you are in your Gym class, make sure you lock up all of your belongings - don't leave them on the bench in the locker room. Locks for your gym locker will be supplied by the school

## **LIBRARY**

The library is available to students during their study halls as an alternate place to work. Students are expected to follow the rules and regulations set forth by the Library staff. If a student fails to follow these rules, they are subject to consequences, which could include removal of library privileges out of study hall. The Library expectations are listed below.

1. Tell a library staff member when you arrive and ask for permission if you need to leave.
2. Have something productive to do while you are here.
3. Keep the furniture where it is - no moving it. Sit in chairs or on stools - not on the floor or tables.
4. No photo, video, or audio recording without library staff member approval.
5. No food or drink except for water in covered water bottles. Snacks may be provided by a staff member.
6. Be conscious of your noise level and be respectful of others using the space.

### **IF YOU WANT:**

Your locker number or combination  
 A pass for dismissal during school  
 Club meeting room  
 Working papers  
 College and testing information  
 Visitor's pass  
 Assignments during a long illness, call  
 BOCES information  
 To submit an excuse for an absence  
 Musical instrument rental  
 Guest pass to Prom or Ball  
 A morning snack  
 Yearbook information  
 To schedule an activity  
 To discuss a private situation

### **THEN GO TO:**

Counseling Office or Main Office  
 Health Office  
 Advisor  
 Counseling Office  
 Counseling Office  
 Main Office  
 Counseling Office  
 Counseling Office  
 HR or Health Office  
 Room 57 (Band Rm)  
 Main Office  
 Cafeteria  
 Mrs. Casper  
 Ms. Snell  
 Counseling Office, Health Office, Main Office

## SECTION FIVE

### STUDENT ACTIVITIES AND SCHOOL SPIRIT

#### TRADITIONS AT WESTHILL

A number of student activities have become traditions since the opening of Westhill in 1961.

#### Bonfire and Pep Rally

This year the Bonfire, which is sponsored by Student Council and recognizes the fall sports teams, will be held preceding the football game on October 4.

#### Academic Awards Ceremony

At this evening program, scheduled to take place in the Spring, most of our academic awards will be presented.

### CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

#### Student Council

The purpose of Student Council is to develop a school government with a positive and supportive school spirit. As a service organization, it is our goal to assist the school and organizations within it in fundraising and other activities. Activities will include the Bonfire and more!

ADVISORS:	Mr. Maimone
OFFICERS:	President – Adyson Goldman
	Vice President – Sophie Donegan
	Secretary – Nora Fitzgerald
	Treasurer – Riley Sheridan

#### Senior Class (2025)

The main objective of Senior activities this year is to raise needed money for the Senior Ball and the Senior Breakfast. Among the fundraisers will be the sale of refreshments during basketball season and the annual Talent Show.

ADVISOR:	Mrs. Fritz
OFFICERS:	President – Sike Alagbe
	Vice President – Molly Dorfman
	Secretary – Avery Starowicz
	Treasurer – Grace Bergett

#### Junior Class (2026)

Planning and committee work will continue all year in anticipation of the Junior Prom.

ADVISOR:	Ms. Rodgers
OFFICERS:	President – Ben Czaplicki
	Vice President – Jael Hill
	Secretary – Trinity Speer
	Treasurer – Molly Ryan

**Sophomore Class (2027)**

The goal of the Sophomore Class is to plan activities that will make Junior Prom and Senior Ball affordable.

ADVISOR:	Mr. Kiggins
OFFICERS:	President – Lucas Devine
	Vice President – Lucy DeMore
	Secretary – Mariana Nagraj
	Treasurer – Grady Etoll

**Freshman Class (2028)**

The goals of the Freshman Class will be to begin fundraising for the Junior Prom and Senior Ball and to create class spirit with a magazine sale, and to promote responsibility with a class service project.

ADVISOR:	Mrs. Galey
OFFICERS:	President – Evan Chaddock
	Vice President – Julia Flegel
	Secretary – Grace Stroman
	Treasurer – Julia Tjaden

**Art Club**

Designed to encourage an interest in Art and give students related social and cultural experiences.

Special activities may include any of the following: a N.Y.C. trip, visits to various area museums, drawing excursions, etc. Money is raised by selling art items made by the club.

ADVISOR:	Mr. Allen
MEETING PLACE:	Room 50
MEETING TIME:	I.A. Tuesdays

**Future Teacher's Club**

The Future Teacher's Club participates in activities that include shadowing in the classrooms at the high school and elementary levels. This club organized the Holiday party where community members and children participate in games and many fun activities organized by the group.

ADVISOR:	Mr. Gilmore
MEETING PLACE:	Room 300

**Drama Club/Masquers Club**

Learn to act on stage and/or produce theatre; add drama to your life in the best possible ways. Participate in fall drama production and spring musical.

ADVISOR:	Joe Buchmann (spring musical)
	Joe Buchmann (fall drama)
MEETING PLACE:	Auditorium

**ECOS (Environmentally Conscious Organized Students)**

This group works to encourage many types of recycling, helps to maintain the high school courtyard, and works with other clubs on environment-oriented service projects.

ADVISOR: Mrs. Kemper  
MEETING PLACE: Room 314

**French Club**

French Club encourages interest in French culture and in speaking French. Club activities will include game days, conversation groups, film days, peer tutoring, French Contest preparation, and Christmas celebrations.

ADVISOR: Ms. Amerault  
MEETING PLACE: Room 311

**DECA (formerly FBLA)**

DECA provides an opportunity for business education students to develop leadership and business skills in a social setting. The club also is concerned with developing civic and personal responsibility.

Special activities include: the provision of gifts and food for needy Westhill families, sponsorship of special-event speakers, attendance for eligible members at district and state competitions held each spring, various fundraising activities, and possible field trips.

ADVISORS: Mrs. Casper and Mrs. Ryan  
MEETING PLACE: Room 4

**Character Education**

Character Education plans activities both in and out of school to promote spirit, service, and a positive lifestyle. The organization also encourages substance-free activities and choices. Some members attend a weekend conference known as Teen Institute to further develop leadership skills and substance-free living. Volunteer work through the Rescue Mission, We Rise Above the Streets, Ronald McDonald House and the Toys for Tots program have been other activities of the group. Character Ed sponsors the annual Penny War, which raises money for charity. Students from all grade levels are invited to participate.

ADVISORS: Mrs. Weinsztok  
MEETING PLACE: Room 310

**Literary Magazine**

The goals of the "lit mag" staff are: to stimulate student expression through creative writing, to work together toward a common goal, to share similar interests, to establish confidence, to learn the basics of printing, art and literary editing, and to produce a superior quality magazine.

ADVISORS: Ms. Donegan and Mrs. Casper  
MEETING PLACE: Room 218  
MEETING TIME: 1A Wednesdays



**Math Team**

To promote Mathematics through competition with other students at a local, state, and national level. Teams compete with other schools in the Onondaga County Math League with four area meets and an All-County meet. There are six contests as part of the New York Math League and the American High School Math Exam is given in March.

ADVISORS: Ms. Hatt & Ms. Warne  
MEETING PLACE: Room 205

**Mock Trial Team**

Participate in area competitions, debating various points of view

ADVISORS: TBD  
MEETING PLACE: TBD

**National Honor Society**

A faculty committee selects members from the Junior and Senior classes. A cumulative **academic** average of 88.0% or higher is required. Service, character, and leadership are also factors that are considered. For a further description, see Section Two of this Handbook. Activities include a fall and spring induction, sponsoring an Indian foster child, peer tutoring here at Westhill High School, and various community service projects.

