



WEST DES MOINES COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Innovative Spirit. Inspiring Success.

2022-23



PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK

RESOURCES FOR ALL WDMCS EARLY CHILDHOOD
PRESCHOOL PROGRAM FAMILIES

West Des Moines Community Schools

Mission

Working in partnership with each family and the community, it is the mission of the district to educate responsible lifelong learners so that each student possesses the skills, knowledge, creativity, sense of self-worth, and values necessary to thrive in and contribute to a diverse and changing world.

Shared Vision

WDMCS will be a caring community of learners that knows and lifts every child. We will inspire joy in learning. Our schools will excel at preparing each student for their life journey.

Portrait of a Graduate

A West Des Moines Community Schools graduate will possess the essential skills and integrity to communicate, collaborate, and solve problems as a confident citizen, embracing our diverse and changing world.

District Philosophy

We believe that early childhood is an important time of learning and growth in a child's life. We will nurture and support each child in an environment that inspires a love of learning and readiness for school. We recognize the uniqueness of each child and the diversity of their needs. Our staff will plan and implement developmentally and individually appropriate learning experiences.

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Tiger Cubs Preschool in the Elementary Schools—West Des Moines Community Schools

Tiger Cubs Preschool is available at the following West Des Moines Community Schools elementary school sites:

Clive Learning Academy (grades PK-6)

1600 73rd St.
Windsor Heights, IA 50324
515-633-5800
Director: Shelly Pospeshil

Crestview School of Inquiry (grades PK-6)

8355 Franklin Ave.
Clive, IA 50325
515-633-5700
Director: Tamara Tjeerdsma

Fairmeadows Elementary (grades PK-6)

807 23rd St.
West Des Moines, IA 50265
515-633-6500
Principal: Brandon Pierce

Hillside Elementary (grades PK-6)

713 8th St.
West Des Moines, IA 50265
515-633-6200
Principal: Graham Jones

Jordan Creek Elementary (grades PK-6)

4105 Fuller Rd.
West Des Moines, IA 50265
515-633-5200
Principal: Annie Orsini
Assistant Principal: Jeannette Barnes

Learning Resource Center (PK, Administrative building)

3550 Mills Civic Parkway
West Des Moines, IA 50265
515-633-5000
ECSE and Preschool Administrator: Kristin Rourk

Western Hills Elementary (grades PK-6)

600 39th St.
West Des Moines, IA 50265
515-633-5900
Principal: Jenna Pressley

Westridge Elementary (grades PK-6)

5500 E.P. True Pkwy.
West Des Moines, IA 50266
515-633-5400
Principal: Beth Brewer
Assistant Principal: Jeannette Barnes

Welcome to the WDMCS Early Childhood Preschool Program

Our program's goal is to provide a high-quality preschool program meeting each child's needs, including typically developing children and children with disabilities. Our preschools provide a rich learning environment that encourages children's natural curiosity and supports them to take risks that lead to new skill development. It is a setting where children feel safe, respected, and cared for. This is an opportunity for children to take part in planned, active learning experiences guided by Creative Curriculum. Our preschool programs have adopted the [Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards](#) (QPPS), administered by the Iowa Department of Education, and use the Iowa Early Learning Standards which provides developmental expectations for preschool-aged children. Before working with children, staff members are given an initial orientation that introduces them to fundamental aspects of program operation.

Educational Non-Discrimination Statement

West Des Moines Community Community Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, and socioeconomic status in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy, please contact the district's Equity Coordinator Dr. Anthony Ferguson, Executive Director of Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity, 3550 Mills Civic Parkway, West Des Moines, IA 50265; Phone: 515-633-5040; E-mail fergusona@wdmcs.org (Adherence to bona fide occupational/ educational qualifications will not be interpreted as discriminatory.)

If provisions of this handbook conflict with those of board policy, the terms of the board policy shall govern.

General Program Information

Eligibility

Tiger Cubs Preschools

Tiger Cubs preschool programs are in eight West Des Moines Community Schools (WDMCS) district buildings: Clive, Crestview, Fairmeadows, Hillside, Jordan Creek, Learning Resource Center, Western Hills, and Westridge Elementary schools. All schools serve four-year-olds. The Tiger Cubs model is to serve both general education and special education students in a combined classroom. Special Education students are ages three through five.

Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SVPP)

Students are eligible for our SVPP classrooms at Crestview, Clive, Creekside, Fairmeadows, Hillside, Jordan Creek, Learning Resource Center, Sacred Heart, Western Hills, Westridge, and West Des Moines United Methodist preschools. Cadence Academy Preschool Grand and Cadence Academy Preschool Ashworth have SVPP sessions within their day for full day students. SVPP is for students who are four years old on or before Sept. 15 of the school year for which they are enrolled. Students who are low income and/or West Des Moines Community School families may be given priority. SVPP is funded through the Iowa Department of Education.

Inclusion

Our preschool programs provide for all children, including those with disabilities and unique learning needs, through a variety of center options. Modifications are made in the environment and staffing patterns in order to include children with special needs. Staff members are aware of the identified needs of individual children and are trained to follow through on specific intervention plans. It is our belief that inclusion in our program will enrich the experience for teachers, students, other children, and their families. Our preschool facilities meet the Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility requirements.

Program Options and Fees

Tiger Cubs—West Des Moines Community Schools

Tiger Cubs at Clive Learning Academy

1600 73rd St, Windsor Heights, IA 50324

515-633-5800

Shelly Pospeshil, Director

Four-Year-Old Program

Children must be four by Sept. 15

Days: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

Hours: 9:05-11:50 a.m. and 1:10-3:55 p.m.

Cost: Tuition will be paid through the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SVPP).

Tiger Cubs at Crestview School of Inquiry

8355 Franklin Ave., Clive, IA 50325

515-633-5700

Tamara Tjeerdsma, Director

Four-Year-Old Program

Children must be four by Sept. 15

Days: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

Hours: 8:20-11:05 a.m. or 12:25-3:10 p.m.

Cost: Tuition will be paid through the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SVPP).

Tiger Cubs at Fairmeadows Elementary

807 23rd St., West Des Moines, IA 50265

515-633-6500

Brandon Pierce, Principal

Four-Year-Old Program

Children must be four by Sept. 15

Days: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

Hours: 9:05-11:50 a.m. and 1:10-3:55 p.m.

Cost: Tuition will be paid through the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SVPP).

Tiger Cubs at Hillside Elementary

713 8th St., West Des Moines, IA 50265

515-633-6200

Principal: Graham Jones

Four-Year-Old Program

Children must be four by Sept. 15

Days: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

Hours: 9:05-11:50 a.m. and 1:10-3:55 p.m.

Cost: Tuition will be paid through the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SVPP).

Tiger Cubs at Jordan Creek Elementary

4105 Fuller Road, West Des Moines, IA 50265

515-633-5200

Annie Orsini, Principal

Jeannette Barnes, Assistant Principal

Four-Year-Old Program

Children must be four by Sept. 15

Days: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

Hours: 9:05-11:50 a.m. and 1:10-3:55 p.m.

Cost: Tuition will be paid through the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SVPP).

Tiger Cubs at Learning Resource Center

3550 Mills Civic Parkway,, West Des Moines, IA 50265

515-633-5000

ECSE and Preschool Administrator: Kristin Rourk

Four-Year-Old Program

Children must be four by Sept. 15

Days: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

Hours: 9:05-11:50 a.m. and 1:10-3:55 p.m.

Cost: Tuition will be paid through the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SVPP).

Tiger Cubs at Western Hills Elementary

600 39th Street, West Des Moines, 50265

515-633-5900

Jenna Pressley, Principal

Four-Year-Old Program

Children must be four years old by Sept. 15

Days: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

Hours: 9:05-11:50 a.m. and 1:10-3:55 p.m.

Cost: Tuition will be paid through the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SVPP).

Tiger Cubs at Westridge Elementary

5550 E.P. True Parkway, West Des Moines, IA 50266

515-633-5400

Beth Brewer, Principal

Jeanette Barnes, Assistant Principal

Four-Year-Old Program

Children must be four by September 15

Days: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

Hours: 9:05-11:50 a.m. and 1:10-3:55 p.m.

Cost: Tuition will be paid through the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SVPP).

Preschool Students with IEPs

Each Tiger Cubs location serves students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). Students ages 3-5 will be funded through Special Education. No registration fee or tuition is charged.

