



# Family Handbook 2019-2020

Responsibility ♦ Adaptability ♦ Respect ♦ Kindness ♦ Honesty

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## Welcome from the Head of School

Dear Students & Families,

As we begin the 2019-2020 school year, we are hurriedly readying the campus for the return to school of our vibrant, eager, and active student body. In an effort to develop both a common language and common understanding of Westerly's policies and procedures, the administrative team has developed this annual comprehensive handbook for parents/guardians and students.

The policies and procedures help define our community life, and they will be helpful to you as you navigate Westerly. This handbook contains more than simply a list of rules, instead it is also intended to communicate standards and practices that we all agree to honor so that our school community meets our mission and serves our students and families well.

During the next several weeks, we respectfully ask that families and students familiarize themselves with the information presented here, in hopes that we may all work together toward building a community with shared vision, healthy and supportive structures, and a common purpose.

Respectfully,

Dr. Lauren Plant

## Mission Statement

Westerly School develops the whole child through a challenging and stimulating program in an inclusive and diverse community. We ignite within each child a lifelong love of learning by encouraging them to discover their full and unique potential every single day. Our students develop a true sense of self through meaningful opportunities for self-expression, service, and character development. Westerly graduates are leaders, helpers, and creators today and in the future.

## Educational Philosophy

Westerly School develops the whole child through an inquiry-based educational program that balances academic mastery, creative expression, critical thinking, socio-emotional awareness, and physical development.

Westerly School celebrates and understands the differences in viewpoint, culture, and capabilities of each individual child so they may serve as compassionate and global-minded citizens.

Westerly School illuminates the joys of learning through collaborative inquiry, experiential learning, and real world connection-making.

Westerly School cultivates a safe and trusting community in which students are seen and known, allowing them to take academic and emotional risks.

Westerly School engages our young leaders through authentic service opportunities to understand the value of giving back to the community on both a local and global scale.

## Core Values

Responsibility. Adaptability. Respect. Kindness. Honesty.

## Non-Discrimination Policy

Westerly School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not

discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, athletic and other school-administered programs.

## General School Information

### Accreditation and School Affiliation

Westerly is a fully accredited independent school by the following:

- CAIS (California Association of Independent Schools),
- WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges)

In addition, Westerly is a member of the following organizations:

- NAIS (National Association of Independent Schools)
- NBOA (National Business Officers Association)

The accreditation process involves a lengthy self-study based on established standards, and a three-day school visitation by educators from CAIS and WASC. Schools worthy of accreditation are given a one year, **three year, or six year accreditation depending on the strength and quality of the school's finances**, instructional program, and culture. Westerly is proud to have most recently received a six year accreditation from its last accreditation process in the 15-16 school year. Our affiliation is with the network of 225 independent schools in California and then with the 1500 independent schools nationwide.

### Governance

Westerly is governed by a Board of Trustees comprised of current and alumni parents, alumni and **community members. The Board's sole employee is the Head of School, who in turn, hires, evaluates and** determines the tenure of all faculty and staff, and manages the program. Trustees serve three year terms, and devote many hours to strategically focused meetings. Trustees utilize professional consultants, and conduct their own professional development activities. Governance questions can be directed to the Board President, Dr. Shalu Gupta at [sgupta@westerlyschool.org](mailto:sgupta@westerlyschool.org).

### Parent/Guardian Communications

Parents/Guardians and families wishing to stay connected to and informed about the school are encouraged to be proactive in reading all publications and communication produced and communicated by the school. Faculty, staff and administration in most cases will return emails or voicemails by the end of the school day, and no later than 24 hours. The following vehicles of communication provide the best sources of that information:

### Classroom Teachers

Classroom teachers communicate to families in a variety of way, including, but not limited to, information provided during Back-to-School Night; weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly communications via email, in person meetings and telephone calls. All faculty may be reached at their Westerly School email addresses, which **is the teacher's first name initial along with full last name @westerlyschool.org** (e.g. [hpotter@westerlyschool.org](mailto:hpotter@westerlyschool.org))

### Wildcat Weekly

Each week the office publishes and distributes a digital newsletter that features messages from school personnel, exciting learning opportunities, events, and other useful information that has taken place during the week or will be happening in the near future.

### Website and FACTS/RenWeb

Westerly's website is regularly maintained and contains much of the information that parents/guardians need to have a fuller understanding of school operations. Current school-wide Westerly news can be found in a link at the bottom of the home page.

FACTS/RenWeb is a secure, password protected student information system component. FACTS/RenWeb enables parents/guardians to access certain grade specific information, see current report card information, view a school directory, access school wide resources, and manage financial information.

The link to FACTS/RenWeb can be found at the top of Westerly Website, or go to <https://ws-ca.client.renweb.com/pw/>

## Google Classroom

Teachers for grades 4 - 8 will post assignments and update class grades daily as needed.

The middle school faculty produce a calendar within Google Classroom that lays out all major tests and assignments for any given month. This calendar will help ensure that teachers are not overlapping major assignments and tests, and that students and families are provided ample time to prepare for upcoming deadlines.

## Other Communications Avenues to Families

Please note that other communications avenues to families may be through Room Parent email, WPA, as well as individual administrative emails and alerts.

## Mobile Devices

Mobile phones and electronic devices: If a family chooses to send their child to school with an electronic handheld devices, students are required to store the device during the school day. The device may be confiscated if misused. Students or parents/guardians may retrieve the device from the front office at the end of school day. The school is not responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen equipment. Middle school students are allowed to use their devices to contact their parents/guardians if necessary in the dismissal area only.

Parents/Guardians are asked to refrain from contacting or communicating with their child via their mobile device during the school day. Instead, we encourage students and parents/guardians to **utilize Westerly's** main office phone line in case of emergency or urgent matter.

## Communications Protocol

The Westerly community believes in families as partners in the Westerly student experience. Any **questions or concerns related to your child's academic day or classroom experiences should be directly** addressed with the teacher involved via their Westerly School email address. If no resolution is found, the Head of School will provide additional support. Parents/Guardians may access the faculty/staff directory via website or going to <http://www.westerlyschool.org/who-we-are/faculty-staff.cfm> Teachers will respond within 24 hours of your email, though in consideration of our faculty we ask that parents/guardians and students refrain from emailing urgent matters after 8:00 p.m.

As a professional learning community, Westerly requests that all school-related communications are **channeled through Westerly School's main phone line or school email. Please refrain from contacting** faculty or administration via text, IM, social media or any other informal method. In the case that Westerly cannot reach you by calling during the school day, a text message will be sent via FACTS/RenWeb.

# General School Safety and Student Welfare

## Campus Safety Procedures

The School is committed to creating a safe and secure learning environment for all.

The School reviews and updates its Emergency Preparedness Plan annually. Faculty and staff receive specific training on different emergency and safety procedures. The school uses alarms and video to monitor entrance and exit points throughout the school.

