

2011-2012

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
PARENT / STUDENT
HANDBOOK**



West Ottawa Elementary Parent/Student Handbook 2011-2012

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Introducing...

Board of Education

- Scott VanderStoep, President
- George Jacob, Vice President
- Doug Mahn, Secretary
- William Bloemendaal, Trustee
- Jill Miller, Trustee
- Bill Kangas, Trustee
- Randy Schipper, Trustee

Regular Board of Education meetings are held the third Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Training Room of the Administration Building, 1138 - 136th Ave. Please call the Administration Building at **738-5795** for more information.

West Ottawa Public Schools will provide necessary and reasonable auxiliary aids and services at all Board meetings, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials for the visually-impaired, upon receipt of seven (7) days prior notice. Disabled persons requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the office of West Ottawa Student Services, 1138 136th Ave., Holland, MI 49424; (616) 738-5720.

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District-Level Administrators

- Thomas K. Martin, Superintendent.....738-5795
- Cindy Dymowski, Assistant Superintendent-Student Services.....738-5720
- Jim English, Assistant Superintendent-Finance.....738-5706
- Suzanne Richards, Assistant Superintendent-Instructional Services.....738-5730
- Sara DeVries, Director-Food Services/Child Care.....786-2100
- Patrick Marsman, Director-Athletics.....994-5030
- Jeri Page, Director-Human Resources.....738-5780
- Timothy Tibbitts, Director-Transportation.....395-2400

West Ottawa Public Schools Mission Statement

West Ottawa Public Schools, a caring community,
challenging and inspiring students to learn and succeed
in a diverse world.

Welcome

Dear Parents and Guardians:

The start of a new school year is full of excitement and anticipation. We are pleased to have your child as part of the West Ottawa School District and we are looking forward to working closely with both you and your child. Throughout the year you will have many opportunities to become involved both in and out of the classroom. Your involvement is very much appreciated and welcomed in our schools. Throughout this handbook you will find the answers to many questions you may have about our schools including how to become a volunteer.

Our number one priority is to provide your child with a challenging and supportive education in a safe and orderly learning environment. This handbook is designed to help answer many of the questions you may have about our schools including our expectations for student behavior and board policies and procedures for student conduct. Please review these expectations with your child. Working together, we can ensure a successful year for everyone.

If you have any questions that are not addressed in our handbook, please contact your student's teacher or building principal. Thank you for your continued support of the West Ottawa School District. I'm looking forward to a great year.

Sincerely,

Thomas K. Martin
Superintendent of Schools



Parent involvement is very important here at West Ottawa! Our volunteer program strives to include everyone who is available and willing to serve in the classroom, in extracurricular activities, and with PTA/PTO/PTC programs. There are volunteer coordinators at each building who help facilitate the parent and community volunteers.

There is a Volunteer Profile form for you to complete which indicates your interest and availability. Once the form is completed and turned in at your building's office, a background check will be made according to the Volunteer Pledge, and your name will go into the volunteer database. You will be contacted by the teacher or chairperson of an event to schedule your participation. Please check with your building coordinator for further information, or call me at 738-5785.

*Laura Cramer
District Volunteer Coordinator*

School Addresses/Phone Numbers

Glerum Elementary School	395-2200
342 W. Lakewood Blvd., Holland, MI 49424	Principal: Mary Gordon
Principal's Phone: 395-2299	Secretary: Judy Gielczyk
Principal's Email: gordonm@westottawa.net	
Great Lakes Elementary School	738-6300
3200 - 152nd Ave., Holland, MI 49424	Principal: David Stefanich
Principal's Phone: 738-6399	Secretary: Sara Roper
Principal's Email: stefanichd@westottawa.net	Clerk: Julie Edgley
Lakeshore Elementary School	786-1400
3765 N. 168th Ave., Holland, MI 49424	Principal: Jens Milobinski
Principal's Phone: 786-1499	Secretary: Debra Postma
Principal's Email: milobinskij@westottawa.net	Clerk: Pat Smith
Lakewood Elementary School	786-1300
2134 W. Lakewood Blvd., Holland, MI 49424	Principal: Elizabeth VanderWege
Principal's Phone: 786-1399	Secretary: Gayle Holwerda
Principal's Email: vanderwegee@westottawa.net	Clerk: Sue Noble
North Holland Elementary School	786-1500
11946 New Holland St., Holland, MI 49424	Principal: Karen Abraham
Principal's Phone: 786-1599	Secretary: Sheila Webb
Principal's Email: abrahamk@westottawa.net	
Pine Creek Elementary School	786-1600
1184 - 136th Ave., Holland, MI 49424	Principal: David Gough
Principal's Phone: 786-1699	Secretary: Pearl Morales
Principal's Email: goughd@westottawa.net	Clerk: Nancy Essenburg
Sheldon Woods Elementary School	786-1700
15050 Blair St., West Olive, MI 49460	Principal: Karen Abraham
Principal's Phone: 786-1799	Secretary: Mary Topp
Principal's Email: abrahamk@westottawa.net	
Waukazoo Elementary School	786-1800
1294 W. Lakewood Blvd., Holland, MI 49424	Principal: Ami Taylor
Principal's Phone: 786-1899	Secretary: Suzanna Coney
Principal's Email: taylora@westottawa.net	Clerk: Maribeth Zeinstra
Woodside Elementary School	786-1900
2591 N. Division Ave., Holland, MI 49424	Principal: Lisa Neumann
Principal's Phone: 786-1999	Secretary: Patti Freers
Principal's Email: neumannl@westottawa.net	Clerk: Angela Gonzalez
West Ottawa Public Schools Website	www.westottawa.net

Academics

Curriculum and Instruction

The West Ottawa Public Schools curriculum exceeds the standards of the Michigan Curriculum Framework, which provides specific standards in mathematics, science, social studies, and English language arts.

Our core curriculum provides students with instruction focused on rigorous and relevant concepts. These concepts are taught using multiple research-based instructional strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners.

As students learn these concepts, they will develop an understanding of the relationships and connections of knowledge, facts and skills necessary to be successful in the 21st century. We focus on the development of thinking skills, problem-solving abilities, and effective communication. We encourage our students to achieve high expectations.

We continually work to improve curriculum standards, instructional practices, and assessment strategies to provide the best education for your children. Improvements are made based on analysis of MEAP data, progress report results, district common assessments, and classroom assessments. Believing that all children can learn, we strive to provide learning options that will help all students find success.

International Baccalaureate

West Ottawa Public Schools is proud to offer the International Baccalaureate continuum of education within our school district. The continuum of education consists of a high quality educational programme for students from kindergarten to a pre-university diploma. This continuum develops the intellectual, personal, emotional and social skills needed by West Ottawa students to live, learn and work in a rapidly globalizing world.

International Baccalaureate (IB) instruction encourages **international-mindedness**. To do this, students must first develop an understanding of their own cultural and national identity. All IB students learn a second language and the skills to live and work with others internationally – essential for life in the 21st century.

A **positive attitude to learning** is an integral part of IB which encourages students to ask challenging questions, to reflect critically, to develop research skills, and to learn how to learn. Students participate in community service to understand the importance of being a community member and giving back to the community.