ADVISOR: Ms. Bitner  
MEETING PLACE: Auditorium

**Pep Band**

Perform in an instrumental group at Westhill home football games, the WHS bonfire, and other special occasions.

ADVISOR: Ms. Althen  
MEETING PLACE: Room 57

**Shakespeare Recitation Competition**

Sponsored by the English-Speaking Union, this is an international, multi-level competition. It is held in December, with the school winner advancing to the area competition in March at Syracuse University. A soliloquy of at least twenty lines is performed from memory. The area competition requires the recitation of a sonnet in addition to the monologue.

ADVISOR: Mrs. Murphy  
MEETING PLACE: Room 213

**Pride Club**

The WHS Pride Club offers LGBTQ+ students and allies a safe space to talk, share community resources, as well as educate and raise awareness about LGBTQ issues within the Westhill school community.

ADVISOR: Mrs. Bower  
MEETING PLACE: Room 103

## HOSA

HOSA (Health Occupations Students of America) is a student-led club that helps students develop skills and knowledge in preparation for careers in the health industry. Students participate in health-related volunteer and enrichment activities as well as competing in a yearly competition against other New York State HOSA Chapters.

ADVISOR: Mrs. Johnson  
MEETING PLACE: Room 101



### INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

Students are encouraged to consider joining a Westhill athletic team and, in fact, most do so at some point in their high school careers. Numerous sports are available in each of the three sports seasons. If interested please see Ms. Smarrelli or the appropriate coach. Sign-ups will take place at the beginning of each season on FamilyID.com.

<u>Fall</u>	<u>Sport</u>	<u>Coach</u>
Football:	Varsity	Adam Griffo
	Asst. Varsity	Jack Hayes
	Asst. Varsity	Joe Fiacchi
	Jr. Varsity	Ahmaad Graham
	Jr. Varsity Asst.	Rashaad Graham
	Head Modified	Ramy Guindy
Cross-Country:	Asst. Modified	Robert Bach
	Boys'	Chris Stogsdill
	Girls'	Dan Reid
Soccer:	Boys' Varsity	Tom Etoll
	Boys' J.V.	Jake Etoll
	Girls' Varsity	Patrick Connors
	Girls' J.V.	Kaylee Randall
Tennis:	Girls'	Doug Annable
Volleyball:	Varsity	Karla Prince
	J.V.	Karl Caputo
Golf:	Boys'	Jason Clavijo

<u>Winter</u>	<u>Sport</u>	<u>Coach</u>
Basketball:	Boys' Varsity	Jon Connelly
	Boys' J.V.	Sean McIntosh
	Girls' Varsity	Zach Kiggins
	Girls' J.V.	Anthony Zaia
Hockey:	Varsity	Neal Purcell
Indoor Track:	Varsity (Girls')	Dan Reid
	Varsity (Boys')	Chris Stogsdill
	Assistant	Robert Bach
	Assistant	Isabella Sterly

<u>Spring</u>	<u>Sport</u>	<u>Coach</u>
Baseball:	Boys' Varsity	Ted Klam
	Varsity Ass't	Dan Karleski
	J.V.	Anthony Zaia
Softball:	Girls' Varsity	TBD
	J.V.	TBD
Track:	Boys' Varsity	Chris Stogsdill
	Asst. Varsity	Isabella Sterly
	Girls' Varsity	Dan Reid
	Asst. Varsity	Robert Bach
Tennis:	Boys'	Doug Annable
Golf:	Girls'	Jason Clavijo
Lacrosse:	Boys' Varsity	TBD
	Asst. Varsity	TBD
	Boys' J.V.	TBD
	Asst. J.V.	TBD
	Girls' Varsity	Bob Elmer
	Asst. Varsity	Lloyd Hamilton
	Girls' J.V.	TBD
	Asst. J.V.	Kevin Hennigan

## **ALMA MATER**

Among the tall and verdant hills all “valed”  
in majesty of colors white and blue  
so true we pledge our loyalty.

Where guiding hands of knowledge lead with tender care,  
treasured friendship, love and memories, always we will share.

Our Warrior pride will guide our ways, O fair Westhill.

Composers: Nick Godzak, Gina Fortunato, Cody Chester  
Edited by: Tonette Orlando

School Colors – Royal Blue and White

## APPENDIX

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### STUDENT EXTRACURRICULAR CODE OF CONDUCT

The establishment of this code is an outgrowth and reflection of the school district's concern for the safety, well-being, and conduct of all students including those participating in athletics and other extracurricular activities. The rules and regulations that are contained in the code are developed with the students' best interests.

The creation of such rules and regulations necessitates the need for the responsibility for enforcement. Adherence to the Student Extracurricular Code requires the cooperation and support of the family, the student, and the school district. Together we can work toward mutual goals of healthy sportsmanship, keen competition, and the personal and physical development of our students. Additionally, we can work together in preventing and reducing the risks of possible penalties that occur if the provisions of the code were not followed. Please read the code and discuss its contents with your son/daughter. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact any coach, club advisor, the athletic director, or a school administrator.

#### **Philosophy and Expectations for students participating in athletics and other extracurricular activities**

Interscholastic athletics and other extracurricular activities are an integral part of the educational experience. They serve as a uniting force for the student body, the faculty, and the entire community. Interscholastic athletic activities and extracurricular activities provide realistic opportunities to promote the physical, mental, moral, social, and emotional well-being of all the students at Westhill.

It is a privilege for a student to represent his or her school through participation in interscholastic teams and extracurricular activities. With this privilege comes responsibilities that include the following expectations: adherence to all rules of the sport/club and to the school's code of conduct; cooperation and sportsmanship among all individuals involved; respect for officials and authority; an obligation to give one's best effort in the pursuit of individual, team and club goals.

Students participating in extracurricular activities represent the school in a special and unique way. Students must maintain a high standard of conduct, both in and out of school, on or off the playing field, as a host or guest, and in all activities in the community.

Because the use of alcohol and other drugs prevents the normal development of a healthy mind and body, the "Student Extracurricular Code of Conduct" has been established for those participating in Westhill athletics and other extracurricular activities. The use, possession, consumption, or distribution of alcohol, illegal drugs or the unauthorized use of prescription or nonprescription drugs is strictly prohibited on and off school grounds. This Code of Conduct will be instituted over the entire school year. A school year is defined as the start of the fall sport season (including practices in the summer) through the last day of the school year.

#### **ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY POLICY**

The faculty and administration of Westhill Central Schools are committed to providing every one of our students with the finest academic opportunities possible. Academic achievement is, indeed, our primary goal as an institution, and should be the primary goal of all students.

It cannot be forgotten, however, that participation in interscholastic and extracurricular activities is also an integral part of becoming a well-rounded young adult. To that end, academics and extracurricular activities work hand-in-hand as each of our students strives for excellence in their own personal way.

The following policy is set forth in order to serve as the determinant as to whether or not each student has demonstrated sufficient academic achievement to be considered eligible to participate in interscholastic or extracurricular activities

1. A student who is failing two or more courses at the end of the first, second, or third ten-week marking period (as indicated by a grade of less than 70%) will be ineligible to participate in interscholastic or co-curricular activities for the next five weeks. In such a case, a student and parent may request entry into the "two week protocol" to continue participation in interscholastic and co-curricular activities and attempt to raise grades to passing. If, at the end of the protocol the student is still failing two or more subjects (any subjects), or, at any time the conditions of the protocol are not met, the student will be ineligible to participate for the remainder of the marking period.

