

**WESTERN HILLS
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
2009 - 2010**

FAMILY-STUDENT HANDBOOK

**600 39th Street
West Des Moines, Iowa 50265
633-5900
www.wdm.k12.ia.us/whills**

**Mrs. Beth Thornton, Principal
Dr. Thomas Narak, Superintendent**

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West Des Moines Community Schools
Western Hills Elementary School
600 39th Street
West Des Moines, Iowa 50265

Parents and Students,

On behalf of the staff, I welcome you to Western Hills Elementary School.

This handbook has been compiled as a reference for your use. I hope you will sit down together as a family to read through it and discuss the information on the following pages.

Communication between home and school is essential to your child's success at school and we encourage you to call if you have questions or concerns regarding your child's progress.

Everyone you meet here, every friend you find, every book you read, every problem you solve, every choice you make will contribute to your educational experience. We look forward to learning and growing with you.

I invite to visit Western Hills often to become involved in our many activities. Please let me know if you need help in any way.

Sincerely,

Beth Thornton, Principal

GREETINGS FROM THE WESTERN HILLS STUDENT COUNCIL

On behalf of the student governing body, the Western Hills Student Council welcomes you to Western Hills.

The Western Hills Student Council consists of elected classroom representatives from second through sixth grades and we are the voice of the entire student body. Meetings are held once a month throughout the year. We plan entire school events to improve our school atmosphere. We also participate in community service projects.

Some of our annual school events are planning Red Ribbon week, Spirit Days, Book Drives, Thanksgiving Dinners, Can Drives and the Spring Walk-a-Thon.

Western Hills Student Council looks forward to working with you throughout the coming year.

Western Hills Student Council Objectives

The goal of the Western Hills Student Council is to provide strategies and activities that involve students in school-wide functions and decision making in order to maintain an effective school.

To reinforce the understanding that student, staff, and PTA involvement is vital in establishing a vision for an effective school.

To provide strategies to reinforce the understanding of democracy and responsibility in the students, staff, and community.

To provide an understanding that the involvement of students in planning and decision making supports building a successful school climate.

Western Hills Student Council

Western Hills Philosophy

The purpose of Western Hills School Elementary is to transmit specific skills, background information, and basic understandings which will become the foundation for life-long growth. In addition to providing academic programs, the school joins with the home and the community in helping students to build a personal system of values, heritage, and an understanding of other cultures.

The role of the entire staff in this process is to inspire and direct students to sources of information. With this in mind, the staff recognizes the dignity and worth of every person and knows that each individual has potential that should be encouraged. It is the belief of the Western Hills staff that all students can learn and that the greatest student achievement will occur when expectations are high.

Western Hills Vision Statement

Western Hills believes that each student has a right to feel safe and secure at school. As we work and learn together our students, staff and parents will strive to achieve a positive school environment in which the six pillars of good character – trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship are common place. The word discipline means to learn a better way to develop skills which correct, strengthen and perfect behavior. The key work in defining discipline is LEARN. We want students to develop a sense of the six pillars through the teaching of appropriate social skills so they are accountable for their own actions and are competent in decision-making skills. As a result, each adult and student will feel honored and valued for their unique strengths and abilities.

WESTERN HILLS GENERAL INFORMATION

Western Hills Elementary School Hours:

Office Hours: 8:15 am-4:15 p.m. except Wednesday 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

School Hours: 9:05 a.m.-3:55 p.m.

Full day Kindergarten -6th Grade 9:05 a.m.-3:55 p.m.

Office (515) 633-5900

Answering Machine 4:15 p.m.-8:15 a.m.

SCHOOL CLOSING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Up-to-the-minute recordings about cancellations, dismissals and closings are available at **633-5555**. The WDMCS hotline is provided as a service for students, parents, staff and community members to call if school must be cancelled or dismissed early due to weather conditions or other emergencies.

Parent Link, the district's emergency notification system, will be used to notify families of cancellations, early dismissals or other emergencies. Calls are made to home phone numbers, cell phone numbers and/or work numbers as provided to the school and entered into the Infinite Campus data system.

This information is also shared with the local media on the following **television stations:** KCCI (Channel 8), WHO (Channel 13) and WOI (Channel 5); **FM radio stations:** KJJY (92.5), KIOA (93.3), KGGO (94.9), KHKI (97.3), KWQW (98.3), KZZQ (99.5), KSTZ (102.5), KAZR (103.3), KLTJ (104.1), KPTL (106.3) and KISS (107.5); and **AM radio stations:** KPSZ (940), WHO (1040), KWKY (1150), KRNT (1350) and KXNO (1460).

Student days missed due to school closing will be made up beginning Thursday, June 3, 2010.