English Language Arts

In early elementary, our primary focus is to ensure all students can read. We utilize many resources to enhance the opportunity for all students to be successful. Students are challenged to read at their level of ability. Toward that end, each teacher and building has a very large selection of books for a wide variety of literacy activities and multiple reading strategies (such as guided reading, choral reading, and independent reading).

To meet the needs of all learners, we utilize a “balanced literacy” program with added lessons in phonemic awareness and phonic activities with all students. We also have many programs designed to assist targeted students. Our program is interactive and utilizes many mini-lessons to develop skills in spelling, grammar, and comprehension. Students write daily and are continually challenged to improve their written communication skills.

Science

Our science curriculum is designed to focus on students "constructing and reflecting on scientific ideas." To accomplish this focus, we use "scientific inquiry" or a hands-on approach to student learning. Teaching science is about students learning the process of inquiry; science facts are not the end goal.

Our students are expected to ask specific questions about their observations, form hypotheses that explain observations, test hypotheses through inquiry, analyze data, and draw conclusions. We expect students to discuss scientific ideas, observations, hypotheses, and conclusions. We allow young students to explain observations by guessing...it is the first step toward hypothesizing. We expect all students to reflect on their learning through written summaries and verbal communications.

Mathematics

The Math Expressions program published by Houghton Mifflin offers students, parents, and teachers the latest in research-based instructional techniques. Author Karen Fuson from Northwestern University has developed a balanced program based on national and state standards that:

- Combines focus on understanding with focus on skills
- Emphasizes in-depth, sustained learning of core grade level concepts
- Expands word problems to include types solved by students in other countries
- Uses math drawings and research based visual representations to support student understanding and class discussion of mathematical thinking
- Provides students with the understanding and tools to develop alternative problem solutions
- Provides visual and linguistic supports to aid concept development and understanding
- Will ensure development of math fluency

Twenty-four West Ottawa teachers implemented the program during the 2007-08 school year with excellent results. These teachers continue to train and support all West Ottawa elementary teachers.

Social Studies

Our social studies curriculum is designed to focus on a few core concepts at each grade level. It is integrated with English language arts whenever possible. Incorporated into these concepts are knowledge, facts and skills regarding the Core Democratic Values, economics vocabulary, and significant ideas in geography and history. We provide our students with many opportunities to take a stand on relevant social issues and challenge students to respond to extended response items, which is a type of question that requires a written response and is always on the MEAP social studies test.

Other

Beyond the four core content areas, we provide all students in grades one through five with additional instruction in art, music, physical wellness, Spanish, computers, technology, and library services.

Integration of Technology

Technology integration is a major focus for West Ottawa Public Schools. Students use technology as tools for learning. Extensive professional development is provided to expand our knowledge in using technology to access information and demonstrate understanding. Teachers store, manipulate, and access data to determine a course of educational action.

Review of Instructional Materials and Activities

Parents have the right to review any instructional materials being used in the school. They also may observe instruction in any class, particularly those dealing with instruction in health and sex education. Any parent who wishes to review materials or observe instruction must contact the principal prior to coming to the school. Parents' rights to review teaching materials and instructional activities are subject to reasonable restrictions and limits.

Resources and Support

Meeting the Needs of All Students

Through strong instructional programming, implemented by quality teachers and supported by excellent facilities and technology, our curriculum provides students with expanded academic opportunities designed to meet their individual needs. Our instructional strategies make provisions for the variety of skills, interests, and developmental experiences of our students.

Integrated with our core curriculum and enhancing a student's quality educational experience are reading support and instruction, mentoring programs, preschool, Kindergarten Enrichment, Extended Day Kindergarten, Junior Achievement, Project CHARLIE, conflict management training, community partnerships, service-learning opportunities, and career awareness programs.

Response to Intervention

Our teachers are committed to identifying those students who may not be meeting grade level expectations as early as possible. West Ottawa Elementary Schools have adopted a scientifically research-based approach that identifies students exhibiting specific challenges in their learning. This collaborative, problem-solving approach is called Response to Intervention (RtI).

Teachers, principals, and ancillary personnel in every building meet during the school day to discuss the needs of the students and specific interventions to meet those needs. The lessons are developed, implemented, and monitored for effectiveness. If students are improving as a result of targeted instruction, that is great! However, if students do not respond to specific strategies during a specified period of time, the RtI team discusses other methods and strategies that may work. This constant and continued monitoring of student progress and reevaluation of instructional practices is an integral part of the RtI process.

The research on RtI states that through a collaborative, problem-solving general education process, 94-98% of all students can meet grade level expectations when provided with appropriate instruction. The Response to Intervention approach has made a positive difference in teaching and learning at West Ottawa.

Positive Behavior Support

Our elementary schools strive to create a culture of respect and responsibility within their learning communities. When safe and positive learning communities are established, students' academic and social progress soars!

Our West Ottawa Elementary Schools have adopted a system entitled Positive Behavior Support that teaches children the importance of being respectful, responsible, and ready to learn each day. Classroom and core support teachers provide instruction with the targeted interventions. Each school has developed an overall plan and protocol that will:

- Specify appropriate behavior for students and staff
- Teach appropriate behavior
- Monitor behavior
- Encourage appropriate behavior
- Correct inappropriate behavior
- Use data to problem solve

Special Education

The Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provide that no individual will be discriminated against on the basis of a disability. This protection applies not just to the student, but to all individuals who have access to the District's programs and facilities. West Ottawa takes pride in being responsive to the needs of children with disabilities. Special education students receive direct instruction and indirect support in academic and/or social areas.

Students identified as eligible for special education programs/services under Michigan guidelines are provided with appropriate instruction and support in the regular classroom setting to the greatest extent possible. Teams of diagnostic, consultative, supportive, and direct instruction professionals work with general education teachers to help each student maximize their potential and participate in a school's educational program as fully as possible. A child may be placed in a specialized classroom outside the district in rare instances.

Public Act 198, the Mandatory Special Education Act, establishes the right of persons with disabilities, from birth through the age of 25, to equal opportunity within the public schools. This means children with disabilities do not need to wait until they are school age to benefit from public school special education services.

The nature and extent of services provided are dependent upon individual needs. Expectations, classroom environment, and curriculum may be adapted for special needs students. A student can access special education services through the proper evaluation procedures. Parent involvement in this procedure is important and required by Federal (IDEA) and State law. Child Assistance Intervention Teams operate in every building to help parents and teachers design appropriate interventions. Special education and 504 referrals begin with the Child Assistance Intervention Teams.

Section 504 plans and accommodations are also available to disabled students who do not require special education programs and services. If you have questions, please call your building principal.

English as a Second Language

West Ottawa's focus is to ensure that all students, regardless of their English language proficiency, have opportunities to participate fully in the educational and extracurricular programs offered by the district.

Students qualify for the program through:

- completion of a home language survey and
- a test of English Language Proficiency

Students have many opportunities for English language development as well as support in content area instruction. Teachers skilled in working with English Language Learners provide specifically designed lessons that enable students to increase their English proficiency while mastering content area curriculum.

West Ottawa's teachers and support staff speak a variety of languages including Spanish, Vietnamese and Lao. Students' first languages are used to improve comprehension as well as to advance their English language development.

West Ottawa strongly believes that English Language Learners can achieve levels of academic performance comparable to those of the general English-speaking population. We are committed to providing the instructional services students need to obtain a high level of success.