2. The “two week protocol” is a signed agreement which allows the student to continue participation in interscholastic or co-curricular activities for an additional two weeks as long as the following criteria are met **each week for each class the student is failing**. Parents, students, and administration all sign the agreement.
  - a. The student must attend all classes and arrive on time.
  - b. The student must be actively engaged in all learning activities.
  - c. The student must complete and hand in all assignments including homework.
  - d. The student must attend at least one Instructional Assistance period with the teacher of the class.
  - e. The student must have each teacher sign off that the above criteria were met.

At the end of the protocol, if a student is still failing two or more subjects (any subjects), they are ineligible for the remainder of the 5 week period.
3. At the end of the semester, final averages for semester courses only will be used in conjunction with second quarter averages (for yearlong courses) to determine eligibility for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter.
4. For the fourth quarter only, final averages will be used instead of quarter grades to determine eligibility for the next school year. Summer school grades may be substituted for such averages in order to improve a student’s eligibility status. The same eligibility standards as outlined above will be applied to final averages and/or summer school grades.
5. Students may not drop courses they are failing to escape becoming ineligible. Grades of drop/fail and incompletes, which are assigned due to lack of academic effort, count as failures. When such incompletes are changed to passing grades, a student’s status will be re-evaluated.
6. Ineligible students may not attend rehearsals or practices, nor are they to sit on the bench during athletic contests.
7. The activities to which this policy pertains are interscholastic and co-curricular activities which meet or occur outside of the instructional day (7:30 a.m. - 2:10 p.m.) .
8. A student’s ineligibility period will begin the day report cards are posted. **For the 2023-2024 academic year, eligibility periods will begin on November 15, January 31, April 17, and June 28.**
9. Academic eligibility will not be based on disciplinary considerations. Such cases will be evaluated on an individual basis by the school administration.

## **PROCEDURES**

1. A list of all participants in each interscholastic or extracurricular activity should be submitted to the Assistant Principal by the Athletic Director or activity advisor within one week after such a roster may be determined.
2. In return, the Athletic Director or advisor will receive from the Assistant Principal at the end of each five-week period a list of students who are ineligible. It will be the primary responsibility of the coach or advisor to notify any such student of their status, and provide an explanation of the implications of such status.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Extracurricular activities are activities that are organized by the school to engage students beyond the parameters of the classroom for which participation is voluntary. Examples of such activities include, drama and musical productions, all athletic-associated events, regional or state competitions attached to clubs, and overnight trips. Not considered extracurricular are those activities that are part of a course curriculum for which course credit is awarded. Such activities include participation in band and chorus concerts and class field trips.

## **INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS**

The athletic program at Westhill is conducted under the following principles as set forth by the University of the State of New York:

1. To emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play.
2. To stress values derived from playing the game fairly.
3. To show cordial courtesy to visiting teams and officials.
4. To respect the integrity and judgment of sports officials.
5. To encourage leadership, use of initiative, and good judgment by the players of the team.
6. To recognize that the purpose of athletics is to promote the physical, mental, moral, social, and emotional well being of the individual players.
7. To ensure that coaches' conduct reflects integrity and fair play.

## **ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY (as determined by the NYSPHSAA)**

1. **Registration** - An athlete is eligible for interschool competition only when he or she is a bona fide student enrolled during the first fifteen school days of a semester and registered in a complete schedule of courses as governed by school policy.
2. **Duration of Competition** - A student is eligible for competition during any eight semesters after his or her entry into the ninth grade and prior to graduation. A student shall be eligible for interschool competition in grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 until their nineteenth birthday. If the age of nineteen years is reached on or after July 1, the student may continue to participate during that school year in all sports. A student who attains the age of fifteen years while enrolled in a grade below the ninth grade may take part in inter-high school sports, provided he or she meets all other requirements. Younger students may qualify under the New York State Selection Classification program.
3. **Physical Examinations** - Before a student may participate in the interscholastic athletic program, he/she must have completed the following:
  - A physical examination by the appointed school physician and/or the student's personal physician. Medical examinations may be scheduled at any time during the school year and shall be valid for a period of twelve continuous months.
  - A health update questionnaire completed within 30 days of the start of the sport season. All paperwork pertaining to the student's physical examination must be turned in to the school nurse for verification and approval prior to any athletic participation.

## **EXPECTATIONS FOR ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION**

1. **Attendance/Routine Practice** - Regular attendance at practice is mandatory. If an athlete misses more than two practices without permission, he or she shall be suspended from the team for the amount of time to be determined by the coach.
2. **General Attendance** - A student is expected to attend all classes on his or her schedule on the day of a contest and the next school day following the contest. Habitual absence before and after a contest may result in suspension from the team. To be eligible to participate in daily practices or a contest, the athlete must be present in school by 11:00 AM unless the student has been excused from school attendance for such reasons as a doctor appointment, field trip, college visitation, driver test, or such reasons other than illness. The purpose of this clause is to keep a student from participating when he or she is ill.
3. **Injuries and Illness** - An athlete must report any injury immediately to the coach. If an athlete sustains a significant injury, he or she must have a written release from the attending physician. Should there be any question concerning the decision about an athlete's participation due to illness or injury, the final decision will be made by the school physician. Any student who has been absent from school for five or more consecutive days due to illness or injury must be released for participation by the athlete's attending physician and again qualified for participation by the school physician.

4. Transportation To and From Athletic Contests - All team members will travel to and from “away” contests by means of school-provided transportation. After the conclusion of an away contest, athletes may be released to their parent or guardian only with full knowledge and approval of the coach. Any other exceptions to this must be made in writing to the building principal.
5. Care of School Equipment - The athlete is responsible for all equipment issued to him or her. All lost, stolen or damaged equipment must be paid for by the athlete. All equipment issued to an athlete must be returned at the end of the sport season. Failure to return lost, stolen or damaged equipment may jeopardize further participation in the interscholastic athletic program.
  - a. This equipment is intended for use in practices and contests only! General use of school equipment outside of the normal practice and contest needs is not permitted.
6. Quitting a Team - If an athlete quits or is suspended from a sport, he or she will not be eligible to participate in another sport during the same season. A student who is not successful in making a team after participating in a tryout program is eligible to try out for, and participate in, another sport during that season. Students will not be allowed to quit a sports team to avoid penalty for a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

#### **PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION OF THE EXTRACURRICULAR STUDENT CODE**

It is the responsibility of coaches, club advisors, the student body, athletes, and parents to ensure that these code rules are observed. Any violation of the district’s drug and alcohol policy should be reported immediately to the principal. If a violation of the Extracurricular Student Code of Conduct occurs in relation to use, possession, consumption, distribution of alcohol, illegal drugs and prescription or nonprescription drugs, the following consequences will occur:

#### **FIRST OFFENSE**

<b><u>Initial Consequence</u></b>	<b><u>Reduction Clause</u></b>
<b>PENALTY</b>  The student will be immediately suspended for 60 calendar days from all school sponsored activities.	<b>PENALTY</b>  The student will be suspended for 30 calendar days from all school sponsored activities.
<b>CONDITIONS</b>  Students are prohibited from attending practice, games, meetings and events during the suspension period. Students will be allowed to participate in any tryouts if such occurs during the suspension period.	<b>CONDITIONS</b>  The student will complete a minimum of 5 hours substance abuse counseling/awareness. The cost of this program will be covered by the student’s parents/guardians. Students are prohibited from attending practice, games, meetings, and events during the suspension period. Students will be allowed to participate in any tryouts if such occurs during the suspension period.