Fire, earthquake, and lockdown drills are regularly scheduled and conducted in an orderly fashion under close supervision. Lockdown procedures are in place in the event the School is required to do so by the **police or fire department and in cases of necessity as determined by the School's administration**. Every classroom is supplied with an emergency backpack containing various first aid supplies and necessary student records. The school maintains a supply of water and other emergency supplies necessary for an extended stay on campus.

Faculty and staff receive bi-annual CPR/first aid training.

In the event of an emergency, the School utilizes Parent Alert, an emergency notification system that communicates immediately by text, email and voice. A trial test is done at the beginning of the school year.

### **Campus Preparedness**

In the event of an emergency occurring during school hours, Westerly has safe drinking water, a 3-day supply of food, first aid supplies, blankets, and additional emergency supplies. These items are checked and replenished on an ongoing basis. Provisions have been made for the safety of students on campus during the event of a fire or lockdown.

### **Family Preparedness**

Given the nature of emergency situations, it is imperative that all parents/guardians update their Parents Web information at the beginning of the school year and at any time changes are needed. Key information that must be updated are: emergency contact lists, student medical, and student pick-up lists.

In the event of an emergency, only individuals noted on your Emergency Contact List will be able to pick up your child.

## **Entrance and Exit Doors**

The school is only accessible through an electronic security door. This system allows for the door to be **locked during school hours, whereby visitors need to be “buzzed-in.”** Families and employees are issued access cards to allow them to enter the office during those hours. Each family unit will receive up to 3 access cards (one for each parent/guardian and one for a nanny, for example) at no charge. Any lost or stolen cards must be reported immediately to the front office. New cards may be purchased for \$5 per card. Access cards are assigned to individuals, and are therefore non-transferable.

**Westerly's** main office closes Monday – Friday at 4:30 p.m. For those using the Wildcat After-School Program they will have access through the east gate with their access card. Gate will be accessible Monday – Friday from 4:30 – 6:00 p.m. Additionally, the cards will be activated on pupil-free days in which Wildcat will be running a program.

Families with their children may exit through one of the side gates. However, no children are allowed to exit through a gate unless accompanied by responsible party.

## **Communicable/Infectious Diseases**

Out of consideration for other students and faculty, any student afflicted with or liable to transmit any contagious or infectious disease shall not be permitted to attend classes or other school-sponsored activities until it has been determined, based upon medical evidence that:

1. The student is no longer infected or liable to transmit disease.
2. The student is afflicted with a chronic infectious disease, which poses little risk of transmission in the school environment with reasonable precautions.

Any student permitted to attend school with a chronic infectious disease must do so under specified conditions and under a doctor's written approval and recommendation. Each case shall be handled in an individual manner.



## Student Injury

Westerly School takes student safety seriously. Parents/Guardians are immediately notified of serious injury, and safety protocols are put in place; such as not moving a child who may have a spinal injury. 911 is called for life threatening emergencies.

It is the policy of the school to complete incident reports for any child who is hurt on campus and requires more than basic first aid assistance. Additionally, an incident report will be completed for every instance that involves potential head trauma of any kind. The incident report is completed by the supervising faculty or staff member, and a copy of the form is given both to the homeroom teacher and the child's parents/guardians.

## Student Illness and Absence

If your child is ill or away from school, or will arrive late, please call the school office by 8:30 am or email Elizabeth Proven ([eproven@westerlyschool.org](mailto:eproven@westerlyschool.org)) to let us know. Students must be fever free and vomit free for 24-hours before returning to school. Please do not send sick children to school.

## Illness at School - School Nurse Pass

Any student who is feeling ill is sent to the front office with a school nurse pass. If the student appears well enough to resume normal educational activities, they are sent back to the classroom and a copy of the school nurse pass is sent home with the child that day. If the child is ill, the front office administrator calls family members to come pick up their child. Children will rest in the first aid room while waiting for authorized emergency contact to arrive.

## Background Checks

It is the policy of Westerly School to run background checks through the Department of Justice and the FBI for all employees, volunteers (except parents/guardians), and interns who work closely with children. Employees, volunteers and interns are required to successfully pass such background checks before any work on campus can be started. Westerly School contracts with vendors that require their employees to pass background checks. In cases where background checks are not required, the School allows for work to be done only when students are not present.

## Immunizations

All students must meet California code regarding immunizations before attending school.

## Periodic Lice Checks

Head lice are common in schools and other venues where children gather. Though they are easy to acquire, lice are difficult to eliminate. The School may take proactive response and periodically check students during the year. The school uses an outside professional organization to conduct these checks. If a child is suspected of having head lice, the school will call home requesting parents/guardians to have the child and any siblings checked by a nurse, commercial lice service or pediatrician. Students will need to be treated to become "nit-free" and certified by one of the above in writing before they can return to campus. Meanwhile, the School will perform a check of all other students in the class and send a letter home to parents/guardians informing them when a classmate has lice. In such cases, the school recommends parents/guardians do their own check as well. A helpful website for further information of head lice is [www.headlice.org](http://www.headlice.org). The site provides a wealth of information about prevention and treatment of household lice elimination

## Visitors to Campus

Throughout the day the school receives many visitors, including prospective families and vendors. It is the policy of the school that all visitors must enter through the main entrance and sign-in with the front office. Visitors will be given a visitor's badge or name tag before proceeding to any part of the campus. Visitors may enter the courtyard area only with the express permission from office staff.

## Parking

To keep our children and community safe, we ask families to use extra caution when entering the parking lot and follow these rules.

### Practice parking lot safety.

- Enter through the west side and traffic flows in a counter-clockwise manner.
- Drive slowly in the parking lot and on 29<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Always watch for children and be cautious.
- If not using the valet drop-off, always park before letting child(ren) out of the car. Do not drop off in the middle of the parking lot.
- If you park on the grass side of the lot, you MUST walk your child(ren) across the parking lot.
- Do not park in reserved parking spaces.
- Do not park in disabled parking spaces unless you have a DMV-issued Disabled Persons placard or license plate.

## Valet Drop-Off

Each morning, Westerly staffs a Valet Drop-Off service from 7:45am - 8:15am. A coned area will be set up in the parking lot where parents/guardians can drive up to the curb and Westerly staff will assist your child out of the car. Parents/Guardians will remain in their car during this process.

We know that some families, especially with younger children, will want to park and walk-in; no worries, that option is still available to you.

### Procedure

- Have your child(ren) ready to go in the car. If possible, backpacks should be in the car. If items are stored in the trunk, Westerly staff will open and retrieve for your student. For safety reasons, we cannot have students access the trunk of vehicles.
- Pull forward into the coned area following the directions of Westerly staff. Seatbelts should remain buckled until Westerly staff opens the door.
- Do not pull in front of any vehicles in the coned area to fill in spaces. Westerly staff will be directing traffic flow.
- Westerly staff will assist your child with doors, backpacks, and making sure they are clear of the parking lot area.
- Students proceed to the front door to be greeted as usual. Staff will indicate to parent/guardian when it is safe to pull away from the curb.