Attendance

Regular school attendance maximizes student learning and achievement. We appreciate parental reinforcement of a positive attitude toward school attendance and promptness. If your child needs to stay home or be late for school, please call the school office before the start of the school day and report your child's name, homeroom teacher and reason for the absence or tardiness. (If a child is reported absent by the homeroom teacher and the school has not been notified by parents, the secretary, school nurse, or health assistant will contact the home to ensure the child's safety.) Please note the following attendance procedures:

- One hour or more of absence (a.m. or p.m.) is considered absent for the session.
- Less than one hour of absence (a.m. or p.m.) is considered tardy for that session.
- Written excuses may be required for each absence and/or tardy. Until the reason for absence is documented, absences/tardies are noted as unexcused. In the case of excessive absences, a physician's note, school nurse, or building administrator's documentation may be required to excuse the absence.

Teachers, guidance counselors and administrators work very closely to carefully monitor every student's attendance pattern. Every effort will be made to communicate and work with the families of our students who demonstrate a pattern of poor attendance. It is important to

understand that if attendance disruptions remain excessive despite the school's efforts to assist the family, the matter may be turned over to the County Attorney's office as a truancy referral.

Thank you for doing your part to ensure your child is able to take full advantage of his/her educational opportunities in school!

Students Arriving Early

Unless students need to arrive early for a school-sponsored event or breakfast, students should not arrive on the school grounds prior to the designated time for entrance into the building. Due to other responsibilities, staff members are not available for supervision of students until that designated entrance time into the building. Kids West before school child care is available for students who arrive prior to the designated entrance time into the building. Please call Community Education for fee information and registration details.

Students Arriving Late

If a student will be arriving late to school, a phone call notifying the school should be made or a note from home should accompany your child stating the reason for his/her late arrival. All late-arriving students are required to stop at the office and obtain a pass that will allow them to enter the classroom.

Students Leaving Early

Students leaving the school before dismissal time must check out through the office. No student will be allowed to leave early unless we have received a note or phone call from the student's parent/guardian granting permission to leave the school early. If someone other than a parent or guardian will be picking the student up, the note or phone call should tell us who that person will be. Proper identification may be required. All students will be required to wait for parents by the office at the main entrance to the building. Parent(s) arriving early to pick up a child must sign out at the office before leaving with their child.

School Fee Waiver

Students whose families meet the income guidelines for free and reduced price lunch, the Family Investment Program (FIP), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), transportation assistance under open enrollment, or who are in foster care are eligible to have their student fees waived or partially waived. Parents or students who believe they may qualify for a waiver should contact the principal or lunch secretary for a waiver form. This waiver does not carry over from year to year and must be completed annually.

TRIMESTER SCHEDULE

End of first trimester November 13, 2009

End of second trimester March 1, 2010

End of third trimester June 2, 2010

Progress Reports send home last day of school.

School Pictures

School pictures for all children are taken in the fall. A prepay picture information packet will be sent home with students prior to the day pictures are taken.

NO PETS, PLEASE!

We welcome members of our school family to visit our schools during the day. Our buildings are also open to the community for many activities such as youth organization meetings, youth sports contests, after school classes and adult classes.

However, we cannot welcome pets into our schools. Student safety and the cleanliness of the building are put at risk when animals accompany their owners for a drop-in visit at school. There are exceptions, of course. If your student is bringing a pet for show and tell or for a class project, please contact the principal for permission before the animal comes to school.

Animals which are kept at school for instructional purposes will be in good health with no evidence of disease, be of such disposition as to not pose a safety threat to children, and be maintained in a clean and sanitary manner. Documentation of current vaccinations will be available for all cats and dogs. Pets/animals and/or their cages will not be allowed in kitchen, sinks or food preparation areas due to health and sanitation guidelines

Birthdays/Special Days

Birthday treats may be shared with classmates, if desired. Birthdays are important for children, and we would like to give them the opportunity to commemorate the day, using a minimum amount of class time for this purpose. **We ask that all birthday treats brought to school be peanut restricted.** Children who wish to share with others on their birthday are encouraged to donate a book to the media center. The media specialist or media assistant may be contacted to assist with book selection. The student's name will be placed on a special book plate in the front of the book.

If a balloon or flower bouquet is delivered to the school, it will be kept in the office until the end of the day. Delivery of such items to the classrooms may be disruptive to the learning environment.

Please do not allow home party invitations to be distributed at school unless a whole class is being invited. This will help to avoid hurt feelings of students not receiving invitations.

Each school celebrates three special days a year with a class party: Fall, Winter, and Valentine's Day. These are district-wide special days. We have parent volunteers who help coordinate the parties for the classroom teachers.

STUDENT COUNCIL

The Western Hills Student Council is comprised of elected students from each class and one or more adult advisors. Student Council members are elected at the beginning of the school year.

The main purposes of the student council are to coordinate school-wide projects; to help provide a feeling of unity among the grade levels; and to allow students to learn about leadership, the democratic process, group dynamics, and community service.

Recess

Recess provides children opportunities for physical exercise, release of energies, relaxation with friends, and social skill development. Outdoor recess is held except during inclement weather. During cold weather, the current outdoor temperature is monitored. Wind-chill factor information is used as a guide for a recommended, safe level of temperature. During inclement weather, an indoor, supervised recess occurs. Safe and responsible behavior is expected and enforced.