Migrant Education

School age children of migratory workers are provided with instructional support services during the spring, summer, and fall seasons.

Teachers and educational assistants work collaboratively with the students' general education teachers during the regular school year. During the summer months, certified and non-certified staff provide intensive instruction for six weeks (180 hours) to pre-kindergarten through eighth grade children.

Gifted and Talented Opportunities

West Ottawa is committed to providing opportunities for academically advanced students to develop their talents and gifts. We provide challenging programs for these students based on multiple criteria of the student's performance in the specific academic content areas. We believe the talents and gifts of motivated and academically advanced students can develop more fully in an environment of challenging, meaningful, and specialized learning experiences. We provide the following opportunities:

- Midwest Academic Talent Search (MATS) – Students who have scored in the 95th-99th national percentile on the Terra Nova assessment in grades 3-5 are invited to take the EXPLORE test, usually held in the month of January and hosted at Glerum or Waukazoo Elementary Schools. This assessment gives us another piece of information about specific talents of individual students, assisting teachers and parents in planning individual programs of instruction for the children. Parents and teachers have the choice to nominate children for eligibility to take the assessment if their scores do not meet the stated criteria. This assessment is absolutely voluntary, and requires parents to pay a fee for their child to participate.
- Differentiated instruction within classes – Teachers provide students with varied assignments designed to challenge the child's thinking.
- Enrichment opportunities – Periodic offerings that enable students to explore various interests.
- Science fairs and math events – Projects, presentations, and/or competitions that challenge students to demonstrate the application of key concepts.
- Acceleration – Students are often very talented in one content area, so we may allow the students to progress through that content area curriculum more rapidly.
- Academically Advanced program at Lakewood Elementary – The SAIL program (Students Accelerating in Learning) is an accelerated language arts program for qualifying students in grades 2-5. This enhanced language arts experience allows students to learn and apply advanced reading and writing skills while participating in a comprehensive study of literature genres.
- Academically Advanced courses at the middle schools – Eligible sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students may enroll in academically advanced courses in English, science, social studies, math, and Spanish. Additionally, seventh grade students can earn high school credits in math and eighth grade students can earn high school credits in all four core areas.
- Advanced Placement courses at the high school – Students who want a higher challenge and/or the potential to earn college credit may enroll in any of seventeen Advanced Placement courses.

Measuring Success

Assessment Tests

The West Ottawa staff continually works to improve instruction, seeking ways to help all students succeed. Analysis of student achievement data is used to review and revise curriculum and instructional strategies. It is also used to guide staff development and develop and monitor student interventions and enrichments.

Recognizing no one measure can capture the full range of student learning, West Ottawa uses a variety of methods to assess student progress and academic achievement, to monitor mastery of skills, and to provide valuable data regarding the curriculum's effectiveness in providing students with the knowledge, facts, and skills deemed essential by the Board of Education and Michigan Department of Education.

West Ottawa Public Schools utilize the following methods for measuring student achievement:

MEAP

The Michigan Educational Assessment Program tests were developed to measure how well school district curriculum aligns with the Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations in mathematics, reading, science, social studies, and writing content areas, as well as student success in mastering the content expectations. The MEAP tests are given statewide to all students. MEAP tests are given at the 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, and 11th grades.

ELPA

The English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) is given statewide to students whose native and/or home language is a language other than English. The results of the assessment help schools/districts identify services and strategies to help these students become proficient in English, and also help schools/districts monitor student progress across the years in gaining English proficiency. The ELPA is given in grades K-12.

Additional Assessment Methods

West Ottawa Public Schools also assesses elementary students using the following:

- District interim assessments in reading and math
- District writing prompts
- Rigby running records and DIBELS Next
- Math and science unit assessments
- Authentic projects
- Presentations

Limited student data is entered into the University of Oregon data base for use with DIBELS Next. This will be completed unless we have a written request from parents/guardians stating not to release this information. (Please see Student Records.)

Adequate Yearly Progress

Schools are expected to demonstrate Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in improving student achievement and minimizing achievement gaps. AYP is a component of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). ESEA and the current state accreditation program, Education, YES!, are intended to hold schools more accountable and to ensure every student is provided with the tools they need to be successful.

In Michigan, AYP is primarily determined by MEAP and MI-Access test results. Student attendance and participation rates in state testing are also factors. To make AYP, a school must demonstrate that all students meet or exceed the established MEAP and MI-Access proficiency requirements in both math and reading. Additionally, schools must meet the minimum state assessment participation rates and student attendance rates.

Communication with Parents/Families

Please contact your child's teachers or principal when questions or concerns arise as we encourage you to work closely with our staff. Nearly all West Ottawa employees are accessible through phone, voice mail, or e-mail, or feel free to contact the secretary to leave a message to ensure open communication.

Situations regarding your child or your child's classroom activities should be directed to the teacher. Any time there are continued concerns or questions that have not been resolved, feel free to continue the communication process through the principal, an assistant superintendent, or the superintendent.

At West Ottawa, we believe together we share the responsibility for meeting student needs. We encourage ongoing parent-teacher communication. Our teachers are available and communicate with parents using one or more of the following methods:

- Classroom or grade level newsletters
- Progress updates
- E-mail
- Websites
- ClassLine
- Telephone

Parent/Teacher Conferences

We highly encourage all parents to participate in their child's conferences. Parents and teachers need a time to discuss each child's progress in school. Our partnership and ongoing communication are vital to your child's success.

First semester conferences are scheduled in October. Second semester conferences are scheduled in February. Please check with your child's school for conference information. Parents may request a conference at any time.

Report Cards

Report Cards will be issued at the end of each nine-week period. Kindergarten students will receive progress reports twice a year, at the end of each semester.

Voice Mail

A voice mail message may be left for nearly every employee in West Ottawa who has a district telephone number. If a call is not answered after four or five rings, the caller will generally be connected to voice mail and may leave a message to be responded to at a later time. The caller may be given the option to press "0" to be connected to an operator in the building for immediate assistance during school hours.

E-Mail

All certified staff and most support staff members may be contacted via e-mail. E-mail addresses, as well as phone numbers, are available online at www.westottawa.net.

ClassLine

ClassLine is an announcement-only service which a teacher may use to provide parents and students with current information about a specific class. If a teacher has notified you that they utilize ClassLine, then information such as homework assignments and project requirements is available by calling **786-1200** and entering the four-digit code for that teacher.

Infinite Campus Parent Portal

West Ottawa Schools is pleased to provide the Infinite Campus Parent Portal which connects parents/guardians to their students' data online anytime from anywhere there is internet access. Once the Portal is accessed, information about only their child's progress can be viewed.

Making this information-rich connection with parents is a clear way to improve communication between teachers, parents and students. Access to the Parent Portal can be gained from home, work, a public library, or anywhere an internet connection can be established. The Parent Portal is a free service to our district families.

Directions to obtain a Parent Portal account can be found online at www.westottawa.net.

Information Hotline

The Information Hotline is an announcement-only service which provides district-wide information with the touch of a few buttons. By dialing **786-1100** and choosing from the menu selections, a caller is connected with information about school closings, district cancellations, the school calendar, district and school events, lunch menus, Performing Arts Center events, and athletic contests. Rotary phone users will hear a summary of announcements. This service is available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.