Community Preschools Offering Statewide Voluntary Preschool for Four-Year-Olds

Children must be four years old on or before Sept. 15. Tuition will be paid through Statewide Voluntary Preschool. The following locations are private preschools which operate independently yet coordinate with the West Des Moines Community Schools to provide consistent and comparable programming. All programs meet the requirements set forth by the Iowa Department of Education for the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program.

Cadence Academy Preschools

The Cadence Academy Preschools offer families the option of full-time preschool and care. The daily preschool session is paid through the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program and parents pay costs of wrap-around childcare. Cadence Academy Preschools hold preschool Monday through Friday, with morning or afternoon sessions.

- **Grand Location** - 1809 Grand Ave., West Des Moines, IA 50265; Erica Austin, Director 515-225-1837
- **Ashworth Location** - 5859 Ashworth Drive, West Des Moines, IA 50266; Danielle Coley, 515-226-9791

Each of the centers listed below offers half-day sessions, four days per week. Hours and days vary slightly per center.

- **Creekside Christian Preschool** - 2743 82nd Place, Urbandale, IA 50322; Connie Keller, Director, 515-277-8454
- **Sacred Heart Preschools** - 1653 Grand Ave., West Des Moines, IA 50265; Jane Kinney, Director, 515-223-1284
- **West Des Moines United Methodist Early Learning Preschool** - 720 Grand Ave., West Des Moines, IA 50265; Nancy Setchell, Director, 515-279-8897

Who Works In the Preschool?

Administrator/Director

The Early Childhood Special Education and Preschool Programs Administrator supervises Tiger Cubs classrooms and coordinates continuity between the classrooms to meet quality standards. The preschool directors in Community Partner Preschools are designated as the program administrator supervising the preschool programs.

Teachers

Teachers are licensed by the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners and hold both an Early Childhood Endorsement and/or Early Childhood Special Education Endorsement.

Teacher Assistants

Teacher assistants in each classroom carry out activities under the supervision of the teacher. The teacher assistants have specialized training in early childhood education and the individual needs of the staffed students. Many are

completing Para Educator certification and/or have college degrees and meet standards as outlined in QPPS.

School Nurse/Child Care Nurse Consultant

Preschools that are in WDMCS elementary buildings have access to an on-site school nurse. The community preschools have access to a child care nurse consultant. The school nurse or center director maintains health records that show the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics. The nurse or director also updates student health records and attends to the health needs of the students while they are at school. The nurse or nurse consultant is available for parent consultations when necessary.

Support Staff

Heartland AEA11 cooperates with Tiger Cubs and Community Partner classrooms to support early childhood programming. Such staff may include: early childhood consultant, speech and language pathologist, social worker, occupational therapist, physical therapist or others.

Staff participates in joint and collaborative events with other community programs and service agencies throughout the year. They are encouraged and given the opportunity to participate in community or statewide early childhood affiliations.

Daily Activities

A consistent daily schedule is planned to offer a balance of learning activities. Learning opportunities are formal and informal. Your child will have the opportunity for the following types of activities every day: small group and large group, self-initiated learning, creative expression, early literacy and math experiences, and fine and gross motor activities. Play is planned for each day.

Monthly newsletters will be sent home by the teacher. Each teacher maintains their own communication log system for individual students' families.

Curriculum

Our preschool programs use [The Creative Curriculum](#) as its framework. The Creative Curriculum is a research-based preschool curriculum that focuses on four main developmental areas: social and emotional development, physical development, cognitive development, and language development. A family's culture and the child's experiences outside the school setting are recognized as being an important part of the child's growth and development. The curriculum goals and objectives will guide teachers' planning and instruction based on the [Teaching Strategies GOLD](#) assessment tool and/or other research-based assessment tools.

Each day, the children will have an opportunity to self-select where they might like to play and work. Here is a list of some of our centers and some typical activities:

- **Art:** Students may choose a variety of art materials to create works of art.
- **Blocks:** Students can build with different types of blocks and also engage in imaginary play with play people, dinosaurs, animals, etc.
- **Dramatic Play:** Students may role-play and pretend with props and settings, as well as utilize social skills
- **Library:** Students have an opportunity to enjoy a variety of books independently or with peers.
- **Science:** Children will explore their world with a variety of science materials.
- **Sensory Table:** Students can develop their senses and cognitive development through play in a sensory table. (Items may include: water, sand, snow, pasta, rice.) Materials are rotated on a regular basis to sustain interest and maintain cleanliness.
- **Technology:** Students will have learning opportunities using various media and technology.
- **Toys and Games:** Children will develop cognitive skills, such as counting, problem-solving, categorizing, and matching, as well as play games with rules through a variety of toys, learning materials, and games.
- **Writing:** Students have access to a variety of writing utensils and materials.

Assessment

Children may be assessed in any of the following ways:

- Teaching Strategies GOLD
- Ongoing observations help to ensure a child's progress during daily activities.
- The Preschool Early Literacy Indicators (PELI) are given at the beginning, middle, and end of the year to monitor the growth of early literacy skills.
- Child portfolios are organized by the teaching staff and may include assessments and child work samples that are collected on an ongoing basis.
- Information shared by parents/families

The assessment information from the above is used to help guide instruction based on the children's needs, interests, and abilities in order to plan individualized and effective instruction.

Assessment information will be shared formally with families during Family/Teacher Conferences in the fall and spring. Informal conferences are always welcome and can be requested at any time. If the observation and/or assessment data indicates a need for further assessments or screening, the teacher can assist the family through the process. The preschool team, along with the parents/families, and Heartland AEA11 staff will come together to discuss concerns and create an action plan. Likewise, if a parent or family member has a concern about the progress of their child they are encouraged to share those concerns with the teacher. Parents and teachers can then work together toward making an action plan.

Supervision

Our preschool staff will be responsible for making sure all indoor/outdoor environments are safe for children. No child will be left unsupervised while attending preschool. Children will be supervised primarily by sight. Supervision for short intervals by sound is permissible as long as teachers check frequently on children who are out of sight (such as those who can use the toilet independently). Staff will make every reasonable effort to protect the children in their care from hazards. Each preschool classroom provides at least 35 square feet of usable indoor space per child.

There is a daily [safety checklist](#) available in each classroom.

Child Guidance and Discipline

Teaching staff will use positive guidance, redirection, and pre-planning with all children in the classroom. They will encourage appropriate behavior through the use of consistent, clear rules, and involving children in problem solving to foster the child's own ability to become self-disciplined. Using appropriate language for the child, discipline will be explained before and at the time of any disciplinary action. Teaching staff will encourage children to respect other people, be fair, respect property, and learn to be responsible for their actions. Teaching staff will use discipline that is consistent, clear, and understandable to the child. They will help children learn to persist when frustrated, play cooperatively with other children, use language to communicate needs, and learn turn taking.

Challenging Behavior

The teaching staff in our preschools is highly trained in behavior management. Aggressive physical behavior toward children or staff is unacceptable. Teaching staff will intervene immediately when a child becomes physically aggressive in order to protect all of the children and encourage more acceptable behavior. Teachers will communicate with parents about their child's behavior, and seek their input. If a child displays persistent, serious, and challenging behavior, the teaching staff and parents with support from AEA consultants problem solve to determine the most effective strategies for the student to successfully participate. All teachers and assistants will be trained in Nonviolent Crisis Intervention strategies. Nonviolent Crisis Intervention focuses on prevention strategies equipping staff to safely diffuse behaviors at the earliest possible stages. Our district Tiger Cubs classrooms are equipped to support children on Individual Behavior Plans.

Permissible Methods of Discipline

For acts of aggression and fighting (biting, scratching, hitting), staff will set appropriate expectations for children and guide them in solving problems. This positive guidance will be the usual technique for managing children with challenging behaviors rather than punishing them for having problems they have not yet learned to solve. In addition, staff may: (1) Separate the children involved; (2) Immediately comfort the individual who was injured; (3) Care for any injury suffered by the victim involved in the incident; (4) Notify parents or legal guardians of children involved in the incident; (5) Review the

adequacy of the teaching staff supervision, appropriateness of program activities, and administrative corrective action if there is a recurrence.

Expulsion/Suspension

Preschool and administrative staff will provide alternatives to expulsion and suspension so they are infrequent or unnecessary. Expulsion and suspension will only be used as a last resort when a serious safety concern cannot be eliminated with reasonable modifications.