A written request from a parent is needed for a child to be excused from recess. This note should state the reason that prevents the child from participating in recess. If a child needs to be excused from recess for more than three days, a physician's note is required.

Students are asked to dress appropriately for the weather. Weather changes occur quickly, so children need to be dressed in a manner to reflect any seasonal change in weather.

BUSINESS-EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS

Each of the district's fourteen schools are linked with a local business, agency or organization in a partnership designed to enhance educational experiences and increase awareness about the workplace. Students, staff and partner employees participate in a variety of activities throughout the school year. Community service projects, pen pal programs, student performances, mentoring programs, and employee assistance at special school events are among the many activities conducted in the partnership program.

The key to the ongoing success of the district's Business-Education Partnership Program lies in the mutual benefit to students, the schools and the business community. For further information contact the Office of School/Community Relations at 633-5022.

WESTERN HILLS HAS CHAR-ACT-ER

This title is part of our effort to integrate Character Education into our programs. The character pillars and social skills are taught together and used in all parts of the school day. The 6 pillars of good character are combined with the teaching of social skills to reinforce appropriate behavior. The 6 pillars of character are also used as a multi-level filter through which to process behavior when a student receives a Character Reminder Slip and completes an Action Plan to change inappropriate behavior.

Parents are encouraged to visit with their students about the 6 pillars of character and adopt these words into their vocabularies. The 6 pillars are: Trust, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship (TRRFCC)

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS

Western Hills work to integrate Character Education with Positive Behavior Support (PBS) efforts and strategies in order to make our school a caring and safe community for learning. This will provide:

- A systematic approach that establishes and reinforces clear behavioral expectations.
- A team-based system involving the entire school staff using a systems approach.
- A common approach to discipline that is proactive, instructional, outcome-based.

- Data about the school that is used to guide decision making.
- A goal to help educate all students, even students with challenging behaviors.
- An emphasis on continuous, data-based improvement, individualized to each student.
- An instructional approach that focuses on systematically teaching social behavior using effective instructional methodology.

CARING & SHARING

We believe children need to know that giving time, skills and effort are important ways of helping to serve the community. Individual classrooms may also choose to do additional service projects. We hope the children will understand that even a small contribution will make a difference in other people's lives!

ICARE

I CARE is a community service learning program sponsored by the West Des Moines Community School District in which students can volunteer throughout the community. The projects allow the students to learn about their community, to enhance their self-esteem by helping others and to begin to prepare for future employment.

GIFTS

Students are not to exchange gifts among themselves. Individual gifts given to teachers by students are discouraged. Any gift given to a teacher by a student may not be opened in the presence of the class.

Student Dress and Appearance

Students are expected to practice good hygiene and wear neat and appropriate attire at all times. The dress and physical appearance of our elementary students is expected to be age appropriate. Personal enhancement products (i.e., make up) are not encouraged. Clothing should not draw undue attention, and should provide adequate coverage of the person so as to not be disruptive or distracting. Some articles of concern are low rider pants, short shorts, tube tops, halter tops, midriff tops, and spaghetti straps. The wearing of obscene or unbecoming apparel is not appropriate. Consistent with our drug and alcohol prevention program, we discourage students from wearing clothing that promote these types of products. Students that are dressed inappropriately will be asked to change or be given something appropriate to wear for the day. Shoes must be worn at all times for health and safety reasons. Hats are not allowed in the classroom, except on special occasions.

Student Supplies

It is very important that children bring school supplies to begin the year. Teachers at each grade level have prepared a list of supplies which students will need. Each elementary school supply list is posted on our district website. Please contact the school if you did not receive a supply list or need assistance with obtaining school supplies.

Telephone Usage/Cell Phones

We encourage children to limit their use of the phone to necessary calls. Students will not be interrupted from instruction to talk on the phone unless there is an emergency.

Students are discouraged from bringing cell phones to schools. Telephones are available in all classrooms and staff members will assist students in making all necessary calls.

The school district is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen cell phones. Cell phone use during the school day may result in confiscation of the phone.

Visitors

Parents are encouraged and welcomed to visit their child's classroom. All visitors are expected to check in at the office and pick up a visitor badge. Please call your child's teacher to arrange a time. Schedules may occasionally change, and it is helpful to arrange a time to visit. Please enter the building through the front door during the school day.

If parents need to drop off a cold lunch or school materials necessary for a student, please stop by the office. We want to try to avoid disruptions to a class in session.

Field Trips

There may be times when your child's teacher chooses to enhance the curriculum by taking a field trip. A permission slip must be signed by the parent or guardian before each field trip. These forms provide authority for your child to travel away from school premises. If written permission is not received, students may be required to remain in the building. Parents often are invited to assist with supervision on field trips.

Community Education

The West Des Moines Community School District has a commitment to lifelong learning, and Community Education provides a vehicle for matching community needs and community resources.