The Education Station

The Education Station is an educational access cable television channel provided by the FCC, Charter Communications (Channel 96), and T² Communications (Channel 2) at no cost to the school district. Videos are produced, directed, written, taped, and performed by students as part of their educational experience. Other programs are created by educators. Programming includes a scrolling message board, daily announcements by students, news programs, event schedules, events from the Performing Arts Center, sporting events, and Board of Education meetings.

The Education Station is always looking for volunteers and ideas! Please call the television studio at **994-5060**.

Non-Custodial Parents

We often receive requests for student progress reports from non-custodial parents. When legally possible these requests will be honored. Upon request, weekly reports such as building or classroom newsletters may also be sent.

Should circumstances require that a parent not be allowed to pick up or be in contact with a particular child, **a court order to that effect must be on file in the school office before school officials may prevent parental contact.**

Visitors

According to school board policy, all school visitors must check in at the office immediately upon entering and just prior to leaving the building. You will be given a name tag or I.D. badge and asked to sign in.

Parents are always welcome to visit the school. Please contact the office staff or teacher to make arrangements to ensure there are no conflicts with special activities.

When picking up your child, please stop in the school office to sign your child out.

Approval for a student visitor must be obtained from the principal and the teacher. In most cases, visitors from a neighboring school district will not be permitted. The administration reserves the right to refuse any visitation.

Volunteers are asked to sign in and out on the Volunteer Register at the school office.

Safety Hotline

Students, parents and community members can call **738-5750** twenty-four hours a day to report concerns, suspicions, or any situation they feel is potentially dangerous. Each reported incident is investigated.



Parent Involvement

Many exciting and important opportunities for parent involvement are available in West Ottawa Public Schools. Parents are encouraged to join their school's PTO/PTC/PTA and/or school improvement team. Booster groups are eager to welcome new members. Volunteers share their time, talents and experiences to enhance educational programs. School volunteers are from all walks of life, yet they share a common goal - supporting the need for quality education for all children.

Volunteer Profile Forms are sent home with students as part of the back-to-school packet of information. We strongly encourage you to complete this form and return it to school to become a vital part of our volunteer program. **Volunteers make a difference!**

Volunteer hours are recorded in the Volunteer Register located in the office of each school. Whether you volunteer for 30 minutes or 1,000 hours, it is important that you register each time you volunteer. Registration and sign-out are required as part of our school safety policy and help us reach volunteers if they need to be contacted.

Please call **738-5700** for more information.

Field Trips

Periodically, well-planned field trips are provided for our classes. A trip away from school by a classroom or a grade level will be part of the total curriculum that the teacher has planned with students. You will be notified in advance of any planned trip by way of a note including destination, date, and cost (if any).

We must have your signed permission for each trip in which your child participates. Forms are sent home with your child well before the trip.

Fundraisers

All student sales and fundraising activities must have the building principal's approval. Students are not allowed to go door to door. Fundraising may not take place during school hours.

Requirements for School Enrollment/Transfer

Kindergarten Age Requirement

To enroll in kindergarten, a child must be five years of age on or before December 1, the year of enrollment. Required for enrollment are a certified copy of your child's birth certificate, immunization records, including proof of vision and hearing screening, and proof of residence.

To Enroll in School

In general, State law requires students to enroll in the school district in which their parent or legal guardian resides unless enrolling under the District's open enrollment policy.

New students under the age of eighteen (18) must be enrolled by their parent or legal guardian. When enrolling, parents must provide copies of the following:

- a birth certificate or similar document
- court papers allocating parental rights and responsibilities, or custody (if appropriate)
- proof of residency
- proof of immunizations

Under certain circumstances, temporary enrollment may be permitted. In such cases, parents will be notified about documentation required to establish permanent enrollment.

Homeless students who meet the Federal definition of homeless may enroll and will be under the direction of the District Liaison for Homeless Children with regard to enrollment procedures.

A student who has been suspended or expelled by another public school in Michigan may be temporarily denied admission to the District's schools during the period of suspension or expulsion even if that student would otherwise be entitled to attend school in the District. Likewise, a student who has been expelled or otherwise removed for disciplinary purposes from a public or private school may request a hearing to review the circumstances of the suspension or expulsion and any other factors the Superintendent determines to be relevant to determine the student's status.

To Transfer to a Different School

Parents must notify the principal about plans to transfer their child to another school. Transfer will be authorized only after the arrangements are completed, all school materials are returned, and any fees or fines that are due are paid. Parents are encouraged to contact the building secretary for specific details.

School officials, when transferring student records, are required to transmit disciplinary records including suspension and expulsion actions against the student.

Schools of Choice

West Ottawa accepts Schools of Choice students within the district as well as from other school districts. Should you wish to apply for Schools of Choice, the appropriate application forms are available online at www.westottawa.net or at your school office as well as the Administration Building. This form must be resubmitted each year.

A Student's Day

Arrival at and Departure from School

So that children may be supervised at all times while they are at school, we ask for the cooperation of parent(s).

If your children walk to school or are dropped off at school, please plan for them to arrive not more than ten minutes before the start of the school day. In extreme or inclement weather (cold, raining), children will be permitted to wait inside the building when they arrive at school. Afternoon kindergarten students who are dropped off should arrive 10 minutes

prior to the beginning of the afternoon session.

All students should be out of the building and on their way home promptly after school is out. Please encourage your children to leave the school grounds promptly at the end of the school day and to go directly home.

After-School Procedures

Without written parental permission stating otherwise, teachers will always send students home on their regular bus or as a routine walker. Occasionally, children will want to ride the bus home with a friend for the night, to a party, etc. When this is to occur, a note from the parent granting permission is required.

Parties

Parties for birthdays and holidays are left up to the discretion of the teacher. Prior permission for birthday treats is appreciated.

Student Responsibilities

Playground

Children need the daily physical activity and play opportunities that playground time provides. Providing the weather is reasonably dry and the wind chill is not below zero, all children will be expected to go out for recess. Children should wear appropriate clothing for outdoor activity. A reasonable, illness-related written request for the child to stay in for one day will be honored. If additional time is needed, please provide the principal with a written doctor's explanation of the circumstances.

Playground Discipline

At the beginning of the school year, all teachers will acquaint their students with playground rules. The rules will also be posted in each classroom. Educational assistants will be the immediate playground supervisors. Any serious problem will be reported to the teacher. Swearing, vulgar language, fighting, and disrupting other students will not be tolerated.

Selling and/or Trading Property

Students are not permitted to trade or sell any of their personal property at school. Group fundraising through sales of merchandise may be permitted with the approval of district or building administration.

Money and Other Valuables

We discourage students from bringing valuable items to school. It is preferable to send a check or money order rather than cash when a payment must be made. If money is being sent to school for any reason, it would be wise to:

- Place the money in an envelope.
- Include a note inside, stating the reason for the money.
- Place teacher's and child's names on outside of the envelope.

Animals and Pets

Students are asked not to bring personal pets to school at any time without the prior approval of the principal. No animals may be transported by school bus.

Bicycles at School

There is no age restriction of who may ride bicycles to school. This is a parental decision. Please discuss with your child the correct procedures for riding a bicycle on the road or bike path and demand that those procedures be followed. A helmet must be worn while riding the bicycle at school or as part of a school activity.

Parents of children who must cross busy streets where crossing guards are not on duty may be asked to submit written permission for their child to ride and/or walk to school.