## Weapons on Campus

No person shall possess or have control of any firearm, deadly weapon, or prohibited knife, as legally defined, while on School property, except as required in the lawful course of business or as authorized by state law.

## Non-smoking Policy

Westerly School is concerned about the effect that smoking and secondhand smoke, including electronic cigarette - inhalation can have on its employees and students. Smoking, including electronic cigarettes, in any area of the property is strictly prohibited.

## Academic Life

### Academic Program

Westerly's whole child educational program balances academic mastery, creative expression, critical thinking, socio-emotional awareness, and physical development, and is designed to meet the mission of

the school and prepare our students for success in high school. Faculty continually reviews specific disciplines within the program so that every program is reviewed critically on an annual basis. In this process, best teaching practices, standards, assessment practices, classroom support materials, and school wide continuity of the curriculum are analyzed. The school places a high priority on professional growth and budgets funds for individual and school-wide professional development, and holds professional development days and sends staff to conferences and workshops. Additionally, the faculty strives to meet the needs of each child in every area taking into consideration their intellectual, emotional, moral, and physical potential. Faculty distributes a syllabus at the beginning of the year, as well as frequent classroom updates to inform parents/guardians of the program and expectations for their particular grade level or class. In addition, all academic curriculum can be found online at [westerlyschool.org](http://westerlyschool.org) and is connected to best practices and standards.

## Student Progress and Support

In partnership with families, faculty strive to ensure student progress. The nature of Westerly's program, with small class sizes, a differentiated approach to teaching and learning, and an understanding that each student is their own unique person, together create a supportive environment for students. When students are not progressing to their ability and/or grade level, faculty will consult with administrators and the Student Learning Coordinator to create an intervention strategy. Strategies may include but are not limited to, lunch time and after school support, in-class small group or individual teaching, additional tutoring or support work, meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s), and, in some cases, recommending the child be assessed by a professional for possible learning differences. In such cases the outside assessment is shared with staff and recommendations implemented, as the school is able, and frequent check-in meetings with parents/guardians are established to ensure student progress.

## Academic Honesty and Student Growth

The Westerly faculty takes seriously teaching students an understanding of, and the personal responsibility toward, academic honesty and integrity. We ask families to support this by providing only appropriate academic support. Additionally, we want students to develop the grit and reliance to persevere through their academic work. Through a proactive approach of teaching the benefits of being responsible and honest toward their studies and the integration of Westerly's values, students are well equipped to make good choices. Faculty teach students to understand what constitutes cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty. A student may face disciplinary actions in accordance with our disciplinary policy if plagiarism/cheating occurs.

## Forms and Definitions of Academic Dishonesty

**Cheating:** Using answers or sources without permission to receive credit as schoolwork. Examples would be looking at someone else's paper, copying from notes/sources without authorization, copying someone else's work and turning it in as your own.

**Plagiarism:** Presenting another person's words or ideas as your own without giving the originator credit for the information.

## Consequences of Academic Dishonesty

**Lower School:** Students in lower school (grades 2-5) who are suspected of cheating will be counseled by the teacher, where the violation and its severity will be examined. Repeat offenses will result in a loss of credit for the assignment, parent/guardian notification and/or a conference with the parent/guardian and teacher and in certain cases a conference with the Dean of Students. Students may lose credit for the assignment.

**Middle School:** First offense for students in grades 6-8 will be to receive a zero on assignment, parent/guardian and Dean of Students notification and documentation. Students will be given the opportunity to redo the assignment, yet only with partial credit being awarded. Repeat offenses will result in conference with the parents/guardians, Dean of Students, and Head of School, along with disciplinary action, and documentation. See Student Discipline and Character Development for further detail.

## Fourth - Eighth Grade Academic Probation

The administration and faculty understand that there are exceptional circumstances in which a student may slip in academic or behavioral performance. Each case is considered with care and sensitivity before making specific recommendations for or against academic or behavioral probation. However, the school holds the position that students accept fundamental levels of academic and personal responsibility as part of being at Westerly.

Conditions warranting academic or behavioral probation include but are not limited to:

- Any student who indicates a serious lack of interest or positive involvement in the learning process, a lack of academic integrity, or a lack of willingness to pursue academic excellence; each case will be considered on its individual merits.
- Any student who receives two grades at or below a C+ in academic content areas.
- Any student who receives a grade of D or F at the end of a grading period; the grade must be raised by the next grading period to have a contract issued for the following year.

In order to provide needed academic support, parents/guardians of Fourth - Eighth Grade students will be **advised of a student's academic struggle prior to the issuance of a C or below on a Progress Report or Report Card.**

Parents/Guardians of any student in jeopardy of dropping a full grade in any subject will receive a written communication advising them of the change. Academic and behavioral probation is determined upon the issuance of grades at the two progress reports or report cards. If necessary, parents/guardians will be asked to attend a meeting with academic teachers and Head of School where grades are delineated and conditions of probation determined.

The student has until the next grading period to meet academic standards. **A student's academic probation status** will be considered at a follow-up parent/guardian conference held at the end of the next grading period. Any student on academic or behavioral probation exceeding one academic calendar year will have their contract withheld or withdrawn for the following academic calendar year.

Additional academic and behavioral supports may include regular academic counseling with a faculty member(s) and/or outside school-approved professionals.

Contracts are withheld when advancement to the next academic level is considered detrimental to a **student's emotional, social, or academic well-being.**

## Assessments

Students are assessed in a variety of ways at Westerly. Assessments are categorized as either Formative or Summative.

**Formative assessments** are those which inform the teacher of incremental progress students are making. They allow teachers to determine the course of instruction based on what they notice on these types of assessments:

- Anecdotal observations
- Response to literature
- Writing journals and drafts
- Classwork

**Summative assessments** are those which culminate a unit of study and allow teachers to assess how well the students ultimately understood the material covered. They include:

- Chapter tests
- Final drafts
- Major projects
- Final Exams (Middle School)

Refer to your child's teacher for more specific information on assessments and their influence on your child's grades.

## Homework

Homework at Westerly is a necessary extension of instruction time in the classroom. Homework teaches responsibility and provides an opportunity to enhance and reinforce skills taught during the academic day. Since children are different in their approach to homework, daily time expectation may vary:

- Kindergarten-Third grade: 20-30 minutes
- Fourth-Fifth grade: 40-60 minutes
- Middle School: up to 90 minutes

Additionally, all students should plan on reading at least 15 minutes a day. A homework policy for each class/grade level is communicated by your child's teacher during the first weeks of school.

## Report Cards and Progress Reports

Westerly's academic year is divided into three trimesters. Midway through the first trimester, LS teachers, MS teachers and Co-curricular teachers complete progress reports for all students. At the midway point of the succeeding two trimesters, progress reports are written for students not making sufficient progress.

At the end of each trimester, students in all grades receive trimester report cards from all teachers. Report cards include narratives explaining the work completed during the trimester and student-specific comments. Report cards will be made available to families via FACTS/RenWeb within a week after the end of the trimester.