Prohibited Practices

The program does not, and will not, employ any of the following disciplinary procedures:

- Harsh or abusive tone of voice with the children, nor make threats or derogatory remarks.
- Physical punishment, including spanking, hitting, shaking, or grabbing.
- Any punishment that would humiliate, frighten, or subject a child to neglect.
- Withhold nor threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

Snacks/Foods and Nutrition

Attitudes about food develop early in life. The food children eat affects their well-being, their physical growth, their ability to learn, and their overall behavior. We have an opportunity to help children learn about foods, to enjoy and request a variety of foods from their own culture and others, and to help them begin to appreciate that their bodies need to be strong, flexible, and healthy. Eating moderately, eating a variety of foods, and eating in a relaxed and social atmosphere are healthy habits for young children to form. Snack is also an excellent time for language modeling.

Children are offered one snack during the preschool session. Our preschools serve a wide variety of nutritious snacks, and encourage children to expand their tastes by at least trying a portion of the food offered. Snacks need to be commercially packaged. With the exception of wrap-around care, all of our preschool programs are three hours or less and tooth brushing is not required.

Clean, sanitary drinking water is made available to children throughout the day. Staff discards any foods with expired dates. Foods that are hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of children's reach, and foods requiring refrigeration will be kept cold until served. All food is prepared, served, and stored in accordance with USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines.

For every child with special health care needs, food allergies, or special nutrition needs, the child's health care provider should provide the program with an individualized care plan prepared in consultation with family members and a specialist involved in the child's care. Children with food allergies shall be protected from contact with the problem food. With family consent, the program posts information about the child's allergies in the food preparation area and in areas of the facility the child uses to serve as a visual reminder to all adults who interact with the child during the day. When any child with a disability has special feeding needs, the program staff will keep a daily record documenting the type and quantity of food a child consumes and will provide parents with that information.

High-risk foods, often involved in choking incidents, will not be served.

Our preschool staff will not withhold food or beverages as a punishment, nor will staff ever threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline. An appropriate snack is offered to all children.

Outside Play and Learning

We have daily opportunities for 15-30 minutes of outdoor play as the weather permits. This allows children the opportunity to develop their large muscle skills, get exercise, and be active together. Parents are informed of appropriate outerwear and encouraged to provide those items. Staff will ensure that children are appropriately dressed for outdoor play. Sunscreen and/or insect repellent may be applied at school with written parent permission. The outdoor play equipment is age and developmentally appropriate, is fenced to avoid hazards, and arranged so staff can easily supervise children. A playground safety checklist is completed and on file.

In cases when we cannot go outside (due to weather or other conditions), children are given the opportunity to use indoor equipment for similar activities inside and are supervised at the same level as outdoor equipment.

Water Activity

When a water play table is present in the classroom for the children to stand and play with their hands in the water, the following procedures will be followed. Children with sores on their hands are not allowed to participate with others in the water play. Children are not allowed to drink the water in the water table. When the activity is complete, the water table is drained, sanitized and refilled with fresh water before a new group of children come to participate. Outdoor water play is limited to tubs and buckets or containers, as well as the water table. We do not participate in swimming pool activities. Staff supervises all children by sight and sound during such water activities.

Objects From Home

Because the preschool program provides ample toys and learning materials for your child, we ask that you limit toys brought from home. If your child brings an “attachment” item from home, we ask that it is small enough to fit inside their backpack or cubby. Please do not allow children to bring gum, candy, money, or toy guns to school. The program cannot be responsible for lost or broken toys brought from home.

Weapons Policy

Please reference WDMCS district discipline policy [503.01](#), located in the legal notifications section of this handbook.

Communication and Parent Involvement

Communication with Families

The program will promote communication between families and staff by using written notes as well as informal conversations or email. All teachers use [MyTeachingStrategies™](#) online family portal. Through MyTeachingStrategies™ Family, teachers communicate about the child’s experiences, accomplishments, behavior, and other issues that affect the child’s development and well being. photos, notes, and daily reports with families. Families are also able to share information with teachers through the portal, allowing for two way communication between school and home. In addition to using MyTeachingStrategies™ Family, teachers will also communicate via email, in person, notes, and phone calls. Parents are encouraged to communicate in a way that is best for the family.

Open and honest communication between families and the preschool program is an essential component of a high quality early childhood program. Parents and legal guardians are always welcome to visit the preschool classroom. As a safety feature, all parents and visitors will check in at the elementary school or director’s office. The preschool staff wants parents to feel confident that their child is being well cared for and is receiving a quality experience at school. Parents are always encouraged to address concerns with the child’s teacher. If additional help is needed, either party may ask for assistance from the Building Administrator or Preschool Programs Administrator.

Arrival and Departure of Children

Other than parents or legal guardians, only persons with prior written authorization (Parent Consent Form) will be allowed to pick up a child from the school. Anyone who is unfamiliar to teaching staff, including authorized individuals, will be asked to present photo identification before a child is released to them.

WDMCS welcomes visitors to its school buildings. However, since school is a place of work and learning, there are certain expectations that must be met. Parents/guardians who wish to visit their child’s classroom must arrange such visits in advance with the classroom teacher. They may not disrupt or interfere with the class in progress, or discuss individual concerns when students are present.

All visitors to the school shall enter the building through the front door and check in at the office to pick up a visitor badge. All visitors are subject to a screening process (Raptor System). Please bring your personal identification with you. Examples of personal identification include a state-issued ID, passport, military license, Mexico Consular ID card, and Permanent Resident card. Learn more about the Raptor Visitor Check-In System. All visitors must have approval to be in a designated area. Failure of a visitor to follow these expectations, or other regulations established by the building principal or Preschool Administrator, may result in removal of the visitor from school grounds and/or contact with law

enforcement, as appropriate. Learn more about the Raptor Visitor Check-In System. Students are not permitted to bring visitors to school.

Transportation

If your child is eligible for and uses district transportation, teaching staff will go to each bus as it arrives to greet and assist the student off the bus. At dismissal, teaching staff will accompany each student to the bus and assist the student onto the bus. All students will be in an appropriate harness, seat belt, or restraint system. Parents or legal guardians are asked to keep their information current by reporting changes to the preschool teacher or elementary school secretary.

Preschool students are expected to arrive and depart from their preschool site at the designated beginning and ending times for their classroom. Children should be secured in appropriate safety car seats when arriving and departing from the preschool.

Preschools have the option to charge a fee for late pick up.

Field Trips

An important learning opportunity can take place in the form of a field trip that is relevant and reinforces what has been taught in the classroom. WDMCS buses with five-point harnesses may be used for these field trips in preschools that are in District buildings. Parents will be informed of each field trip, and must sign a consent form before each trip. Adult family members are invited to go on these trips to provide increased supervision and adult/child ratios. Parents may be asked to provide transportation for field trips.

During the field trip, all children will wear identifying information that gives the program name and phone number. A first aid kit, emergency contact information, and emergency transport authorization information for the children in the group will be taken on all trips. Children may only use a public restroom if they are accompanied by a staff member. Children will never be left alone in a vehicle or unsupervised by an adult.

Attendance

Students who are enrolled for classes in the WDMCS preschool programs are expected to be in school for the full session. Students are not expected to be absent any more than is necessary for health reasons or appointments. Irregular attendance interferes with the progress of your child and others as teachers find themselves taking class time to repeat necessary information and make adjustments for those students who have been absent. Please call your child's attendance center when your child will be absent, with the reason for an absence. For safety's sake, if a student is absent without notification, the school secretary/teaching staff will attempt to contact the family to verify the child's absence from school.

According to [Iowa Code § 299.1A\(2\) \(2013\)](#), "A child who has reached the age of four by September 15 and who is enrolled in the statewide preschool program under chapter 256C shall be considered to be of compulsory attendance age unless the parent or guardian of the child submits written notice to the school district implementing the program of the parent's or guardian's intent to remove the child from enrollment in the preschool program." The preschool director/principal and Preschool Administrator reserve the right to review attendance of students.

Preschool Advisory Committee

The WDMCS has a preschool advisory committee. This group meets quarterly to provide feedback on services that meet children's and families' needs. They also serve as a sounding board for new ideas and services.

Ethics, Confidentiality, and Children's Records

Staff members follow an important code of ethics to guide their involvement with children and families. It is essential to protect the confidentiality of all information concerning children and their families. The preschool staff members will refrain from talking about the children in their presence unless the child is part of the conversation. No information about any particular child shall be shared with another child's parent.

Student records containing personally identifiable information, except for directory information, are confidential. Only persons, including employees, who have a legitimate educational interest are allowed to access a student's records without the parent's permission.

Parents or guardians will be asked to sign a release of information form should they or the school request information be shared with another agency, stating to whom the information is to be released, the reason or purpose for the release of information, when it expires, and ways the parents can withdraw permission if they choose to do so.