There are programs for people of all ages, from infants to the elderly. Every fall, winter and spring, LEARNWest offers courses such as cooking, writing, music, math, mechanics, drawing, exercise, and finances. In addition, Community Education provides programs and classes for preschoolers and for school-age children before and after school and during the summer.

Fliers on Community Education activities will be sent home periodically with your child. If you wish to contact Community Education, please call 633-5001.

Homework

Homework may be assigned by the teacher for enrichment, reinforcement, and extension of the school experience that is consistent with student ability and developmental level. The amount of time necessary to complete homework will vary according to the assignment and the student's ability.

In grades 4-6, homework may be given on a nightly basis. Students are expected to fill out assignment notebooks and keep track of their homework. Assignments are due at the beginning of the next school day unless otherwise stated by the teacher. If situations or

emergencies arise preventing your child from finishing an assignment by the due date, please send a note explaining why it is not finished.

THE TEACHER WILL:

- Relate assignments to the classroom objectives.
- Coordinate assignments with other teachers, if it is necessary.
- Give precise, clear directions.
- Take into consideration home responsibilities.
- Maintain contact between home and school regarding homework.
- Modify or enhance homework assignments according to individual student ability and need.

THE STUDENTS SHOULD:

- Ask for clarification, if needed.
- Have necessary materials before leaving school.
- Plan ahead by estimating the amount of time it will take to complete assignments.
- Complete and return assignments as directed.

FAMILIES CAN HELP BY:

- Providing a quiet, comfortable environment and adequate time to complete homework.
- Providing motivation, guidance, and resource, but insisting upon the child doing his/her own homework.
- Conferring with the teacher if there are any questions about the purpose or procedures of the homework.

Insurance

In a school setting where there is a large group of children playing together, there may be some accidents. Thus, a low cost student accident policy is available through the West Des Moines Community School District (the plan is available for in-school or 24-hour coverage). Students are not required to purchase this insurance. The school makes no profit and only offers it as a service to the students. Information concerning student insurance is sent home with each child during the opening week of school.

Lost and Found

Western Hills Elementary has lost and found boxes which are located throughout the building. Families and students are encouraged to check these boxes as needed. Items that are not claimed are donated to area charitable institutions periodically, and at the end of the year.

Non-activity Night

As per Board Policy 508.2, Wednesday evening is designated as non-activity night in the West Des Moines Community School District. Schools schedule K-12 student programs or meetings to conclude before 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday.

STUDENT SAFETY

Bikes/Skateboards/Roller Blades/Scooters/Roller Shoes

To enhance student safety to and from school, we recommend that only students in grades 4-6 ride their bicycles to school. Wearing bicycle helmets is encouraged and required by some schools. Bicycles are to be walked on school property and parked in the bike racks. The school district is not responsible for students riding bicycles to and from school, and assumes no responsibility for bicycles on the school grounds. Bicycle locks are encouraged. Damage or theft of bicycles should be reported to the local police department.

Bicycle riding should be considered a privilege. The bike riding privilege may be revoked if a student does not abide by the school guidelines and/or causes safety concerns.

Skateboards, scooters, roller shoes and roller blades are **not** allowed on school property.

Bus Safety

Bus safety drills are conducted by district transportation personnel in the fall and spring.

Fire and Tornado Drills

Regular fire and tornado drills are conducted in each school building throughout the school year so that students may become familiar with the proper safety procedures.

District Standards of Student Safety and Security

All parents will receive a brochure entitled: Information to Parents on Discipline Board Policy 503.1. This brochure goes home on the first day of school and outlines all discipline guidelines and procedures followed by the WDMCSD K-12

Safety and Security Rules

All district rules related to safety and security rules are in effect at all times.

CHILD CARE PROGRAM

Before/After School Child Care

Our Before/After School Child Care Program, **Kids West**, is coordinated through the district's Community Education Department. Before and after school care are offered on a daily basis to those students enrolled. If you're interested in enrolling your child for daily or collaboration day care, please contact **Kids West** at **633-5017** for details. There is limited space available.

Care is also offered to any elementary student on early dismissal Wednesdays for \$18.00 per child.

When school is dismissed early for weather-related emergencies, Kids West will open immediately. Parents are asked to pick up their children as soon as possible. We will remain open until the last child is picked up.

PTA VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The primary purpose of the Western Hills Elementary School volunteer program is to provide supplemental educational services to the youth in our community by providing assistance to those involved in the education of our students. The volunteer might relieve teachers of non-teaching duties, or provide individual attention to those students who will benefit by some assistance, or they may volunteer to help with one of our many family-oriented events.

Volunteers do not need to have a formal education. Rather, a genuine interest in the welfare of our children, our school, and our community is desired.

Please read the following pages that describe the volunteer opportunities the PTA has to offer. Whether you are interested in a one-time, short-term, or long term commitment, we are sure you will find something of interest. Please contact our PTA volunteer coordinator for additional information on how you can become involved in your child's education through volunteering at Western Hills.

CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers work for a specific teacher and class. No special training is needed. Duties vary according to each teacher, but might include putting up bulletin boards, typing, filing and collating or working one-on-one with a student in a specific area such as reading, math, or writing.

OFFICE VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers assist the secretaries with a variety of duties including making copies, answering the phone, and other miscellaneous work.

COMPUTER HELPERS



Volunteers work with students in the computer lab. No computer background is necessary.

HEALTH SCREENING

Volunteers help as needed throughout the year with hearing screenings. A medical background is not necessary.

LIBRARY VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are needed to work in the media center shelving books.

HOMEROOM PARENTS

Homeroom parents volunteer to serve in their child's class. At least two parents per class are needed to help the teacher organize class parties, assist with field trips, and help with other possible class projects.

SCOOP

Scoop is a program that connects new families with those families familiar with the Western Hills community.

COOKIE COMMITTEE



Volunteers sign up to be on call to provide cookies for various activities throughout the school year.

HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

Volunteers provide food for various events throughout the year including the "Back to School Social", parent-teacher conferences, and teacher appreciation days.

CARING AND SHARING

Volunteers are needed to conduct special projects throughout the year such as food and clothing drives to help those in need.

SCHOOL GARDENS



Volunteers are needed to help maintain the school gardens.

FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteers are needed to organize various fundraisers held during the year.

SCHOOL DIRECTORY



Volunteers gather family information to be published in the school directory. Volunteers are also needed to put together and distribute the directories.

CHESS CLUB



Chess Club is open to students in all grade levels and meets every Friday before school. No chess experience is necessary to help with the Chess Club.

TALKING CANVAS

Talking Canvas is an art education program for all grade levels. Each classroom has an assigned volunteer who makes a monthly 10-20 minute presentation on an art print or sculpture. All of the art work has been researched and volunteers use this information to prepare their presentation. Volunteers present information about the artist, the art form, or the topic depicted and initiate a discussion with the students. Ideas are often listed in the file folders. No art background is needed. An informational meeting is held in the beginning of the academic year. This is an exciting and fun way to make art come alive for students of all ages.

BOOK FAIR



The Book Fair is held for a week during the fall. This allows our students an opportunity to purchase books that enhance their interest in reading. The profits of the Book Fair directly benefit the students. PTA receives a cash profit along with free books for our classrooms and our school library! Volunteers are needed to help students find and purchase books.

WAFFLE DINNER



The dinner is held every fall in the school's community room. This is a PTA fundraiser that is held in conjunction with the Book Fair. Volunteers are needed to set-up, clean-up and help serve the meal.

FINE ARTS DAY

Fine Arts Day is a day offering our students art enrichment. The entire student body rotates from one classroom to another participating in a variety of artistic experiences presented by invited guest artists. We hope to motivate our students to enjoy "the arts" and to instill in them the importance of becoming a well-rounded individual. This event involves many volunteers. Volunteers are needed to assist artists, bring food, set up individual classroom activities and more.

FAMILY GYM

On selected evenings in January and February we open our gym to the students and families of Western Hills. Adult volunteers are needed to help chaperone on these nights

SCHOOL PLAY

Parents are needed to help with the play process from organizing, directing, set decorating, to costuming, program designing, rehearsing, and funding.

KINDERGARTEN ROUND-UP/STORY TIME

Volunteers work for approximately one hour in the spring to assist with current kindergartners while incoming kindergartners attend story time.

SIXTH GRADE TRACK AND FIELD DAY



The Sixth Grade Track and Field Day is held at Valley High School in the spring. Parents are needed to help with the field events as well as the concession stand.

SUMMER READING PROGRAM

This program is designed to encourage children to continue reading over the summer months. Goals are set for each grade level. Children who reach their goal will be recognized in the fall. Information is sent home before the end of the school year.



Western Hills PTA 2009-2020 Budget

Revenue	
Artist-in-Residence Tile Project	\$ 825.00
Back to School Picnic	\$ 300.00
Book Fair	\$ 1,500.00
Carnival	\$ 10,000.00
Directory Receipts	\$ 270.00
Fall Fundraiser	\$ 5,000.00
Interest Earned	\$ 100.00
Membership Dues	\$ 100.00
School Supply Fundraiser	\$ 450.00
Spirit Wear Sales	\$ 450.00
Target Funds	\$ 900.00
Spring Fundraiser	\$ 3,000.00
Yearbook	\$ 200.00
Waffle Dinner Receipts	\$ 650.00
Total Revenue	\$ 23,745.00