**SECOND OFFENSE**

<b><u>Initial Consequence</u></b>	
<b>PENALTY</b> The student will be suspended for 90 calendar days from all school-sponsored activities.	<b>PENALTY</b> The student will be suspended for 60 calendar days from all school-sponsored activities.
<b>CONDITIONS</b> Students are prohibited from attending practice, games, meetings and events during the suspension period. Students will be allowed to participate in any tryouts if such occurs during the suspension period.	<b>CONDITIONS</b> The student will complete a minimum of 10 hours substance abuse counseling/awareness. The cost of this program will be covered by the student's parents/guardians. Students are prohibited from attending practice, games, meetings, and events during the suspension period. Students will be allowed to participate in any tryouts if such occurs during the suspension period.

**THIRD OFFENSE**

<b>PENALTY</b> The student will be suspended for one calendar year and must satisfy conditions stated.
<b>CONDITIONS</b> The student will complete drug/alcohol counseling with a school-approved counselor until released from the program at the counselor's discretion. The cost of this program will be covered by the student's parents/guardians.

\*\* It is to be noted that, should the infractions take place during school hours or at school activities or otherwise occur in a manner that provides a lawful basis for additional discipline, the penalties outlined above will be applied concurrently with and/or in addition to any school or district penalties. Thus, for example, high school graduation, which is not deemed to constitute an extracurricular activity for purposes of this Extracurricular Code of Conduct, would not be treated as an activity from which a student would automatically be suspended for a violation of this Code. However, depending on the misconduct committed by a particular student, the same misconduct that results in the student's suspension from attending or participating in extracurricular activities in accordance with this Code, may also provide grounds for additional discipline (in accordance with the student's due process rights), including, but not necessarily limited to, a student's suspension from attending or participating in the high school graduation ceremony.

Students who are suspended from extracurricular activities may not participate in any practices, games, rehearsals, performances, or meetings unless noted in the consequences above. These suspensions will begin on the date of notification from school administration.

Violations will be cumulative for a student high school career (Grades 9-12).

**COURSE OF ACTION**

Once a violation of the Student Code of Conduct has been found, the following course of action will take place:

Step 1: The principal will notify the student and their parents/guardians of the violation and penalty. Prior to suspending a student's privilege of participating in and attending school sponsored activities, the student and his or her parents will be given the opportunity to discuss the suspension with the principal or the person who is authorized to impose the suspension.

Step 2: If the student and their parents/guardians feel it appropriate to apply for the reduction in penalty they may do so by applying in writing to the building principal stating why they feel a reduction in suspension time is appropriate.

Step 3: If granted a reduction in penalty, the student must complete the conditions noted under the reduction clause and submit documentation of completion of the substance abuse counseling/awareness. If not granted a reduction in penalty, the student will serve the suspension noted under initial consequence.

Step 4: The principal will determine when all conditions have been met and will notify the student and their parents/guardians in writing with the date the student is allowed to return to participation.

### **APPEAL PROCESS**

Students who are suspended from participation may appeal to the Superintendent of Schools within five days of notification of the suspension. Such an appeal must be in writing and must state the specific reasons for the appeal. Further appeals must be filed with the Board of Education before they are filed with the Commissioner of Education or the court system.

### **PENALTY FOR BEHAVIOR RELATED DISCIPLINARY REFERRAL**

A behavior related incident is considered but not limited to the use of profanity, being disrespectful to any staff member and or game official, violating school rules, unlawful behavior, and flagrant conduct related to school sponsored activities as well as non-school based activity. Students who consistently violate the code of conduct and/or whose behavior causes disruption to the school day will forfeit their privilege to participate in extracurricular activities. School administration will be responsible for communicating with the student, parent, coach, or club advisor prior to limiting the student's ability to participate.

### **ROLE OF PARENTS IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

In order to promote a positive extracurricular experience parents/guardians of Westhill students will:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the Student Code of Conduct and the commitment your child has made to Westhill and as a member of the community.
2. Demonstrate understanding of the consequences of any Student Code of Conduct violation and to assist in the enforcement of the Code.
3. Be supportive/respectful of your child, the coach, the club advisor, the officials, and the administration.
4. Hold your child accountable for their actions and help them in proper decision making skills.
5. Know the team and club rules and expectations and address concerns regarding your child or your child's program to the coach or club advisor.
6. Exhibit sportsmanship at all contests or activities and encourage your child and their teammates.
7. Not consume alcohol or tobacco products on school grounds or at school events, to include chaperoning away contests/events.

### **Definitions of Terms:**

**Illegal Drugs:** Controlled drugs (substances) not prescribed by a physician or substances whose use is against the law.

**Offense Reduction Clause:** If a student and their parents/guardians decide they would like to apply for a reduction in suspension time they may do so by participating in the offense reduction clause. The student will apply in writing to the building principal for the offense reduction. A student can receive an offense reduction after their first or second offense but cannot apply for one after their third offense. The offense reduction clause will reduce the amount of suspension time and will also involve the student completing drug/alcohol-counseling sessions.

**School Sponsored Activities:** Any school sponsored or authorized extracurricular event or activity, regardless of where such activity or event takes place.

## WESTHILL HIGH SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT

In accordance with New York State Project SAVE legislation, the following is a summary of various behavioral offenses and the penalties, which may be imposed as a result of their commission by a student at Westhill High School.

**A complete copy of the Westhill Central School District Code of Conduct is available in the high school main office and on the district website for all interested persons.**

### School and Class Attendance and Punctuality

#### **Unexcused absence from school (truancy)**

- first offense -late detention
- subsequent offenses - multiple late detentions
- If no excuse is presented for a claimed legal absence, it will be processed as unexcused within a week of the student's return to school.

#### **Unexcused tardiness to school**

- Third offense – warning
- 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> offenses – IA detention
- subsequent offenses: late detention, parent conference with Assistant Principal, review of driving privileges/Late Arrival

#### **Unexcused absence from class (i.e. - class cut)**

- first offense - teacher assigns Instructional Assistance; parent is notified by letter from teacher
- second offense (same class) - late detention; warned of consequence of third cut; parent is notified by phone and by follow-up letter from Assistant Principal
- subsequent offenses - three late detentions

#### **Unexcused tardiness to class**

- first, second, third offense - teacher assigns Instructional Assistance
- subsequent offenses - teacher assigns IA at their option, or the student may instead be referred to the Assistant Principal to be assigned detention(s); parent should be notified by teacher

#### **Unexcused absence from Study Hall**

- first offense - detention, letter to parent from Assistant Principal
- second offense - two detentions, letter to parent from Assistant Principal
- subsequent offenses - late detention

#### **Leaving school without permission**

- first offense - late detention, class cuts if appropriate; student loses free time, if he/she has any, for a minimum of twenty weeks
- subsequent offenses - two late detentions, class cuts if appropriate, loss of free time if appropriate

#### **Forgery**

- first offense - two detentions, class cut if appropriate, loss of free time for a minimum of twenty weeks
- subsequent offenses - late detention, class cut if appropriate; if a student leaves school as a result of the forgery, penalties for truancy will be in effect

### Insubordination and/or Disruptive Behavior

#### **Insubordination (refusal to follow the requests of staff members) – not repeatedly and substantially disruptive, not violent.**

- first offense – depending on the nature of the insubordination – teacher-assigned Instructional Assistance to suspension
- subsequent offenses – late detention to suspension

#### **Insubordination or Disorderly Conduct (classroom) - not repeatedly and substantially disruptive, not violent**

- first three offenses - teacher assigns Instructional Assistance; offenses may be recorded in main office via referral; teacher should contact parent
- subsequent offenses - multiple detentions or late detention

#### **Repeatedly and substantially disruptive/violent behavior in classroom**

- Students may be removed immediately from class by a teacher according to the Project SAVE legislation and the District Code of Conduct. Pending proper notification of a parent, this removal may be for five days or more.