Students in grades Kindergarten through Third Grade receive marks of E, M, I (Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, and In need of Improvement) in the following areas: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, as well as Art, Music, Spanish and Physical Education. In addition, marks for Personal Development and Work Habits are given based on the same system.

Students in Fourth through Eighth Grade receive letter grades (A, B, C, D, F) in all core academic courses as well as co-curricular courses. Students in these grades also receive marks based on the E, M, I system for Personal Development and Work Habits.

	Mid-Trimester	Mid-Trimester Progress Report Mailed	End of Trimester	Report Card Released/Mailed
Trimester 1	10/15/2019	10/23/2019	11/26/2019	12/13/2019 (released)
Trimester 2	1/27/2020	2/6/2020	3/9/2020	3/20/2020 (released)
Trimester 3	4/29/2020	5/6/2020	6/10/2020	6/19/2020 (mailed)

## Standardized Testing

Students in Third Grade through Eighth Grade take the CTP-V Standardized Test, colloquially known as the ERB, which measures reading comprehension and mathematical achievement. Results from standardized testing yield several important pieces of information for families and the school. The best information from standardized testing comes from a longitudinal analysis and not a single year. The school conducts longitudinal analysis of the scores across the entire school and by each grade level. This analysis leads to programmatic change at specific grades, and at the school wide level. The school also uses the information to assist in evaluating individual student strengths and weaknesses. The test measures both aptitude and achievement and is normed against national and independent school populations. Test results are mailed to families in summer.

# Community-Wide Expectations

## Parent/Guardian Conduct Policy

All adults at Westerly are expected to serve as role models for the students. As partners in education, parents/guardians should understand that the School serves the needs of a variety of families and that flexibility and cooperation help make the school culture one that can be enjoyed by everyone.

Parents/Guardians are expected to uphold the values of the school in their dealings with school personnel and students. **Westerly School reserves the right to discontinue a student's enrollment based upon his or her uncooperative, disruptive, or other unacceptable behaviors, and/or poor levels of academic achievement, as determined by the Head of School in his or her sole discretion.** Furthermore, a positive and constructive working relationship between Westerly and parents/guardians is essential to the fulfillment of the School's educational purpose. **The School reserves the right to dismiss a student if the Head of School, in his or her sole discretion, determines that the actions of a parent or guardian impairs the positive culture of the School.** Westerly's expectation about the behavior and actions of its students and their parents/guardians include off campus school related activities as well as those on campus.

## Family Involvement

The school views parents/guardians as active partners in the education of students. Research indicates that students, whose parents/guardians are involved in school life, whether at home or at school, have a better attitude toward school and have higher achievement. The school offers a variety of ways parents/guardians can be involved, either as members of the Westerly Parent Association (WPA), volunteering to serve on a number of committees, or help with any one of the numerous school events that happen throughout the year. Parents/Guardians also have volunteer opportunities to help classroom teachers and should contact their child's teacher to discuss any possibilities.

## Parent Organization and Room Parents

The Westerly Parent Association (WPA) is comprised of Westerly parents, grandparents, faculty, and staff. The organization meets monthly with the goal of supporting students and the efforts of faculty and staff toward that end. More specifically, the organization works to provide volunteers for school sponsored events, plan and execute WPA sponsored events, and fulfill teacher wish-list items. Each class is appointed a room parent who serves as a liaison for the class and the school and the WPA president sits on the Board of Trustees as an ex-officio member and parlay's key aspects of the school's strategic decisions back to the organization. This further informs the WPA on how to better support the school's mission and initiatives. Parent/Guardian attendance and participation in the monthly meetings is encouraged whenever possible.

## Student Expectations

The School prides itself on creating a positive and supportive climate for students, which is made possible through the participation of the whole school community - faculty and staff, parents/guardians and family, and of course, the students. We expect our students to live out our five core values of responsibility, adaptability, respect, kindness and honesty. Westerly takes a proactive and supportive approach to guiding and developing student behavior.

**Despite the School's best efforts to guide students to make positive choices, like everyone, they make mistakes.** It is important for Westerly to have a set of guidelines to hold students accountable and to learn from their mistakes. We utilize a progressive and age appropriate discipline model. Students will have the opportunity to reflect on their choices, are guided to better decision making, and to offer apologies as needed. At the end of the process they are welcomed back into the community.

If student misbehavior continues after guidance or is egregious, the student(s) may face suspension or expulsion.



## Student Character Development and Discipline

**General Standards:** Westerly consciously shares with families the responsibility to foster ethical and moral values, and mature citizenship. We believe that it is important for all students to demonstrate responsible citizenship commensurate with their age level. Proper conduct is expected of all students whether on campus or participating in an off-campus, school-sponsored event. Five core values form the foundation for student behavior and conduct at Westerly:

*Responsibility      Adaptability      Respect      Kindness      Honesty*

Teachers and administrators have a responsibility to ensure that students conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the core character values and behavior expectations of the school so students can become their best selves. Teachers and administrators will deal with infractions of such rules and regulations in a manner appropriate to the specific offense and to the individual child.

All rules resolve themselves to these common sense principles:

- That children be careful of their own and others' safety and well-being
- That children be respectful of others' property and responsible for their own
- That children courteously cooperate in the maintenance of an environment and atmosphere conducive to learning
- That children will be kind to others

Westerly believes these value statements are the foundation of a strong character development program.

- Students will make mistakes.
- Reconciliation and flexibility are hallmarks of good discipline.
- Proactive approaches are the best way toward positive choices.
- Proper conduct and corrective action works best with fully vested collaboration between teachers, parents/guardians, and administrators.

**Beyond School:** While the school does not, as a rule, monitor students' behavior outside of school or school functions, we reserve the right to discipline a student whose behavior raises fundamental concerns about their judgement and/or negatively affects the experience of any student at the school.

### Behavioral Policies

At Westerly, we believe in opportunities for learning in all circumstances and situations, including academic and social/emotional contexts. In this light, behaviors that fall out of community standards and values are regarded and addressed as learning opportunities when and where they occur. Westerly educators partner with students and parents/guardians to set community standards for campus and classroom conduct to develop ownership and accountability through positive behavior supports.

The School will work with the student(s) and parents/guardians to develop behavior support systems that serve as learning opportunities, while ensuring the safe and caring environment of our campus. In the case of severe conduct, all disciplinary issues are addressed by the administration.

Students will be held accountable for any of the following behaviors at school-related events, on and off campus:

- Bullying of other students, including cyber-bullying via online or mobile devices
- Harassing or disrespecting other students or Westerly employees, including cyber-harassment
- Bringing or possessing a weapon or explosive on campus, on a school bus, or at school events. A weapon is anything that can be used to harm or intimidate a person or damage property, as ultimately determined by the Head of School
- Distributing or possessing any alcoholic beverage, tobacco or nicotine product, or unlawful drug or medication

- Theft
- Dishonesty
- Destruction of school property or property of another person
- Insubordination
- Acts of physical aggression
- Profanity
- Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty
- Misuse of technology including any violation of the school's responsible use policy
- Violation of any other school rule or policy
- Exhibiting attitudes that impede academic progress or adversely affects the academic atmosphere

### **Lower School Progressive Discipline**

The administration and faculty understand that there are exceptional circumstances in which a student may slip in behavioral performance.