Family Involvement

We encourage families to be involved in their child's education. Teachers use a variety of formal and informal ways to become acquainted with and learn from families about their family structure and their preferred means of child-rearing practices and communication, as well as any information about their socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds that they wish to share. Families are surveyed in enrollment paperwork and through other questionnaires during the year regarding their family, beliefs, and preferences. Home visits are conducted at the beginning of the school year for all Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program students. Family/Teacher conferences are held in both the fall and spring semesters for all students. At least one Family Night is held during the year. Families are encouraged to share any concerns, preferences, or questions with the preschool teacher or administration at any time.

The preschool invites you to become involved in one or all of the following ways and welcomes other ideas as well.

- Support your child's daily transition to school by sharing information about your child's interests and abilities.
- Keep the teacher informed of changes and events that might affect your child and allow the teacher to be more responsive to your child's needs.
- Attend family meetings.
- Return all forms and questionnaires promptly.
- Attend Family/Teacher conferences in the fall and spring semesters.
- Take time to read the family bulletin board.
- Check your child's backpack each day.
- Participate in field trip activities.
- Share some of your talents in your child's class through activities such as: reading or storytelling, cooking, art, music, sewing, crafts, hobbies, your profession, or items from trips you have taken.
- Share any of your family's cultural traditions, celebrations, or customs.
- Help with special events.
- Read all the material sent home with your child.
- Come to play!

It is the policy of West Des Moines Community Schools, not to discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, creed, age, marital status, or physical disability in its education programs, activities, or employment policies as required by Title VI or VIII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, and the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The school district will, to the extent possible, provide full opportunities for meaningful participation of the families with children with limited English proficiency and to families with children with disabilities. This will include providing information and school reports in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent possible, in a language the family understands.

In our preschools, we believe that families should be supported in making decisions about the services that their child may need. Each district and community preschool program supports families so that they may best advocate for their child. The teaching staff will provide information to families about available community resources and assist as requested in helping the family make connections.

Home-school connections are crucial to the transition to kindergarten or any other program, such as special education. The child's family provides the consistency and continuity necessary for a young child to be successful. Making a change from one program to another can sometimes be difficult for a young child, whether the transition is within the same building or in another location. Preschool staff will partner with the family to make the transition as smooth as possible by connecting family members with the next program's staff. Preschool staff will also provide information about enrollment policies and procedures, program options, and arrange for a classroom visit whenever possible.

Health and Safety

Health

Our preschool programs are committed to promoting wellness and to safeguard the health and safety of children and adults who participate in our program. In order to provide a safe and secure environment for every child and adult, we follow the guidelines required by the Quality Preschool Program Standards, regulatory agencies and pediatric authorities in the field.

Health and Immunization Certificates

Within six weeks of a child beginning in the program, health records that document the dates of service must be submitted that shows the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

When a child is overdue for any routine health services, parents, legal guardians, or both must provide evidence of an appointment for those services before the child's entry into the program and as a condition of remaining enrolled in the program, except for immunization for which parents are using religious exemption.

Heartland AEA 11 will conduct its annual Hearing Conservation Program during the school year. Students in the following grades will receive a hearing screening: Preschool-2nd grade and then again in 5th grade. Students who do not pass this screening may receive individual hearing tests by the Heartland AEA 11 Audiologist. Parents will be notified about the results of the hearing test 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, please send this information to the school nurse for the Audiologist to review. If you do not want your child to participate in this screening program and follow-up assessments by the Heartland AEA 11 Audiologist, please notify the school. If there are any questions about the hearing testing program in our school, please contact the school nurse.

Health and Safety Records

Health and safety information collected from families will be maintained on file for each child in the school nurse's office. The school nurse or center director maintains student health records that show the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Files are kept current by updating as needed, but at least quarterly. The content of the file is confidential, but is immediately available to administrators or teaching staff who have consent from a parent or legal guardian for access to records, the child's parent or legal guardian, and regulatory authorities, upon request.

Child Health and Safety Records will include:

- Current information about any health insurance coverage required for treatment in an emergency.
- Results of health examination, showing up-to-date immunizations and screening tests with an indication of normal or abnormal results and any follow-up required for abnormal results.
- Current emergency contact information for each child that is kept up to date by a specified method during the year.
- Names of individuals authorized by the family to have access to health information about the child.
- Instructions for any of the child's special health needs, such as allergies or chronic illness (e.g., asthma, hearing or vision impairments, feeding needs, neuromuscular conditions, urinary or other ongoing health problems, seizures, diabetes).
- Individual emergency care plans for children with known medical or developmental problems or other conditions that might require special care in an emergency (allergies, asthma, seizures, orthopedic or sensory problems and other chronic conditions); conditions that require regular medication or technology support.
- Supporting evidence for cases in which a child is under-immunized because of a medical condition (documented by a licensed health professional) or the family's beliefs. Staff implements a plan to exclude the child promptly if a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in the program.

General Health and Safety Guidelines

All staff must be alert to the health of each child, known allergies, or special medical conditions. Under the supervision of the preschool teacher, all staff must be alert to the whereabouts of all children. Systems are in place for accounting for children at regular intervals, especially during periods of transition.

- All staff members are to follow proper procedures for hand washing, using disinfectant, and following universal precautions to prevent infections.
- All staff members are familiar with evacuation routes and procedures.
- All teaching staff complete "Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens" annually.
- At least one staff member who has a certificate of satisfactory completion of pediatric first-aid training, including managing a blocked airway and providing rescue breathing for infants and children, is always present with each group of children. When a child in the group has a special health condition that might require CPR, one staff person who has successfully completed training in CPR is present in the program at all times.

Illness Policy and Exclusion of Sick Children

For the health and safety of all the children, it is mandatory that sick children not be brought to school. If your child has any of the following symptoms during the previous 24 hours, they will not be admitted the following morning for the safety of the other children.

- fever greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- pink eye with drainage
- cough with congestion and excessive nasal discharge
- unexplained rash

The center's established policy for an ill child's return:

- fever free for 24 hours
- chicken pox: one week after onset (or when lesions are crusted)
- strep: 24 hours after initial medication
- vomiting/diarrhea: 24 hours after last episode
- conjunctivitis: 24 hours after initial medication or when without drainage

Upon arrival at school, each child is observed by teaching staff for signs of illness or injury that could affect the child's ability to participate comfortably in the daily activities. Children will be excluded when a child is not able to participate comfortably, if the illness requires more care than staff are able to provide without compromising the needs of the other children in the group, or if keeping the child at school poses an increased risk to the child or to other children or adults with whom the child will come in contact.

When a child develops signs of an illness during their day at preschool, parents, legal guardians, or other persons authorized by the parent will be notified immediately to pick up the child. For this reason, please be sure that the preschool has current, accurate phone numbers for you, your authorized emergency contact person, and your child's pediatrician. A staff member (who is familiar with the student) will provide the child a place to rest until the parent, legal guardian, or designated person arrives. If the child is suspected of having a contagious disease, then they will be kept in an appropriate area where new individuals will not be exposed.

Reporting Communicable Diseases

Staff and teachers provide information to families verbally and in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child was exposed, signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that are being implemented at the program and that the families should implement at home. The program has documentation that it has cooperative arrangements with local health authorities and has, at least annually, made contact with those authorities to keep current on relevant health information and to arrange for obtaining advice when outbreaks of a communicable disease occur.

Medication Policies and Procedures

Policy: The school will administer medication to children with written approval of the parent and an order from a health provider for a specific child. Because administration of medication in the school is a safety hazard, medication administration will be limited to situations where an agreement to give medicine outside preschool hours cannot be made. Whenever possible, the first dose of medication should be given at home to see if the child has any type of reaction.

Procedure: The school nurse coordinates and/or administers medication during school hours only if the parent or legal guardian and health provider has given written consent and the medication is available in an original labeled prescription or manufacturer's container that is child-resistant. Any other person who would administer medication has specific training and a written performance evaluation, updated annually by a health professional, on the practice of the five right practices of medication administration: (1) verifying that the right child receives the (2) right medication (3) in the right dose (4) at the right time (5) by the right method with documentation of each right each time the medication is given. Medication errors will be controlled by checking and recording these five right practices each time medication is given. Should a medication error occur, the Regional Poison Control Center and the child's parents will be contacted immediately. The incident will be documented in the child's record at the school.