#### **Disruptive behavior in Study Hall, hallway or during IA**

- first offense - one or two detentions, depending on offense
- second offense - two detentions or late detention
- subsequent offenses - late detention to suspension and parent notified

#### **Fighting**

- first offense (after determination of blame and extent of each student's involvement) - penalty may range from exoneration and warning to suspension, parent notified; legal authorities may be contacted as appropriate
- second offense - suspension up to five days, parent notified, legal authorities may be contacted; more serious situation may be referred to Superintendent for further action

#### **Using rude/disrespectful/profane language/body language (when speaking to staff member or other adult visitor)**

- lesser offenses may minimally require an apology, assignment to detention(s), late detention.
- first offense (if profanity directed at staff member) - suspension not less than one day
- subsequent offenses - suspension of five days, conference with Principal and/or Superintendent

#### **Using rude/disrespectful/profane language (directed to, or in reference to another student)**

- first offense – depending on severity, penalty may range from warning to late detention to suspension
- subsequent offenses - penalty may range from detention(s) to late detention(s) to suspension from school

#### **Using rude/disrespectful/profane language (casually - in halls, classrooms, in conversation with other students)**

- first offense – depending on severity, penalty may range from warning to detention(s) to suspension
- subsequent offenses - penalty may range from detentions to late detention to suspension

#### **Physical harassment of another student, staff members or adult visitors**

- first offense – depending on severity, penalty may range from a warning to late detention to suspension
- subsequent offenses - late detention or suspension

#### **Harassment: Bullying, Peer Abuse/Cyberbullying/Hazing**

- first offense – depending on severity, penalty may range from a warning to late detention to suspension
- subsequent offenses – late detention or suspension
- The District's full and complete policy pertaining to Dignity for All Students: Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination of Students (Policy #7552) is set forth as Appendix "A" to this Code of Conduct, and is hereby expressly incorporated into this Code.
- The District's full and complete policy pertaining to Hazing (Policy #7553) is set forth as Appendix "B" to this Code of Conduct, and is hereby expressly incorporated into this Code.

#### **Classroom disruption with cell phone, beeper, use of CD player or electronic device**

- first offense item will be confiscated by the teacher and sent to the Assistant Principal. Student may pick up device at the end of day.
- subsequent offenses – The device will be confiscated and parents will pick it up from the main office. If students continually violate this policy it will be considered insubordination and appropriate consequences will be administered, which could include late detention or suspension.

#### **Cafeteria - unruly/disrespectful behavior, to include but not limited to: leaving a mess behind, cutting in line, and eating in hall**

- first offense (depending on seriousness) - detention(s) or late detention
- second offense - detention(s) or late detention; student may be assigned to spend lunch period in the main office

#### **Cafeteria - instigation of, or participation in a food fight**

- first offense - late detention, required to clean up mess, assigned to eat lunch in main office, and depending on severity, suspension from school
- second offense - suspension from school, parent notified, assigned to eat lunch in main office

**Disruptive and/or uncooperative behavior on school bus**

- first offense - warning or detention(s), depending on nature of offense; parent may be contacted; more serious offenses may require penalty as described below
- second offense - late detention or suspension; student may be removed from all Westhill transportation for 30 days

**Disruptive and/or uncooperative behavior at school functions**

- all offenses - penalty may be applied similarly to offenses listed above; student may be removed from the event, with no refund of any admission charge

**Failure to attend assigned Instructional Assistance period**

- first three offenses - student is reassigned to IA and also assigned to one detention. If either is missed, late detention is assigned.
- second three offenses - student is reassigned to IA and also assigned to two detentions. If any is missed, late detention is assigned.
- subsequent offenses - student is assigned to late detention

**Academic Dishonesty - includes copying from other sources (including Internet sites) or allowing someone else to copy one's own work**

- first and subsequent offenses - penalty may range from a warning to a late detention; student should receive a zero for assignment; teacher should notify parent
- suspension from school may also occur as a penalty for "cheating"

**Drugs and Alcohol (also, see Code of Conduct)****Violation of the Drug and Alcohol Policy - use and/or possession of drugs, drug paraphernalia and/or alcohol at school, on school grounds, or at any school activity:**

- first offense - five-day suspension from school, parents notified, authorities notified if appropriate, parent/student conference with Superintendent of Schools and depending on the nature and severity of the drug or alcohol offense, long term suspension from school
- second offense (same school year) - parents notified, authorities notified if appropriate, parent/student conference with Superintendent of Schools
  - a. the suspension will be for a minimum of twenty (20) school days
  - b. other conditions for reinstatement may be established by the Building Principal or Superintendent if deemed necessary to secure the health, safety or welfare of the student or others
- The District's full and complete policy pertaining to the Student Extracurricular Code of Conduct set forth in the Student/Parent Handbook is hereby expressly incorporated into this Code of violations of the district's drug and alcohol policy.
- If the infractions occur over a period of more than one school year, the student will be suspended for a minimum of five (5) days and a Superintendent's hearing will be held, at which time a determination of any further consequence will be made.
- Penalties also imposed for participation in extracurricular activities, refer to Pg. 14.

**Theft**

- first offense – judgment of administrator – penalty may range from detention to suspension; authorities notified as appropriate; student may be required to pay restitution

**Smoking/Use of Electronic Cigarettes****Smoking in school, on school property, and/or at off-campus school activity**

- first offense - two late detentions
- second offense - two-day suspension from school
- third offense - three-day suspension, parent conference with administrator
- fourth offense - five-day suspension and conference with Superintendent

**Enabling another student to smoke (including but not limited to providing cigarettes or other tobacco products to another student)**

- first offense - late detention
- subsequent offenses - two late detentions, notification of parent

**Smoking on school bus**

- penalties as assigned above
- in addition, student is removed from transportation for 30 days

**Detention/Late Detention****Failure to attend Detention (no legal excuse)**

- first offense - two detentions; if either of these is missed, a late detention is assigned
- second, third offense - judgment of administrator - two detentions as above, or immediate assignment to late detention
- subsequent offenses - student is assigned to late detention

**Failure to attend Late Detention (no legal excuse)**

- first offense - student is suspended from school for one day
- subsequent offenses - student is suspended for two days or more

**Tardiness to Detention or Late Detention**

- first offense – warning; 1<sup>st</sup> five minutes, time to be made up by extending detention. Beyond 5 minutes late, students will be assigned another detention.
- subsequent offenses - additional late detentions will be assigned

**Disruptive behavior in Detention or Late Detention - includes eating, sleeping, talking, making noises**

- first offense - detention
- subsequent offenses in detention – late detention
- subsequent offenses in late detention - one-day suspension from school

**Parking Lot/Unauthorized Areas****Parking on Campus without permission (not obtaining a parking pass)**

- first offense- warning
- second offense- Late Detention, parents notified
- subsequent offenses- Insubordination- student subject to suspension from school.