Each individual situation is handled with care and sensitivity. However, Westerly students are expected to follow standards of behavior and personal responsibility as part of the school community. As issues arise, the teacher may partner with the administration and parents/guardians to acknowledge awareness of the issue.

In most cases, the following steps of progressive discipline will be utilized. However, depending on the circumstances of the situation, steps in the process may be skipped or modified to allow for flexibility in individual situations.

**Level One – Conference with Teacher:** Student meets with teacher to discuss remediation of the situation and to receive counseling.

**Level Two – Warning by Teacher:** Student meets with teacher and is counseled and issued a warning against further misconduct.

**Level Three – Referral to Office:** Student is referred to the Dean of Students.

**Level Four – In-School Suspension, Behavioral Probation, and Parent/Guardian Conference:** Student is referred to the Head of School for further counseling, and receives an in-school suspension determined by the administration. A conference is scheduled with the parent/guardian at which a written plan of action is developed to delineate acceptable behaviors.

**Level Five – Suspension from School:** Student is suspended as determined by the administration. Except in urgent or serious situations, the parent/guardian and student will be given advance notice of the suspension. There is a re-entry conference with the parent/guardian and student, where a re-entry contract may be required.

**Level Six – Expulsion from School:** Student is expelled as determined by the administration. The parent/guardian and student will be given advance notice of the expulsion and an opportunity to meet with an administrator prior to the imposition of the expulsion. The parent/guardian has a right to meet with the Head of School regarding the decision to expel, but the decision of the Head of School is final.

### **Middle School Progressive Discipline**

The administration and faculty understand that there are exceptional circumstances in which a student may slip in behavioral performance.

Each individual situation is handled with care and sensitivity. However, Westerly students are expected to follow standards of behavior and personal responsibility as part of the school community. As issues arise, the teacher may contact the parent/guardian and the Dean of Students to inform the parent/guardian about the situation. This contact does not become part of the student's permanent record.



In most cases, the following steps of progressive discipline will be utilized. However, depending on the circumstances of the situation steps in the process may be skipped or modified to allow for flexibility in individual situations.

**Level One – Conference and Warning:** Student meets with teacher to discuss remediation of the situation and receive counseling. Student is issued a warning against further misconduct.

**Level Two – Referral to Office and Lunch Detention:** Student meets with Dean of Students. Lunch detention is assigned as determined by the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students will inform the parent/guardian of the situation.

**Level Three – Behavioral Probation and Parent/Guardian Conference:** Student is referred to the Dean of Students for further counseling, and there is a conference with parent/guardian at which a written plan of action for the student is generated. In the plan, acceptable and unacceptable behaviors for the students will be delineated and conditions of behavioral probation will be determined.

**Level Four – Suspension from School:** Student is suspended as determined by the administration. Except in urgent or serious situations, the parent/guardian and student will be given advance notice of the suspension. There is a re-entry conference with the parent/guardian and student, where a re-entry contract may be required.

**Level Five – Expulsion from School:** Student is expelled as determined by the administration. The parent/guardian and student will be given advance notice of the expulsion and an opportunity to meet with an administrator prior to the imposition of the expulsion. The parent/guardian has a right to meet with the Head of School regarding the decision to expel, but the decision of the Head of School is final.

## Tardiness/Excessive Absence Corrective Action

The Westerly school day begins promptly at 8:15am and students should be in their classrooms at that time. Class tardiness will be recorded if the student arrives after 8:15am. This includes Monday Morning Assembly. Monitoring and enforcement will be checked at the end of each week.

Progression steps restart at the start of each new trimester.

- **First Offense and Second Offense** – Verbal warning by teacher
- **Third Offense - Fourth through Eighth Grade** Email home & and teacher/advisor conference with student (conference aimed at identifying and rectifying the challenges with getting to school on time/coming to school)
- **Third Offense - Kindergarten through Third Grade** Email home reminding parent/guardian importance of being on time
- **Fourth Offense** – Student will conference with Dean of Students and complete a service to the school during their lunch/recess period and families will be contacted.
- **Fifth Offense** – Student will conference with Dean of Students and complete a service to the school during their lunch/recess period and families will conference with Dean of Students
- **Sixth offense and up** –Noted on students' permanent record as excessive tardy

## Uniform Policy

All Westerly students are expected to wear a uniform to school Monday-Thursday. The days below have been designated as uniform optional. If a student does not participate in the theme of the day, they are required to wear their Westerly uniform.

Spirit Wednesday: Students have the option of wearing a Westerly “spirit” shirt with their uniform bottom.

Friday:	Free-dress day
Spirit Days:	Upon administrative approval, various spirit days (Halloween, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Memorial Day) will be available throughout the year allowing free or themed dress attire.
Birthday:	One day per month will be designated by the homeroom teacher/advisor (MS) as a free-dress day for students celebrating a birthday during that month.

Students who come to school out of uniform will be subject to the school's discipline procedures outlined in the Family Handbook.

### Student Uniforms:

#### Bottoms:

- Khaki or navy colored Capri and long pants (no denim)
- Khaki or navy colored knee-length shorts (no denim), no shorter than the touch point of the student's fingertip when arms are at his/her side (no frayed shorts)
- Khaki or navy colored skirts and skorts (kilt or wrap style – no denim), no shorter than the touch point of the student's fingertip when arms are at his/her side. Shorts must be worn under skirts and dresses at all times.
- Khaki or navy jumper (no denim)

#### Tops:

- Navy or heather-gray polo shirt, long and short sleeve (with or without the approved Westerly logo). White collared blouse is allowed when worn with jumpers only. White collared shirt is allowed when worn with a necktie
- Navy or heather-gray sweatshirt and sweater (crewneck, hooded, V-neck, or cardigan) with or without the logo

#### Outerwear:

- Any color coat or jacket is acceptable but must be removed in the classroom. Sweaters or sweatshirts worn in the classroom must be blue or gray. No logos.
- Navy blue baseball caps and beanies (to be removed in classrooms)

#### Additional notes:

- **Logos:** Non-Westerly logos on any articles of clothing are not permitted except for logos smaller than 1 square inch. This does not apply to Free Dress Friday.
- **Pants/Shorts:** Baggy or sagging pants/shorts are not permitted at any time.
- **Hats & Hoods:** Navy blue baseball caps, knit caps, and hoods are to be removed in the classroom.
- **Earrings:** For safety reasons, earrings should be limited to small studs. Large hoop earrings or earrings that dangle are prohibited.

**Shoe Policy:** All students must wear closed-toe shoes, which fit firmly to the foot. Students must wear athletic shoes that tie or Velcro for sports and physical education classes. Students are not permitted to wear "beach-type" footwear, including flip flops, sandals or Crocs. Socks must be worn with shoes.