Laser Pens/Pointers

Laser pens/pointers are not permitted in school. A student with a laser device will have it confiscated. Additional disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion may be taken.

Electronics

All electronic devices need to remain at home unless a child needs the device for health or other unusual circumstances approved by the Board of Education.

Lost and Found

Each school has a central lost and found area where found items are stored. Please mark coats, jackets, gym shoes, hats, boots, lunch boxes, and anything else that could get misplaced at school with your child's name. It is strongly advised that valuable items not be brought to school. The school is not responsible for losses; however, if reported immediately, every effort will be made to help locate the missing item.

Respect for School Property

Much of the spirit and reputation of a school is reflected in its appearance. Maintaining clean schools takes effort. Every student needs to do his/her part by making sure that wrappers and waste paper are deposited in the recycling and/or trash containers provided. Respect for school property is expected at all times. Accidents will happen, but vandalism or willful destruction of property will be charged to the student(s) involved.

Student Fees, Fines, and Supplies

West Ottawa charges specific fees for some noncurricular activities and programs. Such fees or charges are determined by the cost of materials, freight/handling fees, and add-on fees for loss or damage to school property. The school and staff do not make a profit.

The District will provide all basic supplies needed to complete the required course curriculum. The student and/or his/her family may choose to purchase their own supplies if they desire to have a greater quantity or quality of supplies, or desire to help conserve the limited resources for use by others. The teacher or appropriate administrator may recommend useful supplies for these purposes.

Fees may be waived in situations where there is financial hardship.

Students using school property and equipment can be fined for excessive wear and abuse of the property and equipment. The fine will be used to pay for the damage, not to make a profit.

Late fines can be avoided when students return borrowed materials promptly. Their use may be needed by others.

Failure to pay fines, fees, or charges may result in the withholding of grades and credits.

Textbooks

Textbooks are loaned to students free of charge. However, students are responsible for lost or damaged books and will be expected to pay for them. Students are urged to take good care of books to avoid an assessment at the end of the school year.

Overdue Library Materials Procedure

Parent(s) will be billed for library materials which are not returned. We encourage parent(s) to have their child contribute to the replacement fee through their savings or by working at home.

Student Dress

Grooming and Appearance

Proper dress, hygiene, and good work habits work together to promote good school behavior and consistent learning. Therefore, any attire that attracts attention and distracts from the educational process is not permitted in school.

Examples of distracting attire include midriff or back exposure, visible undergarments, mesh shirts, any head covering (including hats), coats/jackets, chains, visors, bandannas, gloves, sweatbands, sunglasses, or any clothing that displays or promotes inappropriate products, swastikas, confederate flags, sexually suggestive or vulgar language, gang emblems, or drugs. Generally, shorts, skirts and dresses should be fingertip length or longer. All sleeveless shirts must have at least a 2-inch strap.

Shoes

For safety and hygienic reasons, students must wear shoes at all times while in school. To ensure safety these shoes should be firmly attached to the foot.

Separate gym shoes are required footwear for scheduled indoor physical wellness classes. These shoes may also be used for classroom shoes, but are for indoor use only. Gym shoes are to remain at school.

School Meal Program

Children may purchase breakfast and/or lunch at school. Students who bring lunch from home may purchase half pints of milk or orange drink. Meal prices are:

- Breakfast = \$1.60 • Lunch = \$2.10
- Single serving milk = \$0.50

School meal money is collected each day. Children's accounts must be prepaid to purchase meals. If a child's account goes in arrears for three (3) meals, the child will receive an alternate lunch until the meal account is again prepaid. A child's account is charged for a meal only when the child purchases a meal. **All checks should be made payable to West Ottawa Public Schools.**

Each school has a bar code card reader to record meal or milk purchases. I.D. cards are provided to students free of charge and are kept by the child's teacher or nutrition services staff member. If a child loses, tears, or otherwise destroys the card, \$3.00 will be charged for a new card.

The West Ottawa Child Nutrition and Food Services Department believes the best way to meet a child's dietary needs is by offering a variety of meal choices. All school meals include protein, dairy, fruits, vegetables, and bread products. A variety of healthy choices are available daily.

Families who participate in the Free or Reduced-Price Meal Benefit Program must complete a new application each year. Applications may be filled out online at www.lunchapp.com. The approval process for the online application is faster than the paper application. Only one application listing all household members is necessary per family. Applications are available in your back to school packet or from your school secretary.

If you have any questions concerning school meals, payments, or free and reduced-price meal program applications, please feel free to call **786-2100** or **786-2109**.

Health

Accident and Illness

If it is necessary for a child to be sent home because of a **serious accident or illness**, the office will notify the parent to come and get the child. Please sign out and pick up your child in the school office. If a parent cannot be reached, the person designated as the emergency contact will be notified. If neither can be reached and the child needs emergency medical care, the child will be taken to a local emergency room. In all cases, every effort will be made to reach and notify the parent of the child. **The school needs to know of any residence or emergency phone number changes in order to provide quick and thorough service.**

In the early morning before school, it is often difficult to determine whether or not to send your child to school. Most illnesses children have are contagious, meaning other children can catch them. For that specific reason, we have guidelines for school attendance so children will not infect or endanger the health of other children. If your child has these symptoms, please keep him/her home from school:

Fever - A person's "normal" body temperature can vary from person to person. Generally speaking, any temperature over a person's "normal" temperature (usually 98.6°) can be considered a fever. Your child's temperature should be "normal" for twenty-four hours before sending him/her back to school.

Bad cough - (Defined as persistent and interfering with schoolwork) Children often do not remember to cover their mouths. Coughing can easily spread germs.

Diarrhea, vomiting, or severe stomachaches - These symptoms should be gone for 24 hours before sending your child back to school.

Red eyes (with yellow drainage) - Your child may wake up in the morning with his/her eyes "stuck shut." This may indicate conjunctivitis (pink eye) which is extremely contagious. Please check with your physician.

School Insurance

Accidents at school will be covered through the parent's health or homeowner's insurance. School insurance is available to all students in grades K-12. Each student receives a packet of information which includes the insurance application form at the beginning of the school year. Participation is optional; however, we ask that you sign a waiver if you do not wish to purchase this insurance. You may want to look carefully at your insurance policy to determine whether you wish to add this school insurance package. Please note: The district does not carry accident insurance coverage for students.

Pediculosis (Head Lice)

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of a school environment that is safe, clean, and free of undue distractions such as pediculosis (head lice). State regulations indicate that superintendents, principals, and teachers shall exclude from school any child suspected of having a communicable disease. In line with these regulations, students discovered to have pediculosis will be excluded from school until they have been treated and are free of live lice.

Head lice checks are given to all students in kindergarten-5th grade.

WHEN: Three times per year as a prevention technique
First full week of school
First full week after Winter Break
First full week after Spring Break, or any time a problem is perceived

Children found to have pediculosis will be restricted from activities involving close contact. A parent will be contacted to pick up the child. Literature will be sent home on detection and prevention of head lice.

Treatment may be by:

- Family doctor
- Over-the-counter remedy

A form will be sent home so parent(s) may confirm they have taken all required action. The student may attend school when the parent/caregiver brings the child back with the signed form so a check for nits may be made by authorized personnel in the presence of the adult.