**Loitering in parking lot or other unauthorized area without permission during school hours**

- first offense - student is assigned to two detentions, loss of free time if appropriate (whether or not the offense took place during the free time); if it can be determined that student was returning from having left school without permission, penalties for truancy will be in effect (see above). Similarly, if it is determined that the student was smoking (to include smoking in a car), the appropriate penalty for smoking shall be imposed.
- subsequent offenses - student is assigned to late detention. Student loses free time if appropriate.

**Reckless/Dangerous Driving on School Property**

- first offense – warning or detention(s), depending on nature of offense
- second offense – detentions, authorities notified if appropriate, parents notified, driving privilege revoked

**Student Use of Computerized Information Resources (Violation of the Internet Use Policy)**

- first offense - two detentions
- second offense - two detentions, removal of school internet use privileges
- depending on the nature and severity of the violation of District policy, suspension from school

**Inappropriate Dress**

**Criteria (any or all of the following) - insufficient coverage; promoting drug/alcohol use or sexual activity; profane; or disruptive to educational process:**

- first offense - warning, request to remove or cover the offending article; detention(s) if no compliance
- second offense - detention(s), parent notified
- subsequent offenses - late detention, parent notified, possible suspension from school.

- Suspension from school may also occur for a first, second or subsequent offense, under circumstances where a student's dress is exceptionally profane, vulgar or indecent or where the student persists in dressing inappropriately.

#### **Vandalism/Defacing School Property**

- penalty depends upon intent as well as seriousness of offense, from a warning to a suspension; authorities may be contacted
- student is responsible for financial restitution to the limit set by Education Law

#### **Possession or Use of a Weapon**

- first offense – Parents notified; authorities contacted in accordance with Article IX, Subsection “D.” of the Code of Conduct; five-day suspension from school, and depending on the severity of the offense, referral to the Superintendent for hearing and possible long-term suspension from school
- second offense – suspension from school pending further action by Superintendent of Schools, authorities contacted

#### **Activation of School Fire Alarm System (without due cause)**

- Minimum five (5) day suspension; authorities will be contacted, and Superintendent will be notified for consideration of Superintendent's hearing and possible long-term suspension from school
- second offense - suspension from school pending further action by Superintendent of Schools; authorities contacted

#### **Any Offenses Not Listed Above**

- penalty will be imposed appropriate to the offense, with notification of parents and/or authorities by an administrator if it is judged to be necessary.

#### **Addendum**

The following offenses (i.e. - crimes) are itemized on the annual New York State BEDS Report, but are not included above. It is likely that, in the event of such incidents, a lengthy suspension would be imposed, along with criminal penalties. As listed, they include: homicide, rape, arson, kidnapping, assault and battery, bomb threat, threat of bio-terrorism, and threat of harm to an individual.

#### **Reporting Illegal Activities**

Any student observing a student possessing a weapon, alcohol or illegal substance on Westhill Central School property or at a Westhill Central School function has the responsibility to report this information immediately to a teacher, a Westhill Central School administrator, or the Superintendent. Any weapons, alcohol or illegal substances found shall be confiscated immediately, followed by notification of the parent of the student involved and the appropriate disciplinary action taken, up to and including permanent suspension and referral for prosecution.

A building administrator must notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency of those code violations that constitute a crime and substantially affect the order or security of a school as soon as practical, but in no event later than the close of business the day the Principal learns of the violation. The notification may be made by telephone, followed by a letter mailed on the same day as the telephone call is made. The notification must identify the student(s) and explain the conduct that constituted a crime.

APPENDIX II  
Westhill Central School District  
Board of Education Policies

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Students 7552  
Adopted 06.18.12  
Amended 07.09.12  
Amended 08.08.12  
Amended 11.13.18

**Dignity for All Students: Prohibiting Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination**

The Board of Education ("Board") is committed to providing a safe and productive learning environment within its schools. In accordance with New York State's "Dignity for All Students Act" (the "Dignity Act"), the Board is committed to creating a school environment that is free of harassment, bullying and discrimination.

**Policy Definitions:**

"*School property*" means in or within any building, structure, athletic playing field, playground, parking lot, or land contained within the real property boundary line of a public elementary or secondary school, or in or on a school bus.

"*School bus*" means every motor vehicle owned by a public or governmental agency or private school and operated for the transportation of pupils, children of pupils, teachers and other persons acting in a supervisory capacity, to or from school or school activities, or privately owned and operated for compensation for the transportation of pupils, children of pupils, teachers and other persons acting in a supervisory capacity to or from school or school activities.

"*School function*" means a school-sponsored or school-authorized extra-curricular event or activity regardless of where such event or activity takes place, including any event or activity that takes place in another state.

"*Discrimination*" means discrimination against any student by a student or students and/or an employee or employees on school property or at a school function including, but not limited to, discrimination based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.

"*Harassment*" and "*bullying*" mean the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or by threats, intimidation or abuse, including cyberbullying, that: (a) has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional or physical well-being; or (b) reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety; or (c) reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause physical injury or emotional harm to a student; or (d) occurs off school property and creates or would foreseeably create a risk of substantial disruption within the school environment, where it is foreseeable that the conduct, threats, intimidation or abuse might reach school property. Acts of harassment and bullying include, but are not limited to, acts based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex. For the purposes of this definition the term "threats, intimidation or abuse" shall include verbal and non-verbal actions.

"*Cyberbullying*" means harassment or bullying as defined immediately above, including paragraphs (a), (b), (c) and (d) of the above definition, where such harassment or bullying occurs through any form of electronic communication.

"*Material Incident of Discrimination and/or Harassment*" means a single incident or a series of related incidents where a student is subjected to discrimination and/or harassment by a student and/or employee on school property or at a school function that creates a hostile environment by conduct, with or without physical contact and/or by verbal threats, intimidation or abuse, of such severe or pervasive nature that:

(a) has or would have the effect of unreasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits, or mental, emotional and/or physical wellbeing; or

(b) reasonably causes or would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety.



Such conduct shall include, but is not limited to, threats, intimidation or abuse based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex; provided that nothing in the Dignity Act shall be construed to prohibit a denial of admission into, or exclusion from, a course of instruction based on a person's gender that would be permissible under Education Law sections 3201-a or 2854(2)(a) and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. section 1681, et seq.), or to prohibit, as discrimination based on disability, actions that would be permissible under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

*"Disability"* means a disability as defined in New York Executive Law Section 292(21).

*"Sexual Orientation"* means actual or perceived heterosexuality, homosexuality, or bisexuality.

*"Gender"* means actual or perceived sex and includes a person's gender identity or expression.

*"Employee"* means any person receiving compensation from a school district or employee of a contracted service provider or worker placed within the school under a public assistance employment program, pursuant to title nine-B of article five of the Social Services Law, and consistent with the provisions of such title for the provision of services to such district, its students or employees, directly or through contract, whereby such services performed by such person involve direct student contact.

### **Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination of Students Prohibited**

No student shall be subjected to harassment or bullying by employees or students on school property or at a school function (or off school property, as set forth in this Policy); nor shall any student be subjected to discrimination based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex by school employees or students on school property or at a school function. However, this shall not be construed to prohibit a denial of admission into, or exclusion from, a course of instruction based on a person's gender that would be permissible under Section 3201-a or Section 2854(2)(a) of the New York Education Law and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. section 1681, et. seq.); nor shall this be construed to prohibit, as discrimination based on disability, actions that would be permissible under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

### **Remedial Disciplinary Consequences**

In addition to any other disciplinary consequences set forth in the District's Code(s) of Conduct, the Board and District are committed to implementing remedial responses to harassment, bullying and discrimination that are aimed at addressing the root causes of harassment, bullying and/or discrimination and correcting and preventing the recurrence of the problem behavior.