#### Uniform for Physical Education for Grades 4-8 (available through our online store):

Students in grades 4-8 are required to change into a PE uniform before participating in physical education class. The required uniform is as follows:

- Navy blue mesh shorts
- Heather-gray basic tee (short sleeved) with Wildcat logo or any Westerly logo t-shirt
- Heather-gray sweatshirt (crew or hooded) with Wildcat logo - *optional*
- Navy blue sweatpants - *optional*
- Athletic shoes with socks – no ballet flats or slip-ons.

**Spirit Wednesday (Optional):** The “W” signature shirt or any Westerly shirt - must be worn with uniform bottoms. Spirit Wear may be purchased through our [online store](#). Non-Westerly t-shirts will not be allowed on Wednesdays. Students not wearing spirit wear must wear their uniform.

**Westerly Wear:** Additional PE Uniforms (grades 4-8) and Spirit Wear may be purchased through our [online store](#).

**Free Dress:** Fridays are non-uniform days and students may wear “free dress.” The School asks students and parents/guardians to use good judgment so that free dress is appropriate and is not a distraction.

Guidelines for length of garment, shoes, and notes listed below still apply. In addition, t-shirts with inappropriate logos, pictures and/or language are not allowed at School.

**Field Study/Trips:** On field study days, students may be asked to wear a Westerly t-shirt or uniform unless instructed otherwise by their classroom teacher or field study coordinator.

**Attire for Music Department Performances:** The School expects students to dress appropriately for music performances. Look for information from your child’s homeroom teacher and Wildcat Weekly before the event.

#### **Where to Purchase Uniforms:**

School uniforms may be purchased at any retail establishment that carries school uniform clothing, including: Target, Macy’s, Children’s Place, JCPenney, Old Navy, Kohl’s, etc.

Below you will find information on vendors who embroider our school logo on uniforms purchased from their online store.

**Lands’ End Uniform Information** - For those families who wish to order from Lands’ End, you can call 1-800-469-2222 or [order online](#). The preferred school number is 900064080. They have a list of all authorized uniform components from which you may choose, they also donate 3% of all purchases to Westerly. Please note that the color “navy” is stated as classic navy, which is correct. Lands’ End has our school logo on file.

**French Toast Uniform Information** - French Toast is an online option available for parents/guardians. To order, please [visit their website](#) and enter Westerly’s school code Q5WDWD or simply follow the prompts to access the school code.

**Red Eye Media** - PE Uniforms and Spirit Wear may be purchased through [our online store](#) with Red Eye Media.

#### **Uniform Corrective Action Steps & Accidents**

If accidents occur during the school day, students will have access to extra uniforms in the main office. Kindergarten students are required to bring in an extra change of clothes which will be stored in their classroom. In the event a student borrows a uniform, notification is sent home and families are asked to wash and return loaner uniform within one week.

Students arriving to school out of uniform will be directed to administration. If available, students will be provided appropriate uniform attire which must be returned the following day. Families may be charged if the uniform is not returned. If no appropriate uniform is available, parents/guardians may be called to bring a uniform to school.

**First offense** – Verbal reminder (*K-3 students will also have an email sent home*)

**Second offense** – Email home reminding families of Uniform Policy and provide notice of continued offense

**Third offense** – Parent/Guardian Conference and loss of campus privilege including, but not limited to loss of Spirit Day, Free Dress Day, or lunch/recess.

**Fourth offense and up** – Noted on students permanent record

## Policy Against Harassment

### Anti-Harassment Policy

Westerly is committed to providing an environment free of unlawful harassment. The school's policy prohibits sexual harassment and harassment based on pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, race, color, national origin or ancestry, creed or religion, age, gender identification, gender expression, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, physical or mental disability, medical condition, or any other basis **protected by federal, state or local law or ordinance or regulation**. Westerly's anti-harassment policy applies to all persons involved in the operation of the school, including employees, independent contractors, interns, and volunteers, and prohibits unlawful harassment by any employee or student of the school.

Both students and parents/guardians are prohibited from engaging in unlawful harassment. Prohibited unlawful harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following behavior:

- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments, slurs or unwanted sexual advances, invitations, or comments.
- Visual conduct such as derogatory and/or sexually-oriented posters, photography, cartoons, drawings, or gestures.
- Physical conduct such as assault, unwanted touching, blocking normal movement, or interfering with school activities because of sex, race, or any other protected status.
- Threats and demands to submit to sexual requests, or to avoid some other loss, and offers of employment benefits in return for sexual favors.
- Retaliation for having reported or threatened to report harassment.
- Cyberbullying or otherwise harassing messages or statements communicated by email, social media, or the Internet.

### A. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of an individual's employment, academic status, or progress (2) submission to, or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment, academic status, or progress decisions affecting such individual or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or educational environment.

While it is not possible to identify each and every act that constitutes or may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of sexual harassment are provided below: (a) unwelcome requests for sexual favors; (b) lewd or derogatory comments or jokes; (c) comments regarding sexual behavior or the body of another person; (d) sexual innuendo and other vocal activity such as catcalls or whistles; (e) obscene letters, notes, emails, invitations, photographs, cartoons, articles, or other written or pictorial materials of a sexual natures; (f) repeated requests for dates after being informed that interest is unwelcome; (g) retaliating against an employee or student for refusing a sexual advance or reporting an incident of possible sexual harassment to Westerly School or any government agency; (h) offering or providing favors or employment benefits such as promotions, favorable evaluations, favorable assigned duties or shifts, etc., in exchange for sexual favors; and (i) any unwanted physical touching or assaults, or blocking or impeding movements.

### B. Other Harassment

Other harassment is often verbal or physical conduct that insults or shows hostility or aversion towards

an individual because of the individual's age, race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding and/or related medical conditions), gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, military or veteran status, or any other status protected by federal, state, or local laws.

Again, while it is not possible to list all the circumstances that may constitute other forms of harassment, the following are some examples of conduct that may constitute harassment: (a) the use of disparaging or abusive words or phrases, slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating or hostile acts that relate to the above protected categories; (b) written or graphic material that insults, stereotypes or shows aversion or hostility towards an individual or group because of one of the above protected categories and that is placed on walls, bulletin boards, email, voicemail, or elsewhere on the School's premises, or circulated in the workplace; and (c) a display of symbols, slogans, or items that are associated with hate or intolerance towards any select group.

## Reporting Discrimination and Harassment

Any person who feels that he or she has witnessed, or been subject to, any form of discrimination or harassment is required to immediately notify the Head of School, the Dean of Students, the Business Manager or the Board President.

The School prohibits retaliation against any person who provides information about, complains, or assists in the investigation of any complaint of harassment or discrimination.

We will promptly and thoroughly investigate any claim and take appropriate corrective and/or remedial action where we find a claim has merit. If the School begins an investigation, we will endeavor to conduct the investigation in a timely manner and we will keep the investigation confidential to the extent possible. In the same way, anyone involved in an investigation of harassment has an obligation to keep all information about the investigation confidential. That is why the School will only share information about a complaint of harassment with those who need to know about it. Failure to keep information about an investigation confidential may result in disciplinary action. Investigations will be documented and tracked for timely resolution.