Expense	
A to Z Reading (LRC)	\$ 500.00
Artist in Residence	\$ 1,000.00
Caring & Sharing / I Care	\$ 100.00
Book Club	\$ 500.00
Classroom Teacher Allowance	\$ 4,387.50
Contingency Fund	\$ 200.00
Code 411/6th Grade Grad/Video	\$ 1,300.00
Destination Imagination	\$ 250.00
Dollars for Scholars	\$ 500.00
Fine Arts Day	\$ 4,000.00
Health Office	\$ 300.00
Hospitality	\$ 800.00
Kindergarten Round-up	\$ 50.00
Newspaper/Periodicals (LRC)	\$ 1,400.00
Insurance (LRC)	\$ 220.00
Playground Balls	\$ 250.00
Printing Fund (LRC)	\$ 250.00
PTA Administration	\$ 250.00
Red Ribbon Week	\$ 475.00
Request Fund	\$ 4,000.00
School Play	\$ 500.00
Staff Recognition	\$ 50.00
Summer Reading Program	\$ 75.00
Support Funds	\$ 450.00
Talking Canvas (LRC)	\$ 1,000.00
Teacher Appreciation	\$ 625.00
Track & Field Day	\$ 300.00
Total Expense	\$ 23,732.50

Excess Revenue over Expense	\$ 12.50
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LRC=Learning Resource Center: Not subject to membership vote for costs over budget since these are billed by the district & out of our control.

**Western Hills PTA 2009-2010
PTA EXECUTIVE BOARD**

Co- Presidents

*Carey Buchanan
*Pat Roberts

Co-Vice Presidents

*Jodi Stahl
*Barb Spence

Secretary

*Jill Blosser

Treasurer

*Jessica Henrickson

PTA Committees

Artist In Residence

* opening

Fine Arts Day

*opening

School Supplies

*Dawn Reser
*Felicia Twit

Western Hills Book Club

*Susan Allbee
*Carey Buchanan

PTA Membership

*Amy Kuennen

Waffle Dinner

*Sue Roberts
*Lisa Gavathas

Fundraisers

* Renee LaFleur
* Megan Meyerholz

Student Directory

*Wendy Ingham
*Angie Schmitt

Book Fair

* Andi Lipman
* Barbara Kazma

Gardens

*Parent/Teacher Committee

Summer Reading

*Lisa Scherer

Carnival

*Denine Taylor
*Janet Cook

Homeroom Parents

*Suzanne Meyers
* Susan Buising

Spirit Wear

*Betsy Hrdlicka
*Diane Van Dyke

Chess Club

*Lee Cole

Hospitality

*Amber Juffer
*Sue Swanson

Talking Canvas

* Heather Worthington Gloe
*Michelle Bolton-King and
Committee

SCOOP

* Tracy Bohlender

Community Ed

*open

I-Care/Caring & Sharing

* Holly Honnold

Volunteer Coordinator

*Lynda Brown

Destination Imagination

*Rhonda Brackett

Kindergarten Round-Up

*opening

Yearbook

*Michelle Bolton King

Family Gym

*Reggie Stalzer

5th Grade Sponsors

*opening

HEALTH SERVICES

AEA Services

Heartland Area Education Agency supports educators, parents, and the community to improve student learning. Heartland is one of 15 area education agencies created to ensure educational opportunities for children from birth to age 21. Support to local schools is provided in three areas: Educational Services, Media Services, and Special Education Services (assessment, consultation, speech-language, hearing screenings, and others).

A team of specialists (school psychologist, educational consultant, social worker, speech-language pathologist, and others) work at each elementary school in the district several times a week, and is available to assist teachers in supporting the learning and behavioral needs of students. If you have concerns about your child, please notify your child's teacher and a time will be arranged to discuss these concerns with someone from the AEA team.

Heartland also provides screening services to infants and toddlers. If you believe your preschool age child is having difficulty communicating, hearing, or seems to be developing at a slower rate than you think is typical for his or her age, please call 270-9030 for more information. This service is provided at no cost to the parent.

Heartland will conduct an annual Hearing Conservation Program at each elementary school during the school year. All students in kindergarten through grade five will receive a hearing screening. Students in grade 6 will no longer receive a hearing screening. Students who do not pass this screening may receive individual hearing tests by an audiologist and consultation with school personnel. Parents will be notified about the results of the hearing tests only if their child does not pass the test. This is a screening process only, and does not identify all hearing or ear problems. If your child has had hearing or ear problems recently, feel free to send this information to the school nurse for the audiologist. If you do not want your child to participate in the screening program and follow-up assessments by an audiologist, please notify your school. If there are any questions about the hearing testing program in your school, please contact the school nurse or principal.

ILLNESS

Regular attendance is a very important part of education. However, illnesses do occur. In order to decrease the chance for spreading illness to others at school; please keep your child home if he/she has:

- Had a temperature of 100 degrees or more in the past 24 hours. To be able to return to school, students must be fever free for 24 hours without the use of medications.
- Vomited in the past 8 hours
- Had diarrhea in the past 8 hours
- A bacterial infection (strep throat, etc.) and has not been treated with antibiotics for 24 hours
- Constant cough that would disturb both your child and the class
- A communicable disease (chicken pox, impetigo, etc.) and has not received written authorization from your doctor or school nurse for readmission to the classroom
- An ailment that would override your child's learning

If your child will be absent, please call the school secretary before 9:00am and give your child's name, teacher, and the reason for the absence. Your calls are most appreciated because if your child is absent and the school has not been notified, the school will contact the parents. Please call EACH day your child is absent.