Preparedness for Toxic and Asbestos Hazards

West Ottawa Public Schools is concerned for the safety of students and attempts to comply with all Federal and State Laws and Regulations to protect students from hazards that may result from industrial accidents beyond the control of school officials or from the presence of asbestos materials used in previous construction. Our school district has conducted an extensive asbestos survey of all of our buildings. Based on the findings of this inspection, a comprehensive management plan was drafted. This plan details the response actions that the district will be taking regarding asbestos containing materials found in our buildings. This plan is available for inspection at your principal's office without cost or restriction during normal business hours. A copy of the School District's *Preparedness for Toxic Hazard and Asbestos Hazard Policy* will be made available for inspection at the Board offices upon request. If you desire a personal copy, please notify the Administration Office and it will be supplied to you within 5 working days at a cost of .60¢ per page.

Pesticide Notification

West Ottawa Public Schools utilizes an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to control pests. IPM is a pest management system that utilizes all suitable techniques in a total pest management system with the intent of preventing pests from reaching unacceptable levels or to reduce an existing population to an acceptable level. Pest management techniques emphasize pest exclusion and biological controls. However, as with most pest control programs, chemical controls may also be utilized. All applications would be done during non-school days.

You have the right to be informed prior to any application of an insecticide, fungicide or herbicide made to the school grounds or buildings during this school year. This will be provided either in building newsletters or by posting on the building's front doors. In certain emergencies, such as an infestation of stinging insects, pesticides may be applied without prior notice to prevent injury to students, but you will be notified following any such application. If you need prior notification or additional information about our IPM policy, please contact: West Ottawa Public Schools, 3623 Butternut Drive, Holland, MI 49424, Tom Swifney, District Facilities Supervisor, 616-738-6972.

Areas of Authority

According to the State of Michigan's School Code (Sections 340.613 and 340.614), West Ottawa Public Schools maintains the following areas of authority over student conduct:

- While attending school
- While on a school vehicle
- While on school property or at a school-sponsored activity
- While under the jurisdiction of the school
- Whenever directed toward a school employee

As a result, West Ottawa has rules and regulations necessary and proper to maximize the benefits of our educational programs for your child. Additional rules and regulations will be established as needed.

When, in the judgment of the administration, a student's behavior is of a nature that adversely influences others, interferes with the educational process, or infringes on the rights of others, disciplinary action will occur.

Due Process

Students have a right to due process whenever they are subject to any serious disciplinary action such as suspension and expulsion. If a student feels that his/her rights have been violated, the student is encouraged to discuss the matter with school administration. If the matter is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, he/she may appeal to the Superintendent, West Ottawa Board of Education, and State Board of Education, in that order.

Student Records

The School District maintains many student records including both directory information and confidential information.

Directory information includes:

- Student's name
- Student's address
- Student's telephone number
- Date of birth
- Photographic, computer, and video images of the student
- Grade level
- Parent/guardian name, address and phone number
- Participation in officially-recognized activities and sports
- Height and weight, if a member of an athletic team
- Dates of attendance (date entered and date left the District)
- Date of graduation
- Awards received, honor rolls, scholarships
- Current West Ottawa school attending

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can be disclosed by law to outside organizations without a parent/guardian's prior written consent. Additionally, two federal laws require public school districts to provide military recruiters, upon request, with specific directory information (name, address, telephone number), unless parents/guardians or adult students have submitted a request in writing that they do not want their student's directory information disclosed without their prior written consent. The written request to not release directory information to third parties must be submitted by October 1 of each school year, and is in effect for only that school year. For new students enrolling in West Ottawa Public Schools after October 1, the written request for non-disclosure of directory information must be received within 30 days of enrollment. For further information about the items included within the category of directory information and instructions on how to prohibit its release, you may wish to consult the Board's annual Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) notice which has been included in your opening day packet.

Other than directory information, access to all other student records is protected by (FERPA) and Michigan law. Except in limited circumstances as specifically defined in State and Federal law, the school district is prohibited from releasing confidential education records to any outside individual or organization without the prior written consent of the parents, or the adult student.

Confidential records include, but are not limited to, test scores, psychological reports, behavioral data, disciplinary records, and communications with family and outside service providers.

A parent/guardian or adult student has the right to inspect and review the student's educational records within 45 days after receipt of the written request for access. The school has a form which may be used to submit a written request. After receipt of the completed form/written request, the Custodian of Records will notify the parent/guardian or adult student of the time and place where the records can be inspected. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents/guardians or adult students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.

It is a parent/guardian or adult student's right to request amendments to the student's education records if the parent/guardian or adult student believes the record is inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents/guardians or adult students who wish to ask the school to amend a record must submit a written request identifying the part of the record they would like changed and why it should be changed.

Consistent with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), no student will be required, as a part of the school program or the District's curriculum, without prior written consent of the student (if an adult, or an emancipated minor) or, if an unemancipated minor, his/her parents, to submit to or participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

- political affiliations or beliefs of the student or his/her parents
- mental or psychological problems of the student or his/her family
- sex behavior or attitudes
- illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior
- critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships
- legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers
- religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or his/her parents
- income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such a program)

Consistent with the PPRA and Board policy, the Superintendent will ensure that procedures are established whereby parents may inspect any materials used in conjunction with any such survey, analysis, or evaluation.

Further, parents have the right to inspect, upon request, a surveyor evaluation created by a third party before the survey/evaluation is administered or distributed by the school to the student. The parent will have access to the survey/evaluation within a reasonable period of time after the request is received by the building principal.

The Superintendent will provide notice directly to parents of students enrolled in the District of the substantive content of this policy at least annually at the beginning of the school year, and within a reasonable period of time after any substantive change in this policy.

The Family Policy Compliance Office in the U.S. Department of Education administers both FERPA and PPRA. Parents/guardians or adult students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605
www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpco

Your Child's Safety: Our Priority

Emergency Drills

Instructions are posted in each room of the building and must be followed. Each drill will be treated as if it were an actual emergency situation. Although speed is important in any such procedure, of greater importance is the ability of all students to follow directions and proceed in a calm, orderly manner.

Closing School and/or Delayed Start

Inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances may cause us to close school or delay the start of school. We will make every effort to make an announcement **by 6:00 a.m.**, whenever possible.

Should a weather emergency occur during the school day, we will continue in session unless it is determined by the Superintendent that cancellation or early dismissal is advisable and can be carried out under conditions existing at that time.

If school is cancelled due to weather conditions, all kindergarten through eighth grade after-school activities are automatically cancelled.

Parents, students, and staff may find out about school closings, delays in starting times, and cancellations by:

Calling the Information Hotline (786-1100)

- press 5510 for school closing information
- press 5511 for district cancellations
- press 5527 for high school athletic cancellations and
- press 5529 for middle school athletic cancellations

Checking the Internet

- District Website: www.westottawa.net
- Online Calendar: www.dynacal.com/westottawa

Tuning in to a cable television access channel

- Charter Communications (Ch. 96)
- T² Communications (Ch. 2)

Watching the following television stations

- WWMT (Ch. 3)
- WOOD (Ch. 8)
- WZZM (Ch. 13)

Dismissal/Emergency Dismissal

Please be prepared for all emergencies which might result in an unexpected school closing during the day. Give directions to your child such as where he/she is expected to go if you are not at home. Announcements will be made on local radio stations and on Channel 96 as soon as the decision is made. (Please refer to information under Closing of School section.) Because of the large number of students and the need for open telephone lines, the schools will not be making individual calls to parent(s) to notify them of unscheduled early dismissals.