When the investigation has been completed, the School will normally communicate the results of the investigation to the complaining individual, to the alleged harasser and, if appropriate, to others who are directly involved. If the School's policy against harassment is found to have been violated, appropriate corrective action, up to and including termination, will be taken against the harasser so that further harassment will be prevented. Both the rights of the alleged harasser and the complainant will be considered in any investigation and subsequent action.

## Policy Against Bullying

At Westerly, we expect that all members of our school community will treat each other with civility and respect.

It is the policy of the School to provide and maintain a learning environment that is free of bullying and any other verbal or physical misconduct which disrupts the learning environment or makes it unsafe.

The School will promptly investigate any report of bullying or retaliation. Upon determining that a case of bullying or retaliation has taken place, we will immediately take action to stop the behavior and address the safety concerns for any member of the community who has been victimized.

The Westerly Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, set forth below, is published in alignment with California law against bullying and is an integral part of our efforts to promote learning and to prevent **behavior that can impede the learning process. Our plan spells out Westerly's comprehensive approach to addressing bullying, cyber- bullying, and retaliation.**

This Plan is consistent with broader protections at Westerly against discrimination, harassment, bullying, and retaliation that appear in this Family Handbook and our *Faculty/Staff Personnel Handbook*.

It is important that this plan be well understood by all members of the Westerly community. The Head of School is responsible for the implementation and administration of the Plan. Questions and concerns related to this Plan may be referred to her. The School will provide written notice of the relevant student-related sections of this plan to students and parents/guardians at least annually. The notification to students will be in age-appropriate terms.

The School will provide training on bullying for faculty and staff. The training at a minimum will include a review of the reporting obligations for all faculty and staff and the processes that the School will follow in response to a report of bullying or retaliation. The plan, or relevant portions thereof, will be included in the Personnel Handbook.

## **I. POLICY AGAINST BULLYING, CYBER-BULLYING, AND RETALIATION**

The School will not tolerate any form of bullying or cyber-bullying, nor will we tolerate retaliation against any person who reports bullying or who in good faith provides information during an investigation of bullying.

Bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited on school grounds and at school-sponsored events, activities, functions, and programs. Bullying and cyber-bullying also are prohibited at school bus stops, on school buses and other vehicles owned, leased, or used by the school, and through use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by the school.

In addition, bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for a targeted student; infringes on the rights of a targeted student at school; or materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of the school.

### **WHAT CONSTITUTES BULLYING**

California has adopted a law relative to bullying in schools, which broadly defines bullying as “the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim, that:

- Causes physical or emotional harm to the targeted student or damage to the targeted student’s property;
- Places the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- Creates a hostile environment at school for the targeted student;
- Infringes on the rights of the targeted student at school; or
- Materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of the school.

### **Cyber-bullying:**

Cyber-bullying is bullying (as defined above) through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, fax machines, and the internet. It includes, but is not limited to, e-mail, instant messages, text messages, and internet postings, whether on a webpage, in a blog, or otherwise.

### **Hostile Environment:**

A hostile environment is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student’s education.

### **Retaliation:**

Retaliation is any form of materially adverse action such as intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying or who provides information during an investigation of bullying.

### **Legal Definitions and School Policy:**

It is important to bear in mind that stricter standards of behavior may apply under Westerly’s policies in order that we may prevent inappropriate verbal and physical conduct before a student has been subject to bullying as it is defined under the law. For example, although the law defines bullying as “repeated use” of certain expressions, acts, and/or gestures, Westerly reserves the right to apply disciplinary measures and other corrective action in a case of a single expression, act or gesture, if the School determines that it

is of sufficient severity to warrant disciplinary measures or other remedial action or that the repetition of that expression, act, or gesture might reasonably result in bullying as defined under the law.

## **II. PREVENTION OF BULLYING AND CYBER-BULLYING**

From the earliest grades at Westerly, students learn that as members of our community they have a right to be treated with civility and respect. Our curriculum emphasizes respect for differences, and teachers are clear in their expectations for student behavior. Parents/Guardians are expected to reinforce the standards for membership in the Westerly community.

The administration and faculty recognize it is essential that expectations for student conduct extend to corridors, locker rooms, lunch, recess, carpool, buses, and the like. The School strives to ensure that ample adult supervision is provided on School premises, including in the corridors and locker rooms, at lunch and at recess, and on school-provided transportation throughout the school day as well as at school-sponsored events.

## **III. REPORTS OF BULLYING, CYBER-BULLYING, OR RETALIATION**

Any student who is the target of bullying or cyber-bullying or has witnessed an incident of bullying or cyber-bullying or otherwise has relevant information about bullying or cyber-bullying prohibited by this policy is strongly encouraged to promptly report the matter orally or in writing to the Dean of Students or Head of School. In the Lower School, reports can also be made to the lead classroom teacher or Dean of Students. Students in the Middle School can also report to the Dean of Students or the Advisor. Also, any student who is subject to retaliation in violation of this policy or who knows of another student who has been subject to retaliation is urged to report it as soon as possible. Students who knowingly make false reports of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action.

A parent/guardian of a student who is the target of bullying or cyber-bullying or of a student who has witnessed or otherwise has relevant information about bullying or cyber-bullying is strongly urged to promptly notify the Head of School. Furthermore, any parent/guardian who has him or herself witnessed bullying or cyber-bullying or has relevant information concerning such an incident is strongly urged to come forward to the Head of School. A parent/guardian should also report any incident of retaliation in violation of this policy to the Head of School.

Any member of the faculty or staff of the School who witnesses or otherwise becomes aware of bullying or cyber-bullying in violation of this policy or who becomes aware of retaliation against a student who reported information concerning a violation of this policy is required to report it immediately to the HOS.

While California law permits anonymous reports, the School urges students and their parents/guardians not to make reports anonymously. It is far more difficult to determine the facts of what occurred if complaints are made anonymously. Also, while the School cannot promise strict confidentiality, because information must be shared in order to conduct an effective investigation, the School releases information concerning complaints of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation only on a legitimate need-to-know basis.

## **IV. RESPONDING TO A REPORT OF BULLYING, CYBER-BULLYING, OR RETALIATION**

### **A. Preliminary Considerations:**

When a complaint of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation is brought to the attention of the HOS, an assessment is made as to whether any initial steps need to be taken to protect the well-being of students and to prevent disruption of their learning environment while the investigation is being conducted. As appropriate, strategies such as increased supervision may be implemented to prevent further bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation during an investigation.

### **B. Obligation to Notify Parents/Guardians:**

It is the policy of the School to notify the parents/guardians of any student who is an alleged target of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation and the parents/guardians of any student who may have been accused of engaging in such behavior promptly after a complaint has been made.