KINDERGARTEN PHYSICALS

All kindergartners are required to have a completed physical on file in the health office prior to the first day of school.

Reporting Absences

Regular attendance is a very important part of your child's education. Your child should attend school unless he/she has had a fever within the last 24 hours, has vomited within the last eight hours or has a constant cough that you feel would disturb both your child and the class. If your child is ill, please call the school secretary before the start of the school day

Allergies

A significant number of students in our district have allergies, ranging from a mild sensitivity to severe and life-threatening. Allergies to latex and peanuts/peanut products tend to be the most severe. Exposure to even a minute amount of the substance could cause a severe reaction and, without immediate medical assistance, can lead to loss of consciousness and even death.

Families are asked to alert the school nurse and the district's Nutrition Services Department if a student has an allergy and specific accommodations are required.

Schools can adapt lunchroom and classroom procedures to address the needs of all students. Schools may restrict the presence of peanuts and peanut products, restrict the delivery of balloon bouquets and take other precautions.

Please check your school handbook for specific information on restrictions and procedures related to allergies.

Medication Policy

If it is necessary for your child to take medication at school, please observe the medication policy in effect for all West Des Moines Community Schools.

- The Health Office must have written authorization form from the parent/guardian. Please include the student's name, name of medication, amount to be given, time of medication is to be given, reason for the medication, and parent/guardian signature.
- The medication must be in the original current container (**NO** plastic bags or envelopes with loose pills).
- The directions on the medication container must match the parent authorization.

ALL medications (prescription and over-the-counter) must be kept in the Health Office at all time. The only exception to this policy is if a student has authorization to self-administer asthma medications.

Authorization for Self-Administration of Asthma Medications

Iowa Code (280.16) allows students to possess and self-administer asthma and/or other airway constricting medications in schools. In order to do this in the West Des Moines Community School District, the School Nurse must have on file a written consent from parent(s)/guardian.

- Parent(s)/Guardian must provide signed, dated authorization for student medication self-administration.
- Physician (person licensed under chapter 148, 150, or 150A or section 147.107) provides written authorization containing: (1) name and purpose of the medication; (2) prescribed dosage; (3) times or special circumstances under which the medication is to be administered.
- The medication must be in the original, labeled container as dispensed or the manufacturer's label containing the student's name, name of medication, directions for use, and date.
- Authorization must be renewed annually. If any changes occur in the medication, dosage, or time of administration, the parent/guardian is to notify school officials immediately.
- If the student abuses the self-administration policy, the ability to self-administer may be withdrawn by the school or discipline may be imposed.
- The West Des Moines Community School District and its employees acting reasonably and in good faith will not be liable for any improper use of medication or for supervising, monitoring, or interfering with a student's self-administration of the medication(s).

Provided the above requirements are fulfilled a student with asthma or other airway constricting disease may possess and use the student's medication while at school, at school-sponsored activities, under the supervision of school personnel, and before or after normal school activities, such as in before-school or after-school care on school-operated property. Please call the school nurse with any questions or concerns.

Immunization School Entry Requirement

By law, all children must submit the following minimum standards for immunization prior to the beginning of the school year or upon entry to any of the West Des Moines Community schools. Proof of at least one of each required immunization must be submitted prior to enrollment. All new students arriving from outside the United States must show proof of immunization before admittance to the West Des Moines Schools. The immunization record must contain the date of immunization (month, day, year) and signature of doctor or health official.

- DTaP/Tdap (Diphtheria/Pertussis/Tetanus) – Five doses with at least one dose after age 4 years if born on or after September 15, 2003 OR four doses with at least one dose after the age of 4 years if born after September 15, 2000
- Polio Booster – Four doses with at least one dose received on or after age 4 if born after September 15, 2003 OR three doses with one dose given on or after the age of 4 years if born on or before September 15, 2003

- MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) – Two doses of measles and rubella vaccine (MR or MMR) are required. First dose given on or after 12 months of age, the second dose received no less than 28 days after the first
- Hepatitis B – Three doses required if born on or after July 1, 1994
- Varicella (chicken pox) – One dose on or after 12 months of age if born after September 15, 1997 OR 2 doses (the first on or after 12 months of age) if born on or after September 15, 2003 OR has a reliable history of disease.
- Iowa state law requires any child who is entering kindergarten, ninth grade, or is an out-of-state transfer, to provide the school with proof of a dental screening. For elementary school, a screening that is done between the ages 3 to 6 is acceptable. For ninth grade and transfer students, a screening completed within one year prior to enrollment is acceptable. Screening results are required to be on an Iowa Department of Public Health Certificate Of Dental Screening
- **Although a TB test is not required, it is recommended for students who have lived outside of the United States.**

Contact your school nurse or physician if you have questions about immunization requirements. **Although a TB test is not required, it is recommended for students who have lived outside of the United States**

Immunizations are available at:

Polk County Health Department
1907 Carpenter
Des Moines, Iowa.