For prescription medication, parents or legal guardians will provide the school with the medication in the original, child-resistant container that is labeled by a pharmacist with the child's name; the name and strength of the medication; the date the prescription was filled; the name of the health care provider who wrote the prescription; the medication's expiration date; and administration, storage, and disposal instructions.

For over-the-counter medication, parents or legal guardians will provide the medication in a child-resistant container. The medication will be labeled with the child's first and last names; specific, legible instructions for administration and storage supplied by the manufacturer; and the name of the health care provider who recommended the medication for the child.

Instructions for the dose, time, method to be used, and duration of administration will be provided to the teaching staff in writing (by a signed note or a prescription label) or dictated over the telephone by a physician or other person legally authorized to prescribe medication. This requirement applies both to prescription and over-the-counter medications.

Medication will be kept at the temperature recommended for that type of medication, in a sturdy, child-resistant container that is locked and prevents spillage.

Medication will not be used beyond the date of expiration on the container or beyond any expiration of the instructions provided by the physician or other person legally permitted to prescribe medication. Instructions which state that the medication may be used whenever needed will be renewed by the physician at least annually.

Cleaning and Sanitization

Classroom areas will be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. Toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated will be removed immediately and disinfected prior to using again. This also applies to other surfaces in the classroom. Toys and surfaces will be disinfected using an acceptable and safe disinfectant. Machine washable cloth toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated must be laundered before another child's use. Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used. Staff will be trained in cleaning techniques, proper use of protective barriers, such as gloves, and proper handling and disposal of contaminated materials.

Routine cleaning will be supervised by the preschool teacher and will follow the Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table in Section III, page 47 of the QPPS manual. A checklist will be completed as indicated in the table.

Facility cleaning requiring potentially hazardous chemicals will be scheduled when children are not present to minimize exposure of the children. All cleaning products will be used as directed by the manufacturer's label. Nontoxic substances will be used whenever possible. Clorox wipes are not permitted per OSHA regulations.

Hand Washing Practices

Frequent hand washing is key in preventing the spread of infectious diseases. Teachers teach children how to wash their hands effectively. Posters of children using proper hand washing procedures are placed by each sink. The program follows these practices regarding hand washing:

- Staff members and those children who are developmentally able to learn personal hygiene are taught hand-washing procedures and are periodically monitored.
- Hand washing is required by all staff, volunteers, and children when hand washing reduces the risk of transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and to others.
- Staff will assist children with hand washing as needed to successfully complete the task.

Children and adults wash their hands:

- upon arrival for the day.
- after diapering or using the toilet (use of wet wipes is acceptable for infants).
- after handling body fluids e.g., blowing or wiping a nose; coughing on a hand; or any touching of mucus, blood, or vomit.
- before meals and snacks, preparing or serving food, or handling any raw food that requires cooking (e.g., meat, eggs, poultry).
- before and after playing in water that is shared by two or more people.
- after handling pets or visiting animals.

Diapering Procedures

Toilet learning is an important time in a child's development. The teacher and/or director will work with the family to develop a toileting plan for a child who is not toilet trained before school begins. Staff will follow all diapering guidelines that are set forth by the Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards.

For children who are unable to use the toilet consistently, the following procedures are in place:

- Diapering will only be done in the designated diaper area (which has an elevated surface).

Staff will follow all diapering guidelines set forth in the Iowa Quality Preschool Programs Standards: Standard 5, Criteria 5:

- Clothing that is soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.
- Staff will check children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces at least every two hours.
- Diapers are changed when wet or soiled.
- Surfaces used for changing and on which changing materials are placed are not used for other purposes, including temporary placement of other objects, and especially not for any object involved with food or feeding.
- Containers that hold soiled diapers and diapering materials have a lid that opens and closes tightly using a hands-free device (e.g., a step can). Containers are kept closed and are inaccessible to children. The container will be clearly labeled to show its intended use.
- Diapering and Gloving posters will be posted in the changing area showing procedures through the use of visuals and words. These procedures are used by the program administrator to evaluate teaching the staff that change diapers.

Safety

First Aid Kit

A first aid kit is located in every preschool classroom. It is inaccessible to children, but readily available for adult use. The first aid kit is appropriately and fully equipped according to the nurse's guidance. Following each use of the first aid kit, the contents will be inspected and missing or used items replaced immediately. The first aid kit will be inspected monthly. The kit is taken to the outdoor play areas as well as on field trips and outings away from the site.

Fire Safety

A fire extinguisher is installed in the preschool classroom with a tag indicating its annual service date. The fire alarm system is serviced annually. Smoke detectors, fire alarms, and carbon monoxide detectors are tested monthly. A written log of testing dates and battery changes is maintained and available upon request. Fire drills are conducted monthly and recorded on a log.

Medical Emergencies and Notification of Accidents or Incidents

Our preschool programs have written Emergency Plans for all children, as well as printed plans for emergency health procedures. These documents follow district procedures and include the following:

- emergency phone numbers
- fire procedures
- severe weather
- bomb threats
- physical threats/armed intruder
- evacuations
- Crisis Intervention Plan, Crisis Intervention Steps, and Media Procedures — WDMCS buildings
- accidental Injury or Illness procedures for life threatening and non-life threatening situations
- school crisis team members and a checklist — WDMCS buildings
- list of CPR/First Aid experienced persons in each building

In the event that your child receives a minor, non-life threatening injury during their time at preschool, the teacher will assess the situation and apply first aid as needed. Minor cuts and scrapes will be treated with soap and water, and bumps will be treated by applying ice to the injured area. The school nurse or parent/caregiver is immediately consulted for more significant events or illness. Any incident or injuries will be documented on an “Injury and Illness” form and a copy will be given to the parent within 24 hours of the incident.

All staff will have immediate access to a telephone that allows them to summon help in an emergency. The telephone numbers of the fire department, police department, hospitals, and poison control will be posted by each phone with an outside line. Emergency contact information for each child and staff member will be kept readily available. The list of emergency telephone numbers, and copies of emergency contact information and authorization for emergency transport, will be taken along anytime children leave the facility in the care of facility staff.

Inclement Weather and Cancellation Due to Weather

For Students in Community Centers

Center Directors will provide you with information regarding cancellations and dismissals.

For Students in District Buildings

Up-to-the-minute information about cancellations, dismissals, and closings is available on the district website (www.wdmcs.org), Facebook page (www.facebook.com/wdmcs), and Twitter account (@WDMCS). In addition, information is provided at the district weather hotline at 515-633-5555.

The district’s emergency notification system also will be used to notify families of unplanned 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 local television and radio stations. This information is provided as a service for students, families, staff, and community members when school must be canceled or dismissed early due to weather conditions or other emergencies.

Snow/Weather Delays and Cancellations

For students attending Tiger Cubs programs in district buildings: early dismissal and delayed starts will not be made up. However, if the WDMCS makes up days at the end of the school year due to full-day cancellations, Tiger Cubs preschool programs will add that same number of days. These days will be added immediately following the identified last day of preschool and will be scheduled on regularly attended preschool days. Parents will be notified of these make-up days.

If your child attends a Community Partner Preschool

Please contact the director of that preschool for their policy regarding delays and cancellations.

Pets/Service Animals

Student safety and the cleanliness of the building are put at risk when animals accompany their owners for a drop-in visit at school. Other than a few exceptions, pets are not allowed in WDMCS buildings. In keeping with state and federal law, WDMCS recognizes there may be a need for employees or students to use or have access to qualified service animals. Students who have a need for a service animal which is defined by law as “animals that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for persons with disabilities,” are welcome to consult with their building administrator.

Smoke Free Facility

In compliance with the Iowa Smoke Free Air Act of 2008, WDMCS buildings and grounds are smoke-free. No smoking is allowed on the school grounds or within sight of any children. At community preschools, the facility and outdoor play areas are smoke-free and no smoking is permitted in the presence of children.

Child Protection Policies

The health, well-being, and protection of every child is of the utmost importance. An applicant or volunteer for temporary or permanent employment with the preschool program (who has direct interaction with or the opportunity to interact and associate with children) must execute and submit an affidavit of clearance from any and all crimes against a child or families. In addition, no person with a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect will come in contact with children in the program or have responsibility for children.

Mandatory Reporting

WDMCS strongly supports Chapter 232 of the Iowa Code and requires that all employees who are mandatory reporters under this Chapter be familiar with the requirements therein.

The Code of Iowa requires mandatory reporters to report to the Department of Human Services all instances of suspected child abuse involving students. The law further states that any person required to report a suspected case of child abuse who knowingly fails to do so, or who knowingly interferes with the making of such a report in violation of section 232.70, is civilly liable for the damages proximately caused by such failure or interference.