Appropriate remedial consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- peer support groups;
- corrective instruction or other relevant learning or service experience;
- supportive intervention;
- behavioral assessment/evaluation;
- behavioral management plans, with goals for improvement that are closely monitored;
- student counseling and parent conferences.

### **Environmental Remediation**

In addition to imposing appropriate disciplinary consequences and remedial efforts aimed at addressing harassment, bullying or discrimination by particular students, building-wide and/or school-wide environmental remediation can be an important tool to prevent harassment, bullying and discrimination. Environmental remediation strategies may include, but are not limited to the following:

- supervisory systems which empower school staff with prevention and intervention tools to address incidents of harassment, bullying and discrimination;
- school and community surveys or other strategies for determining the conditions contributing to the relevant behavior;
- adoption of research based systemic harassment, bullying and discrimination prevention programs;
- modification of schedules;
- adjustment in hallway traffic and other student routes of travel;
- targeted use of monitors;
- staff professional development;
- parent conferences;
- involvement of parent-teacher organizations; and
- peer support groups.

### **Designation and Training of Dignity Act Coordinators/Dissemination of Names & Contact Information**

The Board of Education shall appoint one or more staff members in each school building to be thoroughly trained to handle human relations in the areas of race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender and sex. The designated individual(s) in each building shall be referred to as the Dignity Act Coordinator(s).

The name(s) and contact information for the Dignity Act Coordinator(s) shall be shared with all school personnel, students, and persons in parental relation, which shall include, but is not limited to, providing the name, designated school and contact information of each Dignity Act Coordinator by:

- listing such information in the Code of Conduct and updates posted on the District's Internet web site;
- including such information in the plain language summary of the Code of Conduct provided to all persons in parental relation to students before the beginning of each school year;
- including such information in at least one District or school mailing per school year to parents and persons of parental relation and, if such information changes, in at least one subsequent District or school mailing as soon as practicable thereafter;
- posting such information in highly-visible areas of school buildings; and
- making such information available at the district and school-level administrative offices.

In the event a Dignity Act Coordinator vacates his or her position, another school employee shall be immediately designated for an interim appointment as Coordinator, pending approval of a successor Coordinator by the Board of Education within 30 days of the date the position was vacated. In the event a Coordinator is unable to perform the duties of his or her position for an extended period of time, another school employee shall be immediately designated for an interim appointment as Coordinator, pending return of the previous Coordinator to his or her duties as Coordinator.

### **Shared Responsibility for Reporting Known and/or Suspected Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination**

Any student who believes that they are being subjected to harassment, bullying or discrimination or who witnesses harassment, bullying or discrimination, as well as any other person who has knowledge of or witnesses any possible occurrence of harassment, bullying or discrimination, shall report the harassment, bullying or discrimination orally or in writing to any staff member or to the designated Dignity Act Coordinator for the student's school building. School staff at all levels are responsible for reporting harassment, bullying and discrimination of which they are aware. Any staff member who is assigned to and regularly works within a particular school building who witnesses harassment, bullying or discrimination or who receives an oral or written report of harassment, bullying or discrimination shall orally notify the designated Dignity Act Coordinator for his or her school building and thereafter shall file a written report with the designated Dignity Act Coordinator. All other school staff who witness harassment, bullying or discrimination or receive an oral or written report of harassment, bullying or discrimination shall orally

notify either their immediate supervisor, who in turn shall notify the designated Dignity Act Coordinator for the supervisor's school building (if applicable), or the Superintendent of Schools, and thereafter shall file a written report with the same person to whom the oral report was made.

In addition, every teacher and every other professional educator (i.e., all certified personnel), whether employed by the District, or working under contract with the District, is required to:

1. At all times maintain a climate of mutual respect and dignity for all students, regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex, so as to strengthen students' confidence and promote learning; and
2. Address personal biases that may prevent equal treatment of all students in the school or classroom setting.

Parents and other members of the school community are likewise encouraged to address their own personal biases and to behave as role models for their own children and other District students by maintaining and promoting a climate of mutual respect for others without regard to actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex.

Parents, community members and other persons are encouraged to promptly report (either orally or in writing) to school staff, any incident(s) of harassment, bullying or discrimination that they observe while they are on school premises or at a school function. Parents, community members or other persons who engage in such misconduct on school premises or at a school function shall be admonished by school staff in charge of the event or activity and may be directed to leave the District's premises and limited or prohibited from attending future school events and activities for a period of time and/or in a manner that is commensurate with their misconduct.

#### **Investigating and Responding to Complaints of Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination**

The Dignity Act Coordinator to whom a report is made or the Superintendent (if the report is made directly to the Superintendent by school staff who are not assigned to a particular school building) shall promptly investigate or cause an investigation to be made into the complaint, regardless of whether the complaint is made orally or in writing.

The parents of the student who is alleged to be the target of the alleged harassment, bullying, or discrimination shall be notified immediately of the fact that a complaint has been made and that an investigation is being conducted. If the complaint alleges that other students engaged in acts of harassment, bullying, or discrimination, the parents of those students shall also be notified.

All complaints will be handled confidentially, except for disclosure necessary to thoroughly investigate and resolve the complaint.

The parents of the student who is alleged to be the target of the alleged harassment, bullying or discrimination, and the parents of any accused students, will be informed of the outcome of the investigation. The Superintendent of Schools will also be informed of the outcome of the investigation. If any students or parents are not satisfied with any procedural aspect of the District's investigation of a complaint, they may appeal such procedural issues to the Board of Education. The appeal must identify the specific action being appealed, explain the basis of the appeal, and must be delivered to the Superintendent of Schools within ten (10) days of the date the student or parent is informed of the outcome of the investigation.

When an investigation verifies that the alleged harassment, bullying or discrimination occurred, the Dignity Act Coordinator or Superintendent (as applicable) shall take prompt action, or cause prompt action to be taken, that is reasonably calculated to end the harassment, bullying or discrimination, eliminate any hostile environment, create a more positive school culture and climate, prevent recurrence of the behavior, and ensure the safety of the student or students against whom such harassment, bullying or discrimination was directed. Such actions shall be consistent with District guidelines developed in accordance with this Policy.

In addition, whenever a Dignity Act Coordinator or the Superintendent (as applicable) believes that any harassment, bullying or discrimination constitutes criminal conduct, he or she shall promptly notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency.

#### **Maintaining a Record of Allegations of Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination and Reporting "Materials Incidents" of Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination to the Commissioner**

A record shall be made by the District's Dignity Act Coordinators of each allegation of harassment, bullying or discrimination (regardless of whether the allegation is made orally or in writing), together with a summary of the finding(s) of the investigation into each such allegation, and the disposition of the matter. If an allegation of harassment, bullying or discrimination is substantiated, at a minimum, the record shall include information about:

- the nature of bias or biases involved (e.g., whether the harassment, bullying or discrimination was based on actual or perceived race, color, weight, national

- origin, ethnic group, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation);
- whether the incident resulted from student and/or employee conduct;
- whether the incident involved physical contact and/or verbal threats, intimidation or abuse;
- the location(s) where the harassment, bullying or discrimination occurred.