Board of Education Policies

The following West Ottawa Elementary School procedures are in place to make your child's school as safe and orderly as possible to enhance his/her learning experience. Should you desire to examine a policy in its entirety, please contact any West Ottawa school office for a copy.

Board Policy 5771: Lockers/Search and Seizure

Lockers are assigned to students for their convenience and temporary use. Students are to use lockers exclusively to store school-related materials and authorized personal items such as outer garments, footwear, grooming aides, or lunch.

Students are prohibited from placing locks on any locker without the advance approval of the school principal or his/her designee.

School authorities may conduct periodic general inspections of lockers at any time without consent or search warrant.

To safeguard the safety and well-being of students, school authorities may search students and/or their personal effects (i.e. purse, backpack, etc.), as well as their lockers, whenever there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized materials.

Board Policy 5200: Attendance

Regular and prompt attendance is essential for a child's academic success at all grade levels, and absences and tardiness adversely affect student achievement.

We do not recommend, however, that children come to school when they show signs of a communicable illnesses (please refer to the Health section).

When an absence is necessary, these procedures must be followed:

- Please call the school office by 10:00 a.m. giving the child's name, your name, and the reason for absence.
- If phone contact is not made, a note from the parent stating the date of the absence and reason must be presented to the office on the day of return to school, or the absence will be unexcused. You may leave a voice mail message outside of school hours.

Types of Absences

Excused Absence - Absences due to illness or other reason which makes attendance impossible, about which the school has been properly notified, are excused absences.

To better ensure each child is in attendance every possible day, a letter of concern may be sent when a child's excused absences reach five (5). Letters indicating increased concern, as well as those requesting meetings, may be sent at ten (10), fifteen (15), and twenty (20) excused absences. When excused absences reach fifteen (15), the Ottawa County Truancy Officer may be notified and further action taken at the county level.

Unexcused Absence - Oversleeping, babysitting, shopping trips, work at home, or "skipping" are examples of unexcused absences. Also if contact is not made with the school confirming an absence, it will be unexcused. Parents will be contacted after three (3) unexcused absences for a planning meeting to eliminate such absences. Further absences will result in a referral to the Ottawa County Truancy Officer.

Family Trips - Students should not miss school for a one-day pleasure outing. Certain family vacations may be quite educational, but must be balanced against missing school learning experiences that cannot be repeated. School officials cannot be expected to approve such absences. Please notify teachers in advance of such extended absences. Although some work may be sent home to be completed during the trip, missed assignments will be made available once your child returns.

Head Lice - A child who has contracted head lice will be excluded from school until they have been treated and are free of live lice. In most cases they are expected back within twenty-four (24) hours. Occasionally, an additional day may be needed.

Tardiness - Students should be in their classrooms when school begins and should remain there the full day. Leaving early will be counted as tardy for recording purposes. It is the responsibility of both student and parent to be on time. Frequent tardiness will be treated as truancy.

Board Policy 8600: Student Transportation

The West Ottawa Transportation Department is eager to provide their critical service as safely and conveniently as possible. To help this process, the following procedures have been established:

- Students will be allowed to have ONE pick-up and ONE drop-off address, either at home or at a caregiver's location within the home school attendance area on a regularly scheduled basis.
- Students must be waiting at the bus stop five (5) minutes prior to scheduled pick-up time. The driver cannot and will not wait for late students. Once students are on the bus, they are not allowed to get off the bus. (A person must show proof of being that student's parent/legal guardian to get them off the bus.)
- If your student is the only student at a bus stop, please call Transportation at **395-2400** if he/she is not going to ride the bus on a given day.

Bus Rules

The West Ottawa Transportation Department has a tremendous responsibility for the care and safety of your child while he/she is riding the bus. For the safety and welfare of all children (pedestrians and motorists, too), please review the bus safety rules with your child and encourage your child to follow them. School rules apply when students are on the bus and at bus stops before and after school. Additional bus rules include:

- Eating or drinking on the bus is not allowed.
- Keep the bus clean.
- Remain seated at all times.
- Keep head, hands, and feet inside the bus, out of the aisle, and to yourself.
- Cross in front of the bus. Obey the Paddy Signal.
- Fighting, pushing, spitting, shoving, and horseplay are not permitted.
- Students are not permitted in the driver area at any time.
- Students must be silent at all railroad crossings.
- Students must be at the assigned bus stop on time.
- The emergency door is for emergencies only.

****Other safety rules may apply at the discretion of the school district.**

Any violation of the above rules will result in discipline which may include suspension of bus riding privileges up to and including expulsion from the bus.

Student Conduct

It is our hope that we can work together to correct inappropriate behavior and continue to provide a safe environment for all students and staff. Drivers will handle routine student discipline concerns on school buses, including assigning seats and advising students of rules and regulations. Failure to follow a driver's instructions may result in a written reprimand with appropriate consequences.

In the event of multiple infractions, progressive disciplinary action steps may include verbal and/or written warnings. With each infraction, there may be a bus suspension and/or loss of riding privileges for the remainder of the school year. Please review this policy with your child(ren).

In the event of suspension from the bus, the student is suspended from riding privileges on all West Ottawa buses. The student is required to attend school; therefore, you would need to find an alternate means of transportation. If a parent wishes to appeal, he/she must contact the Transportation Office **(395-2400)** within 48 hours of the misconduct. **Please remember that school bus transportation is a privilege, not a right.**

Board Policy 5600: Code of Conduct

The Student Code of Conduct applies to any student who is on school property, at school, at a school-sponsored activity, or on a school vehicle. The Code also applies to student conduct at any time or place where the student's conduct interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of West Ottawa Public Schools, or the safety, welfare, or emotional well-being of students, visitors, or district staff.

Students are expected to be familiar with Board Policy 5600: Student Code of Conduct which has been adopted by the Board of Education. Students who engage in activities which may cause interruption or destruction of the school program, incite violence, or otherwise detract from the education mission of the district, are subject to disciplinary consequences, including but not limited to, short or long-term suspension, or a recommendation for expulsion.

Participation in all extracurricular activities, including interscholastic athletics, is a privilege, not a right. Students are bound by the Board of Education's policies, procedures, and rules governing participation in such activities. This may require of all students involved in extracurricular activities an even higher standard of conduct than is expected of all students under our Code of Conduct.

Students should show respect at all times to fellow students, staff members, school employees, and members of the community. Both students and staff members have an obligation to maintain conditions that will promote the proper atmosphere for learning and other school activities.

Gang Activity

Gang activity is defined as individual or group behaviors associated with belonging to a group that promotes juvenile delinquency and which has an adverse effect on the school and learning environment. Students should not engage in behaviors at school, on school property, or at school-related activities which promote gang activity. This includes:

- Wearing of clothing or other apparel, such as bandannas of any type (for both male and female students), or altering one's appearance to indicate gang affiliation
- Wearing of beads, earrings, or other jewelry that denotes gang colors or symbols
- Hand signals that communicate gang activity
- Violent behaviors such as fighting, shouting confrontations, individual or group conflicts ("stand-offs")
- Possession of weapons as described in state law regarding prohibitions of "weapons" in school
- Displaying gang symbols on one's body, clothes, possessions, vehicle, school locker, or on other school property
- Wearing gang colors
- Any other activities deemed to be gang-related

The administration reserves the right to determine which behaviors, dress, or activities are gang-related. Offenses will result in disciplinary action up to and including recommendation for expulsion.