The Code provides immunity from any liability, civil or criminal, to anyone participating in good faith in the making of a report or in the judicial proceedings that may result from the report.

Volunteers

As mentioned earlier, there are many ways family members can volunteer in the preschool programs. Please contact your child's teacher or the main office or your center director for more information.

Staff

Our preschool programs are in compliance with staff regulations and certification requirements. Our programs follow requirements for staffing for Iowa's Quality Preschool Program Standards of maintaining an adult/child ratio of at least 1:10 at all times. Student/teacher ratios may be different at each site based on the continuum of services provided.

Hiring procedures include completion of the following checks: criminal-record check, free from history of substantiated child abuse or neglect check, education credentials, verification of age, completion of high school or GED, personal references and a current health assessment.

The preschool staff will be provided space and time away from children during the day. When staff work directly with children for more than four hours, staff are provided with 15 minutes or more of break time. In addition, preschool staff may request temporary relief if they are unable to perform their duties.

All teaching staff continuously develop and strengthen their skills by participating in a wide range of staff development opportunities. In addition, teaching assistants receive training specific to early childhood on an on-going basis throughout the school year.

Special Section — West Des Moines Community Schools Districtwide Handbook

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West Des Moines Community Schools Board of Education & Learning Resource Center

West Des Moines Community Schools Board of Education

The West Des Moines Community Schools Board of Education usually holds regular meetings at 7 p.m. on the second and fourth Mondays of each month. Most meetings are conducted in the Community Room at the Learning Resource Center, 3550 Mills Civic Parkway, West Des Moines. All meetings are open to the public unless the Board calls for a closed session. For an item to be considered for placement on the agenda, interested citizens must submit the item in writing to the Superintendent's Office by noon on the Wednesday preceding the regular meeting. During each meeting, an open forum time is conducted when citizens may speak to the Board.

Seven elected members serve four-year terms without pay on the School Board. Elections are held in odd-numbered years. A new president and vice president are elected every September. [View current Board of Education information online.](#)

West Des Moines Community Schools Learning Resource Center

3550 Mills Civic Parkway

West Des Moines, Iowa 50265-5556

Phone: 515-633-5000

Superintendent Lisa Remy, Ed.D. (through June 30, 2022)

Chief Officer of Human Resources Josie Lewis

Associate Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Services Michelle Lettington

Chief Financial Officer Paul Bobek

Director of School/Community Relations Laine Mendenhall-Buck

General Information

1:1 Chromebooks

The Chromebook 1:1 program in WDMCS issues each enrolled student in grades 3-12 a Chromebook for use with their academic studies. Chromebooks have become incredibly popular in schools across the country, largely because of their low cost and ability to meet the needs of students at all grade levels.

Student Responsibilities

Students who check out a Chromebook provided by WDMCS must agree to the following:

- I will follow the policies of WDMCS and abide by all local, state, and federal laws when using the device at school, at home, or at any other location.
- I will honor my family's values and follow school expectations when using the device.
- I will keep the device in my possession at all times or secure it in a safe place when not in use.
- I will keep my device in its protective case.
- I will treat the device with care at all times by carrying it appropriately, keeping food and drink at a distance, and avoiding extreme temperatures.
- I will report damage to or loss of the device immediately to my classroom teacher.
- I will not attempt to repair the device on my own nor pay someone else to repair the device for me.
- I will use the device for the sole purpose of advancing and promoting learning.
- I will NOT share my accounts and passwords with any other students or other unauthorized persons.
- I will not release personal information to strangers when using the device.
- I will charge the battery on my device every night.
- I will bring the device to school every day. If I do not have my device, I may be required to make up work outside of the school day.
- I will return the device when requested or when I am no longer enrolled in WDMCS.

Parent/Family Responsibilities

Parents and families play a critical role in the success in their child's education. Before the student is issued a device, a parent or guardian must agree to the following:

- I/We understand that a device is being provided to the student for the sole purpose of advancing and promoting learning. I/We will not use the device to conduct personal business.
- I/We will discuss our family's values regarding the internet, including acceptable online behavior.
- I/We will supervise the student's use of the device at home and set clear expectations for the use of technology outside of school.
- I/We will encourage the student to keep the device secured in its protective case at all times.
- I/We understand that fines may be applied to our family if the device is damaged or lost and possibly up to the full replacement cost may be charged.
- I/We will encourage my child to report any damage to or loss of the device to their classroom teacher right away.
- I/We will not attempt to repair the device nor pay someone else to repair the device on our behalf.
- I/We will discuss the importance of protecting our online identity by not sharing passwords or other personal information with friends and strangers.
- I/We will provide a space in the home to charge the device battery every night.
- I/We will ensure the device is brought to school each day. I/We understand that failing to do so may place the student at an educational disadvantage, and that I/we may be called to bring the device to school if the problem persists.
- I/We agree to return the device when requested or when my/our child is no longer enrolled in West Des Moines Community Schools.

Computer Use Agreement (Google Chromebook)

One Google Chromebook, one AC adapter, and one protective case are being made available to the student in good working order. It is the student's responsibility to care for the equipment and ensure that it is kept in a safe environment at all times.

This equipment is, and at all times remains, the property of WDMCS and is being made available to the student for the advancement and promotion of learning and teaching. The equipment may be accessed and reviewed at any time by the district with or without prior notice. Students and their parents/guardians shall have no expectation of privacy in regards to the device or any content or materials on the device.

Identification and inventory labels/tags have been placed on the Google Chromebook. These labels/tags are not to be removed or modified. If they become damaged or lost, contact the building administrator for replacements. Additional stickers, labels, tags, or markings are not to be added to the Chromebook or the protective case.

The student will not deface or destroy the equipment in any way. Iowa statute allows the district to obtain reimbursement from, or on behalf of, students for any damage to, loss of, or failure to return school property. Replacement cost of the equipment will be \$346 or the actual cost of replacement at the time of the damage.

The student is required to use reasonable care to ensure that the device and accessories are not damaged or lost. The student and parent/guardian(s) will be responsible for any or all damages to or loss of the device and/or accessories. Fines for needed repairs (not exceeding the cost of replacement) or fines for replacement may be charged to the student and parent(s)/guardian(s).

Any damage to or loss of equipment should be reported to the district immediately. Failure to do so may result in delayed repairs or increased fines. Under no circumstances should a student attempt to repair a damaged device or pay for the device to be repaired by an agency other than the WDMCS.

Inappropriate use of the Chromebook may result in the student losing the ability to use the device. Inappropriate use is defined as any action that violates district policy, the student handbook, the student code of conduct, or any local, state, or federal statute.

The equipment will be returned when requested by the district. The student may install apps and extensions that are approved by the district for use.

The student has been assigned a WDMCS Google account with specific privileges and capabilities to be used on the Chromebook. The account is intended for the exclusive use of the student to which it has been assigned. The student may not attempt to change or allow others to change the privileges and capabilities of this account. The student may not attempt to add, delete, access, or modify other user accounts on their Chromebooks.

The district network is provided for the academic use of all students and staff. The student agrees to take no action that would interfere with the efficient, academic use of the network.

The Chromebook utilizes a service which directs any online activity through our district web filter in accordance with federal eRate guidelines. The filtering process collects web URLs for all traffic generated by the Chromebooks, regardless of the physical location of the device. WDMCS does not actively monitor this traffic unless a direct request is made by the building administrator.

The student acknowledges and agrees that use of district equipment is a privilege. By agreeing to the terms above, the student acknowledges personal responsibility to protect and safeguard the Chromebook, adapter, and case at all times and to return the equipment in good condition and repair upon request by WDMCS.

Damage or Loss

Under no circumstances should a repair be attempted by a student, parent or other third party source. The District has technicians who will repair the Chromebook as necessary. Depending on the severity of the repair and circumstances leading up to the damage, families may be charged according to the costs in the next section. Your school has extra "loaner" devices, so students are never "stuck" without a device if damage should occur. If the Chromebook is not returned upon request, the family will be charged according to the costs in the next section. Please report damage or loss to your school immediately!

Costs

There is no fee being assessed up front for your student's use of the Chromebook. Replacement costs are listed below:

Charger \$22 or the actual cost of replacement at the time of the damage or if lost.

Case: \$22 or the actual cost of replacement at the time of damage or if lost.

Chromebook: \$346 or the actual cost of replacement at the time of damage or if lost.