** Call #286-3798 for an appointment

Health Records

In keeping adequate health histories, we are better able to evaluate, understand and be responsive to your child's individual needs. Please send a note or call the school nurse regarding any developments concerning your child's health. This would include hospitalizations, all medications (type, amount and time given), fractures, all recent diagnoses of medical conditions and any other medical information which would be pertinent to the student's performance and attendance.

Head Lice

The incidence of head lice (pediculosis) has been increasing over the last few years. The Iowa Department of Public Health has identified this as a community based problem. The resistance of lice to many of the current over-the-counter medications has added to this problem.

Individual class notification of head lice is no longer necessary because parents should assume there is head lice at school at all times. Weekly checking for head lice as part of your child's routine hygiene care, must become the parent's responsibility. Due to the large ratio of students per school nurse, parents are able to do a much more thorough and effective job of examining their child's head. Our school nurse or her assistant will be happy

to assist you with any questions you may have regarding identification and treatment of head lice. **While head lice are an extreme nuisance, it is very important for parents to understand that head lice do not pose any health hazards.**

Expectations and Rules for Student Conduct

Western Hills' Core Beliefs Which Guide Enforcement of School Rules and Expectations

Each student is a unique individual with unique personal, social and educational needs. As a result, every disciplinary situation becomes unique in nature. Consequences for misbehavior provide the best learning value when matched to the unique student and the unique situation. The odds for children learning from their mistakes increase when children see reasonable connections between their behavior and the resulting consequences.

The Western Hills Elementary Staff dedicates itself to following a set of core beliefs which provides a guide for dealing with student discipline. These core beliefs guide our attempts to individualize disciplinary procedures and to help students see reasonable connections between their behavior and the resulting consequences.

Each student has a right to feel safe and secure. As we work and learn together our students, staff, and parents will strive to achieve a positive school environment in which mutual trust, respect, and good citizenship are commonplace. The word "discipline" means to learn a better way to develop skills which correct, strengthen, and perfect behavior. The key word in defining discipline is LEARN. We want students to develop a sense of responsibility so they are accountable for their own actions and are competent in decision-making skills.

The following list of core beliefs outlines the professional actions and attitudes of the staff members at Western Hills:

1. Preserving and/or enhancing the student's self-respect and dignity is crucial to successful disciplinary action.
2. Students are responsible for solving their own problems with adult guidance. If the student chooses not to solve the problem, the staff will impose the appropriate consequence.
3. Discipline will be considered as an opportunity for personal growth with problem solving and natural or logical consequences used whenever possible.
4. The staff and the students need to respect one another.
5. Rules established by the Board of Education and the consequences established by them will be adhered to by the Western Hills Staff.
6. School problems will be handled by the school personnel. Criminal activity will be referred to the proper authorities.

Rules and Expectations Supporting the Orderly Operation of the School and the Educational Process

Rules and expectations covered in this section are designed to meet the following goals:

1. Maintain an orderly school operation.
2. Maintain optimal learning opportunities for students. School facilities and classrooms must be free of behaviors that interfere with teaching and learning.
3. Help students develop skills and behaviors necessary for healthy social interaction, both present and future.
4. Help students learn how their decisions affect the quality of their lives and others.
5. Help students develop responsibility and good character.

Western Hills School Rules

1. Treat others with respect.
2. Your actions, dress, possessions, etc. may not cause a problem for anyone else.
3. If your actions, dress or possessions cause a problem for anyone else, you will be asked to solve that problem.
4. If you cannot solve the problem or choose not to, staff members will impose upon you an appropriate consequence. These consequences will depend upon the situation and the person or persons involved. Staff members will use their best judgment based upon the information they have at the time.
5. All staff members (including Kids West) will be responsible for monitoring student behavior. Any staff member may administer a Character Reminder slip to any student who breaks a school rule. Students are expected to take the CR slip back to their homeroom teacher.
6. An adult must see the rule infraction for a CR slip to be administered. However, if a student admits to breaking a rule (unseen by the staff member), staff members will use their judgment to determine if a CR slip is given to the student. Student honesty should be noted on the comment section of the CR slip if a slip is given for the rules infraction.
7. Students will complete their Character Reminder action plans during lunch recess the following day with the Principal and/or Counselor. These action plans will be returned to the classroom teachers. The classroom teacher will process the action plan with the student before the action plan is sent home for parent/guardian's signature. The action plan will ask students to think and write about two questions:
 1. What happened to other people and me because of my behavior?
 2. What will I do to show better character?
8. Action plans are brought home to the parents by the student and then are to be signed by parents and returned to the homeroom teacher the next day. Classroom teachers will monitor the return of action plans. Teachers will maintain the discipline records of their homeroom students.
9. If students and/or parents feel that the consequences are unfair, they should request and “an opportunity to respond to the consequence.”