Arson

A student who commits arson on school grounds, in district buildings, or at school district sponsored events, shall be permanently expelled for not less than 180 days from all Michigan school districts and that information will be entered in the student's permanent record. The student will be referred to appropriate agencies within the county (i.e. criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system, social services, community mental health agencies, etc.).

The parent and/or student would also be notified of the referral. Each student subject to expulsion shall, upon petition, have his/her situation reviewed by the superintendent on a case-by-case basis.

Defacing/Misuse of Property

Students shall not deface or misuse school or another person's property. All offenses shall result in a suspension of up to ten days and/or restitution for damages, and notification of parents and/or police. Any severe case of vandalism could result in a recommendation to the Board of Education for expulsion.

Theft/Extortion

Students shall not steal, be in possession of another's property, or be involved in an act of extortion against another student. All offenses could result in a suspension of up to 10 days and/or notification of parents and/or police.

Suspension

Major violations of the Student Code of Conduct will result in suspension. The length of the suspension will be determined by school authorities. The parent(s) will be notified in advance of the action to be taken and will have complete custody of their child during the suspension. The student will be readmitted to school after a satisfactory solution to his/her conduct is agreed upon by student, parent, and administration. This will most often require a parent conference.

Board Policy 5320: Immunizations

Michigan State Law requires that schools have complete immunization records on file for all students. Immunizations include DPT (diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus), polio, measles/mumps /rubella (German Measles), and Hepatitis B. A chickenpox (varicella) vaccination or proof of immunity is also required. If records are missing, you will be contacted since school attendance requires compliance with the law.

Proof of vision and hearing testing, available through the Ottawa County Health Department or your family physician, is also required for new students.

Board Policy 5330: Medications

For the safety of all students, **do not send medications (pain relievers, cold medicines, cough drops, nose sprays, etc.) to school with your child.** If you feel your child needs an over-the-counter medicine during the school day, you may want to try a long-acting (6-12 hour) product and administer it before your child comes to school.

If your child is on a prescription medication that they must receive at school, that medication may be administered at school by school personnel when necessary for school attendance. "Authorization for Medication/Parental Consent" forms are available online (www.westottawa.net). A form must be completed, signed by the parent and physician, and returned to the school office before the medication can be administered. All medication must be presented to the school office in its original container.

Self-Administration

If a student has a health condition and if the necessary medication would not be harmful to other students if taken by accident, a physician, along with the parent, may request to have a student keep and administer his/her own medication, i.e. asthma inhaler. "Authorization for Self-Administered Medications/Parental Consent" forms are available online (www.westottawa.net). This form must be completed and will include the physician/care provider's instructions that the student may self-possess or self-administer a specific medication at school.

Board Policy 5517: Harassment

Harassment is unlawful under both Michigan and federal law and is contrary to the commitment of this district to provide an effective learning environment. District policy prohibits harassment of students, employees, volunteers, contractors, or applicants for employment by students, employees, board members, volunteers, contractors, and/or applicants.

The district will not tolerate harassing behavior as defined by law and/or by district policy, false reports of harassment, and/or retaliation against persons reporting allegations of harassment.

The penalty for such an offense can include any or all of the following: parental contact, possible detention, a possible one- to ten-day suspension, possible police contact, and possible recommended expulsion.

Bullying and Other Aggressive Behavior toward Students

Bullying or other aggressive behavior toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties, including Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers, is strictly prohibited. This prohibition includes physical, verbal, and psychological abuse including hazing, gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety, or personal degradation. Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying are expected of administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers to provide positive examples for student behavior.

“Bullying” is any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – i.e. internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless hand-held device) that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression or a mental, physical, or sensory disability of impairment, or by any other distinguishing characteristic. Such behavior is considered harassment or bullying whether it takes place on or off school property, at any school-sponsored function, or in a school vehicle.

Any student who believes he or she has been or is the victim of bullying, hazing or other aggressive behavior should immediately report the situation to the building principal, assistant principal, or the Superintendent. The student may also report concerns to a teacher or counselor who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator or Board official. Complaints against the building principal should be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent should be filed with the Board President.

Every student is encouraged and every staff member is required to report any situation that they believe to be bullying or aggressive behavior directed toward a student. Reports shall be made to those identified above. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

All complaints about bullying or aggressive behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated and documented.

Board Policy 5530: Drug Prevention

Students may not be in possession of or use, deliver, transfer, or sell any controlled substance, drugs, or drug-related paraphernalia at any time while at school or at any school district-related event.

Violations will be referred to the appropriate authorities and students will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from school. The same consequences apply to any substance that looks like and/or is represented as alcohol or a drug, regardless of its content.

Board Policy 5772: Weapons

Possession of weapons or look-alike (toy) weapons will not be tolerated by anyone while on school property or at a district-related event. Any item may be considered a weapon if the intent is to injure, threaten, or disable.

A student found in possession of a dangerous weapon/firearm in district buildings, or at school district sponsored events, shall be permanently expelled for not less than 180 days from all Michigan school districts, and that information will be entered in the student's permanent record. The student will be referred to appropriate agencies within the county (i.e. criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system, social services, community mental health agencies, etc.).

The parent and/or student would also be notified of the referral. Each student subject to expulsion shall, upon petition, have his/her situation reviewed by the Superintendent or designated committee on a case-by-case basis. This is in compliance with the Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 (20 USC 2351) as amended by P.L. 103-382 (Section 14601, Part F) and MCL-380.1311.

Board Policy 7434: Smoking

In the interest of providing a safe and healthy environment for students, employees and visitors, and in accordance with the Michigan Clean Indoor Air Act, P.A. 198, smoking is prohibited in all school district facilities and vehicles, as well as on all school grounds.

The Board of Education has designated all public school buildings as **NON-SMOKING/NON-TOBACCO** use areas for students, staff and visitors. The use of tobacco products is also prohibited on school buses and/or other vehicles used to transport staff and students.

School Start/End Times

SCHOOL	GRADE	STUDENT DAY
Glerum	1-5 Full Day	8:20 a.m.- 3:23 p.m.
Great Lakes	K-5 Half Day	8:20 a.m.- 11:37 a.m.
Woodside	Kindergarten-AM	8:20 a.m.- 11:29 a.m.
	Kindergarten-PM	12:14 p.m.- 3:23 p.m.
Lakeshore	1-5 Full Day	8:50 a.m.- 3:53 p.m.
Lakewood	K-5 Half Day	8:50 a.m.- 12:07 p.m.
North Holland	Kindergarten-AM	8:50 a.m.- 11:59 a.m.
Pine Creek	Kindergarten-PM	12:44 p.m.- 3:53 p.m.
Sheldon Woods		
Waukazoo		

West Ottawa Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, height, weight, marital status, qualifying handicap, disability, or limited English proficiency in any programs or activities. The Office of Human Resources for the West Ottawa Public Schools, 1138 136th Ave., Holland, MI 49424, has been designated to handle inquires regarding the non-discrimination policies.