Responsibility to Bring to School

Much like a textbook or a pencil, the Chromebook is an integral part of everyday learning. Families agree that the device will be brought to school each day, and that the device will be charged. If the student does not have the device, work may have to be made up outside of the school day.

Allergies

WDMCS promotes a safe and inclusive allergy aware environment for all students. Students with allergies may be entitled to services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Act. Accommodations and/or modifications will be considered and addressed on a case by case basis.

If your student needs diet modifications, a physician needs to complete the [Diet Modification Request form](#). When completed, return the form to the Nutrition Services department.

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

Area Education Agency (AEA) Services

Heartland Area Education Agency (AEA) 11 supports educators, families, and the community to improve student learning. Heartland is one of nine area education agencies in Iowa 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). Visit the [Heartland AEA website](#) for more information.

Boundaries

Covering 36.6 square miles, our district boundaries are rather irregular but generally lie:

- north of Warren and Madison County lines,
- south of Urbandale Avenue,
- east of the Dallas County line, and
- west of 63rd Street.

The following is a list of schools in our district that provide—or feed—our secondary schools with students as they progress in their education. These are called “feeder schools.”

- Indian Hills Junior High: Clive, Crestview, Crossroads Park, and Westridge
- Stilwell Junior High: Fairmeadows, Hillside, Jordan Creek, and Western Hills
- Valley Southwoods Freshman High School: serves all freshman
- Valley High School: serves grades 10-12
- Walnut Creek Campus: alternative high school

For information about elementary school boundaries or a map of the district, please [visit the district website related to boundary information](#).

Counseling Services Available to Students and Families

The West Des Moines Community Schools contracts the services of Employee and Family Resources for our Student Assistance Program. If you need assistance with family or school issues, call 515-244-6090 to speak to a counselor or schedule an appointment. The phone line is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Counselor sessions to assess problems are provided at no cost to you. When additional services are needed, the student assistance counselor will refer you to an appropriate, beneficial and affordable resource.

School-based therapy services are available in each school building. Students have access to a licensed therapist in the building for appointments while minimizing travel time off campus. Families enroll students for services and are responsible for the cost. Contact the school counselor or principal for information about school-based therapy.

Crisis Management

The safety and well-being of your children is our priority at the West Des Moines Community Schools. We are committed to supporting safe and welcoming learning environments where your child can connect, explore, and learn.

The district has a comprehensive emergency management plan focused on planning, preparedness, response, and recovery. For more information, visit [wdmcs.org/](#).

Fees

Each student pays a book fee. Additional fees may occur based on transportation needs. [View current fees online](#). WDMCS offers one convenient webpage to access our online payment systems to pay all school-related fees, register for a Community Education class, and more — 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Please visit wdmcs.org/online-payments/ to learn more. There is NO convenience fee for this service.

Fee Waiver

Students whose families meet the income guidelines for free and reduced price lunch, the Family Investment Program (FIP), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or transportation assistance under open enrollment and students 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 complete the fee waiver form on the back side of the Free and Reduced Price Meal application, or you may contact your principal for a form. This waiver does not carry over from year to year and must be completed annually.

Health Services

Administration of Medication to Students ([Board Policy 507.02](#))

The board is committed to the inclusion of all students in the education program and recognizes that some students may need prescription and nonprescription medication to participate in their educational program.

According to Board policy, medication shall be administered when the student's parent/guardian provides a signed and dated written statement requesting medication administration and the medication is in the original, labeled container, either as dispensed or in the manufacturer's container. If it is necessary to take medication at school, the Authorization for Medication Administration form must be completed.

Immunizations and Health Screenings

Iowa law requires a parent to verify proper immunization against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, meningitis, mumps, rubella, hepatitis B, and varicella to enroll in school. At least one dose of each immunization must be given before starting school. If your child has not received all the following Immunizations, your school nurse will provide a written provisional immunization certificate. They will assist you to connect with a healthcare provider to plan for your child's vaccination catch-up schedule.

[Learn more online about immunizations, health screenings, including dental, hearing, and vision screenings.](#)

Services of the School Nurse

If a student becomes ill during the day, the student is to ask the teacher for a pass from class and go immediately to the nurse's office. If it is necessary for the student to go home, the parent/guardian(s) will be contacted and arrangements made to take or send the student home. Under no circumstances are students to go home or leave the school grounds without contacting the office or the nurse. If a student is seriously injured or becomes ill, every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian(s) immediately.

Student Injuries

Students who suffer injuries should be brought to the nurse's office. The school nurse maintains a record of all accidents resulting in injuries to students. Any change in the student's condition occurring throughout the day should also be made known to the nurse. Injury to a student shall be promptly reported by the building administrator or designee to Administrative Services on the WDMCS Student Incident Report.

Preschool Programs

The WDMCS receives funding from the Iowa Department of Education for approximately 400 4-year-old children to attend preschool. This program is for children who will be age four on or before Sept. 15 of the school year for which they are enrolling. Programs are located at six district buildings and five community preschool sites.

Tiger Cubs Preschool is coordinated through the WDMCS. Programs are located at Clive Learning Academy, Crestview School of Inquiry, Fairmeadows, Hillside, Jordan Creek, Western Hills, and Westridge elementary schools. In addition, the Learning Resource Center is home to preschoolers as an overflow because Crossroads Park Elementary does not yet have space for a PK class. Tiger Cubs Preschool will provide an opportunity for your child to develop readiness skills for kindergarten through age-appropriate activities and experiences.

Project Shine provides resources and tuition assistance for children, ages three to five, from lower income households. The program is funded by Polk County Early Childhood Iowa. The Preschool Programs Coordinator works closely with the child and the area preschools that meet certain quality standards.

[Learn more about preschool opportunities online.](#)

Kindergarten Enrollment

In Iowa, a child must be age five on or before Sept. 15 in order to begin school. Parent/guardian(s) may register their child any time after Sept. 1 of the preceding school year at the Registrar’s Office. [Learn more about registration requirements online.](#)

West Des Moines Community Schools Foundation

The West Des Moines Community Schools Foundation benefits the students, teachers, and school district by offering quality fundraising and accounting resources for WDMCS.

The Foundation began in 1988 as an independent, nonprofit organization that works closely with the school administration, staff, and community to provide resources for students. They strive to encourage student participation, creative teaching, and community-school partnerships by making funds available to all 13 schools in the district. [Learn more about the WDMCS Foundation online.](#)

Communication and Parent Involvement

Complaints Regarding School Personnel

[Board Policy 906.01](#) provides a process for students, parent/guardian(s), and community members to file complaints regarding any district staff member.

Infinite Campus

Internet Portal — [Infinite Campus Login](#)

The West Des Moines Community Schools uses a student information management system called Infinite Campus. This program increases access to student information for our teachers and administrators. Infinite Campus also allows students and parents/guardians to view some of this information through a secure internet connection. This Internet view for parent/guardian(s) and students is called a portal.

The parent portal allows parents/guardians to see schedules, grades, attendance, health, etc. With one account, parents/guardians can view information about all of their students, even if the students attend different buildings. The parent/guardian can edit an email address and indicate preferences on methods of contact for absences and emergencies (under “Change Contact Info”). If there are incorrect phone numbers, addresses, or other information, parents/guardians may contact one of the offices at the school their student(s) attend to have the information updated. Parents/guardians may also reference instructions on the district website (www.wdmcs.org). When these important changes are made by one building office, they are reflected for every student in the family with information in the Infinite Campus system. You will have the same account for as long as your students are in the district.

Viewing Academic Work and Grades — Canvas Learning Management System

Canvas is West Des Moines Community Schools’ official learning management system. A learning management system is a software that helps provide, track, and report on classes and assignments. Canvas provides parents and students with greater access to their curriculum and learning by housing important student curricular expectations and information. This could include their online textbook, links to resources, homework, videos, assessments, online discussions, and so much more. [Learn more about Canvas.](#)

Staff Directory

The district continues to provide ways to assist with communication between school, families, and the community through the Internet. Our district website provides a “one-stop shop” staff directory page. This page contains a [searchable listing of contact information for our staff, including buildings and email addresses.](#)

Translation and Interpretation Services

An interpreter, translator, or sign language interpreter can be made available at most district events. In addition, WDMCS will work with families who have vision, auditory, or language needs to effectively communicate important district and student information. Please contact your school at least 48 hours in advance of the event to request these services.

No qualified individual will be excluded on the basis of a disability from participating in a public meeting in the West Des Moines Community Schools. To receive more information or request an accommodation to participate, please contact the School/Community Relations Department at 515-633-5023.