The District will annually report “material incidents” of discrimination and harassment to the State Education Department in the manner prescribed by the Commissioner, on or before the basic educational data system (BEDS) reporting deadline or such other date as determined by the Commissioner.

In addition, the District’s Dignity Act Coordinators shall regularly report on data and trends related to harassment, bullying and discrimination to the Superintendent.

### **Retaliation Strictly Prohibited**

The Board prohibits retaliatory behavior directed at any such person having reasonable cause to suspect that a student has been subjected to harassment, bullying, or discrimination by an employee or student on school property or at a school function (or off school property, as set forth in this Policy), who acting reasonably and in good faith, either: 1) reports such harassment, bullying or discrimination to: a) school officials, b) the Commissioner of Education, or c) law enforcement authorities; or 2) initiates, testifies, participates or assists in any formal or informal proceedings with respect to such harassment, bullying or discrimination. In addition, all such persons shall have immunity from any civil liability that may arise from the making of such a report or from initiating, testifying, participating or assisting in such formal or informal proceedings.

Follow-up inquiries and/or appropriate monitoring of the alleged wrongdoer and victim shall be made to ensure that the harassment, bullying or discrimination has not continued or resumed and that those involved in the investigation of allegations of harassment, bullying or discrimination have not suffered retaliation.

### **Development of Administrative Guidelines with Respect to Training Programs for School Employees**

The Superintendent is authorized and directed to cause administrative guidelines to be prepared for approval by the Board of Education for school employee training programs to promote a positive school environment that is free from discrimination and harassment and to discourage and respond to incidents of discrimination and/or harassment on school property or at a school function. These guidelines shall include, but are not be limited to, providing employees, including school and district administrators and instructional and non-instructional staff, with training:

- Relating to the development of nondiscriminatory instructional and counseling methods for use by District faculty and counseling staff;
- Relating to the development of measured, balanced and age-appropriate responses to instances of harassment, bullying or discrimination by students, with remedies and procedures following a progressive model that make appropriate use of intervention, discipline and education, vary in method according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student and the student's history of problem behaviors, and are consistent with the District's Code of Conduct; and
- To be used in school training programs to discourage the development of harassment, bullying and discrimination, and to make school employees aware of the effects of harassment, bullying, cyberbullying and discrimination on students and that are designed:
  - a. to raise the awareness and sensitivity of school employees to potential harassment, bullying and discrimination, and
  - b. to enable employees to prevent and respond to harassment, bullying and discrimination.

Training may also address:

- 1) social patterns of harassment, bullying and discrimination, including but not limited to acts based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex;
- 2) the identification and mitigation of harassment, bullying and discrimination; and
- 3) strategies for effectively addressing problems of exclusion, bias and aggression in educational settings.

Training may be implemented and conducted in conjunction with existing professional development training.

In addition, the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee(s) shall assure that the District's curriculum in grades kindergarten through twelve (k-12) provides for instruction in civility, citizenship and character education in accordance with Section 801-a of the Education Law, including an instructional component for all students that supports development of a school environment free of discrimination and harassment, as required by the Dignity For All Students Act, including but not limited to instruction that raises awareness and sensitivity to discrimination or harassment based on a person's actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender or sex

- NOTE: Refer also to Policies #1330 -- Appointments and Designations by the Board of Education
- #7310 -- District Code of Conduct
- #7553 -- Hazing of Students
- #8242 -- Civility, Citizenship and Character Education/Interpersonal Violence Prevention Education

Policy 7553  
Adopted 7/11/11

### Hazing of Students

The Board of Education is committed to providing a safe, productive and positive learning environment within its schools. Hazing activities are demeaning, abusive and/or illegal behaviors that harm victims, and interfere are inconsistent with the educational goals of the District by negatively impacting the school environment. Hazing of a student by another student or group of students is strictly prohibited on school property; in school buildings; on school buses; by school sponsored groups, clubs or teams; and at school sponsored events and/or activities whether occurring on or off-campus. Hazing of a student refers to soliciting, encouraging, aiding, or engaging in "hazing" behavior as defined pursuant to District policy, regulation and/or law.

For purposes of this policy, the term "hazing" among students is defined as any humiliating or dangerous activity expected of a student to join a group and/or participate in a group activity regardless of their willingness to participate. Hazing behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following general categories:

- a) Humiliation: socially offensive, isolating or uncooperative behaviors.
- b) Substance abuse: abuse of tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs.
- c) Dangerous hazing: hurtful, aggressive, destructive, and disruptive behaviors.

Incorporated within this definition are various forms of physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse, which may range in severity from teasing/embarrassing activities to life threatening actions.

Even if the hazing victim participated "willingly" in the activity, or there was no "intent" by the hazer(s) to harm or injure another individual, hazing is still hazing and against District policy, the District Code of Conduct, and also may be in constitute criminal misconduct violation of New York State Law. However, hazing of students does not need to rise to the level of criminal activity for such conduct to be in violation of District rules and subject to appropriate disciplinary sanctions. Any hazing activity, whether by an individual or a group, shall be presumed a forced activity and in violation of Board policy, regardless of the real or purported "willingness" of the student to participate.

Any student who believes that he/she is being subjected to hazing behavior, as well as students, school employees or third parties who have knowledge of or witness any possible occurrence of hazing, shall report the incident to any staff member or the building principal. Anonymous student complaints of hazing behavior will also be investigated by the District. The staff member/building principal to whom the report is made (or the staff member/building principal who witnesses hazing behavior) shall investigate the complaint/incident and take appropriate action to include, as necessary, referral to the next level of supervisory authority and/or other official designated by the District to promptly investigate allegations of hazing. Investigations of allegations of hazing shall follow the procedures utilized for complaints of harassment within the School District.

### **Prohibition of Retaliation**

The Board of Education prohibits any retaliatory behavior directed against complainants, victims, witnesses, and/or any other individuals who participate in the investigation of allegations of hazing. Follow-up inquiries and/or appropriate monitoring of the alleged hazer(s) and victim(s) shall be made to ensure that hazing behavior has not resumed and that all those involved in the investigation of allegations of hazing have not suffered retaliation. Any act of retaliation is subject to appropriate disciplinary action by the District.

### **Knowingly Makes False Accusations**

Students who knowingly make false accusations against another individual as to allegations of hazing may also face appropriate disciplinary action.

### **District Responsibility/Training**

Personnel at all levels are responsible for taking corrective action to prevent hazing behavior of which they have been made aware at School District sites; by school sponsored groups, clubs or teams; and at school sponsored events and/or activities whether occurring on or off-campus. Further, as may be applicable, personnel are to report such hazing behavior to their immediate supervisor. Staff training shall be provided to raise awareness of the problem of hazing within the schools and to facilitate staff identification of, and response to, such hazing behavior among students.

Prevention and intervention techniques within the District to help prevent hazing behavior and to support and protect victims shall include building-level and classroom-level strategies and activities as determined by administration. Individual intervention will be provided by appropriate staff members to hazers, victims and their parents to help ensure that the hazing stops.

This policy shall be publicized District-wide and shall be disseminated as appropriate to staff, students and parents. Disciplinary sanctions for violation of this policy shall be outlined in the District Code of Conduct and may also be incorporated in staff and student handbooks. In addition, allegations of hazing behavior may result in referral to law enforcement officials as necessary.

New York State Penal Law Sections 120.16 and 120.17  
 Education Law Sections 1709-a, 2503-a, 2554-a and 2801  
 New York Code of Rules and Regulations (NYCRR)  
 Section 100.2(l)(2)