WDMCS Online Calendar

The official [school district activity calendar](#) is your complete reference for district activities and events. The [Calendar at a Glance](#) is also available online.

Departments

Administrative Services

Administrative Services oversees the Business Services, Nutrition Services, Operations, and Transportation departments. The WDMCS Chief Financial Officer (CFO) leads a talented group of individuals who support Business Services, Nutrition Services, Operations, and Transportation.

Business Services

The learning that occurs in our classrooms is supported by quality facilities and sound financial management. The department works with representatives in the community and staff to ensure our buildings and funding support student learning. [Learn more about WDMCS budgets online.](#)

Nutrition Services

Nutrition Services participates in the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Nutrition Programs. Meals and snacks must meet the standards set forth by the USDA. The department oversees breakfasts and lunches throughout the school year and helps provide a summer food service program to ensure children continue to receive nutritious meals. [Learn more about nutrition services, free and reduced meal qualifications, and meal pricing online](#)

Operations

Operations provides maintenance and custodial services for more than 1.5 million square feet of space, including more than 500 classrooms. It also provides services that support the delivery of education to our students. [Learn more about current projects online.](#)

Transportation

Transportation strives to serve the needs of our students and to provide safe, efficient transportation to school and school-related activities. Free transportation is provided to the following groups meeting the listed criteria (Iowa Code Section 285.1):

- Grades PK-8 students living more than two miles from their assigned schools as determined by their primary residence.
- Grades 9-12 students living more than three miles away from their assigned schools as determined by their primary residence.
- Involuntary Transfers, who are students transferred by the district to a school other than their designated attendance center.

Students who do not qualify for free transportation and live outside the walk zone for their assigned school are eligible for paid transportation. Transportation is not available for families who live inside the walk zone.

Any student who lives in the paid transportation area and qualifies for the free and reduced-priced meal program may also apply for free and reduced-priced bus pass fees. Please contact your school's office to apply.

A voluntary transfer is a student who attends a school other than the assigned school within the district due to a family request granted by the district. Voluntary transfer students may ride a district school bus if they meet the established criteria.

For more detailed information on transportation, including registration and payments, [visit the transportation section of the WDMCS website](#).

Communications

[School/Community Relations](#) supports WDMCS districtwide and school-specific communication. From weather alerts and crisis notifications to event reminders and sharing student success stories, School/Community Relations provides timely, relevant information to district staff, students, families and the broader community.

When school must be canceled, delayed, or dismissed early because of weather conditions or other emergencies, the School/Community Relations department works to inform district families and staff in a timely manner. [Learn more about specific cancellation and closings procedures online](#).

Community Education

Community Education is the outreach department of WDMCS. It provides opportunities for learning, service, and fun to people of all ages and serves the needs of the community by connecting people, ideas, and resources. [Learn more about the opportunities available through Community Education online](#).

Human Resources

Human Resources oversees one of our district's greatest resources – its employees. The department strives to provide students and parents with a talented, knowledgeable, and dedicated workforce by:

- reaching out locally and nationally to recruit quality and diverse staff members.
- supporting professional development and training.
- fostering an engaging and caring work environment.

The associate superintendent of Human Resources leads a talented group of individuals who support more than 1,700 employees, substitutes, and a retiree recognition program. [Learn more about the Human Resources Department and available career opportunities online](#).

Teaching and Learning Services

WDMCS has long been known for offering a comprehensive education with variety, depth, and rigor. The associate superintendent of Teaching and Learning Services leads a talent group of individuals who oversee the following areas: curriculum, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Extended Learning Program (ELP), homeless youth, home schooling, Project-Based Learning Network (PBLN) reading resource, special education, and Title I.

Curriculum

WDMCS curriculum is embedded in sound, successful, and researched-based perspectives of the past, yet continues to be a fluid, dynamic instrument of the present. Teachers endeavor to implement ideas and skills that reflect the ever-changing technology and cultural changes of our society and needs of our learners. [Learn more about WDMCS curriculum online](#).

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

At WDMCS, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) is designed instruction that supports English Learners (ELs) in developing and enhancing their English language skills in order to acquire academic content and language. ESOL instruction is primarily in English.

All new students to WDMCS are required to fill out a Home Language Survey which is completed through the online enrollment process. If it is evident the student has a native language other than English, the child and family are referred to the child's designated school for registration and assessment for possible language services. [Learn more about ESOL services online](#).

Gifted/Talented (GT) Program

The West Des Moines Gifted/Talented Program is a comprehensive K-12 program designed to identify and serve students who possess outstanding abilities, talents, and potential for high performance when compared with same-aged peers such that they require special provisions to meet their educational programming needs. In addition to differentiated classroom experiences, students meet in small groups in their own buildings with specially trained teachers to work on group and individual projects according to their needs, abilities, and interests. [Learn more about GT online](#).

Homeless Youth ([Board Policy 501.16](#))

West Des Moines Community Schools believes all students should have access to a free, appropriate public education. The district will ensure that homeless children and youth have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as other children and youth.

West Des Moines Community Schools (WDMCS) believes all students should have access to a free, appropriate public education. WDMCS will ensure that homeless children and youth have equal/equitable access to the same free, appropriate public education as other children and youth.

The term “homeless children and youth” means an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes:

- Children and youth who are:
 - Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (sometimes referred to as “doubled up);
 - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
 - Living in emergency or transitional shelters; or
 - Abandoned in hospitals.
- Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

[Learn more about enrollment procedures and support services available for homeless youth online.](#)

Home Schooling

The WDMCS Home School Assistance Program has been offering support to families who wish to educate their children at home since the early 1990s. Today, more than 125 home-schooled students are enrolled in grades K-12. Teacher assistance and enrichment classes are provided to supplement parents’ home schooling efforts. Students can now take writing, science, physical education, Spanish, drama, and art enrichment classes. Additionally, a wide array of field trips are provided throughout the year. [Learn more about home schooling support online.](#) Visit the [HSAP website](#).

Project-Based Learning Network (PBLN)

The Project-Based Learning Network is a pathway engaging students in tasks designed to provide the best context for learning. It ignites a zest for learning and allows students to “fail forward,” which provides a safe environment to make mistakes in order to learn and grow. [Learn more about PBLN online.](#)

Special Education

The goals for our Special Education program are aligned with state law and the federal Individuals with Disability Education Act (IDEA) law, which:

- Assures all children with disabilities are provided a free, appropriate, public education designed to meet their unique needs.
- Protects children’s rights and the rights of their parents or guardians.
- Assists state and local districts in providing education that assesses students’ strengths and weaknesses and assures the effectiveness of the educational efforts.

Families who move to the West Des Moines Community Schools and have a child with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will find similar student-focused programming and services at each of our schools. [Learn more about Special Education support services online.](#)

Technology

West Des Moines Community Schools strives to create a technology-rich environment for its entire learning community. It has been a state and national leader in making a wide range of technologies available to students, staff and other learners.

In order to provide cost effective and reliable services, the district utilizes a fiber optic wide area network that connects all district facilities. The creation of this network was created through WestNET, a cooperative partnership between the West Des Moines Community Schools, City of West Des Moines, City of Clive, City of Urbandale, and the Iowa Communications Network.

Through the use of Infinite Campus, the district provides students and families with live access to grades, attendance, and other student information. In addition, Infinite Campus also has a phone notification system, which places automated phone calls to parent/guardian(s) for weather related notifications. [Learn more about WDMCS technology services online.](#)

Annual Notices and Common Board Policies

Annual Notices

State and Federal regulations, as well as some district policies, require the district to annually post certain notifications to the public. Please reference the list of annual notices on the WDMCS website - <https://discover.wdmcs.org/annual-notices>

Common Board Policies

Attendance Procedures ([Board Policy 501.06](#))

Discipline ([Board Policy 503.01](#))

Dress Code ([Board Policy 502](#) Student Appearance)

Prohibited Substances And Alcoholic Beverages - Possessing, Using, Or Being Under The Influence Of ([Board Policy 502.07](#))

Use and/or Possession of Tobacco and Tobacco Products ([Board Policy 502.06](#))

Student Wellness ([Board Policy 608.01](#))



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The West Des Moines Community School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, and socioeconomic status in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy, please contact the district's Equity Coordinator Dr. Anthony Ferguson, Executive Director of Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity, 3550 Mills Civic Parkway, West Des Moines, IA 50265; Phone: 515-633-5037; E-mail fergusona@wdmcs.org (Adherence to bona fide occupational/ educational qualifications will not be interpreted as discriminatory.)