### **C. Investigation:**

The following is an outline of the procedure that is pursued once a complaint has been brought to the attention of the HOS:

The HOS or her designee will conduct an investigation on all reports of bullying or retaliation. The investigation may include (but will not necessarily be limited to) interviews with the person who made the



complaint, with the student who was the target of the alleged bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation, with the person or persons against whom the complaint was made, and with any students, faculty, staff or other persons who witnessed or who may otherwise have relevant information about the alleged incident.

Depending on the circumstances, the HOS or designee conducting the investigation also may choose to consult with other faculty, staff and/or administrators.

#### D. Resolution, Notification, and Follow-up:

Following interviews and any other investigation undertaken, as the School deems appropriate, the HOS will determine whether and to what extent the allegation of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has been substantiated. If it is determined that the policy set forth in this Plan has been violated, the HOS will determine what disciplinary action and/or other remedial action is appropriate and how it will be implemented. In all circumstances where dismissal is considered as a disciplinary action, the Head of School will be consulted and will make the final determination.

The goal of an investigation and any disciplinary or other remedial process that is imposed following that investigation is to correct the situation to the extent it is reasonably possible and to take such steps as can be taken to prevent there being a repetition of the incident and to prevent the student or students targeted and others who participated in the investigation from being subject to retaliation.

Upon completion of the investigation, the HOS or designee who conducted the investigation will meet individually with the student or students who were the target of the alleged incident and the student or students against whom the complaint was made. Parents/Guardians will then be informed of the results of the investigation and, where disciplinary or other corrective action is determined to be appropriate, the steps that will be taken to correct the situation. The HOS will comply with applicable laws regarding disclosure of confidential information when informing students and parents/guardians.

**In accordance with California' law, any disciplinary actions shall balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior, and no disciplinary action may be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report.**

The HOS who conducted the investigation, in consultation with the school counselor, may refer perpetrators, victims, and family members of such students for counseling or other services as appropriate.

The HOS will insure that there is follow-up contact made with any student found to have been targeted in violation of this policy and his/her parents/guardians to inquire as to whether there have been any further incidents. The HOS will also keep a file on all reports of bullying or retaliation, the investigation, and any actions taken in response to a finding of bullying or retaliation.

## V. CONCLUSION

This Plan is intended (1) to prevent bullying and cyber-bullying among our students; (2) to encourage students and their parents/guardians **to have confidence in the School's procedures and to come forward** promptly whenever a student is subject to conduct that is prohibited by this or any other School policy; and (3) to implement appropriate discipline and other corrective measures when they are found to be warranted.

# Student Life

## School Day Schedule

The school day begins promptly at 8:15 a.m. for all students Monday through Friday. The academic day is over at 3:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and on Fridays, students are released at 1:30 p.m. to allow for faculty meetings. All students are given a 15-minute mid-morning snack, and a 40 minute period for lunch and lunch recess.



## Early Arrival

The School is open to students at 7:30 a.m. Students will be supervised at no charge until 8:05 when classrooms are opened.

## Pick-Up Procedures

Parents/Guardians and other adults dropping off and picking up students are reminded to pull into a designated parking space closest to the sidewalk, which avoids students from entering the busy traffic flow and limits traffic jams. Pick-up/Dismissal protocol is as follows:

Kindergarten-Second Grade: Parents/Guardians should park their cars and pick-up their children from their classrooms from 3:00-3:15 p.m. After 3:15 p.m., students will be escorted to Wildcat and families will be charged accordingly. The grace period for pick-up is between 3-3:15 p.m. On Fridays, parents/guardians should pick up their children from their classroom at 1:30 p.m.

Third-Fifth Grade: Parents/Guardians should pick up their child(ren) between 3:00-3:15 p.m. at the front of the school. Children who are not picked up by 3:15 pm will be escorted to Wildcat and families will be charged accordingly. Please refrain from socializing during this time and from allowing your children to play near the parking lot, as it creates unsafe conditions for the students.

Middle School: Parents/Guardians should pick up their child(ren) between 3:00-3:15 p.m. by the “ramp” at the side of the school. Students who are not picked up by 3:15 pm will be escorted to Wildcat and parents/guardians will be charged accordingly. Please refrain from socializing during this time and from allowing your children to play near the parking lot, as it creates unsafe conditions for the students.

Students who have a sibling(s) on campus, may congregate at the pick-up location of the youngest student.

For the protection of your child(ren), only those properly authorized to pick up students, as indicated on the Parents Web Pick Up, will be allowed to sign your child out. Written notice must be submitted to the main office to make any changes for authorized pick-up. If a parent/guardian would like to update their Pick-up List, he/she may do so on their FACTS/Parents Web page, which can be accessed from the Westerly website.

## After-School Program/ WILDCAT

Westerly's Wildcat after-school enrichment program is offered during all active school days throughout the academic year. The program begins immediately after school and runs until 6:00 p.m. All students attending will have the opportunity for homework assistance and recreational enrichment. Students staying after 4:00 p.m. will also be provided with a snack. Multiple payment options are available and information can be accessed on the Westerly website Parents/Key Policies & Forms.

Any student who remains on campus unaccompanied after 3:15pm will be escorted to Wildcat. Students are not permitted to wait in the main office or meet parents/guardians in the parking lot.

Other after school fee-based programs are available each trimester.

## Early Dismissal Requests

Any child that is leaving early from school must be signed out by a designee, as indicated on the Student Pick-up List or Emergency Contact List on Parents Web. Out of courtesy, please notify the classroom teacher and front office about any early dismissal. Families are asked not to take students out early for reasons other than medical or family emergency.

## School Delays/Cancellations

In situations that school needs to be cancelled or delayed for reasons such as earthquakes, floods, fire and power outages, all families will be notified via Parent Alert, an emergency notification that communicates immediately by text, email and voice.

## Athletics

Westerly School offers students in grades four through eight the opportunity to participate in an athletic league with neighboring small schools. Programs offered are based on interests of the students and include, but are not limited to, football, volleyball, basketball, and track & field. Lower school eligibility encompasses fourth grade through sixth grade, while the Middle School eligibility is for seventh and eighth grade students. **Players may be moved up based on enrollment and coach's discretion.** All student athletes are held to a code of academic and sportsmanship. We also ask our families to practice sportsmanship as fans at our games.

## Birthday Celebrations and Healthy Treats

Families wishing to bring a treat to the class to celebrate their child's birthday should consult with their teacher first, with at least a 48-hour notice, to choose the most appropriate time to stage their healthy treat. **It is at the teacher's discretion when such celebrations/treats will be occurring.** Parents/Guardians are to be reminded that we are a nut-free campus and to discuss with the teacher other dietary restrictions.

Families planning to have a birthday party off-campus for their child and want to invite only certain children from the class are asked to send invitations to the home addresses or via email, instead of bringing invitations to hand out at school. The only exception would be if all children in the class are invited. This policy is established in order to avoid hurt feelings. In Lower School, each teacher will celebrate the students' birthdays in each month with free dress day.

## Graduation

Graduation at Westerly is a community event in which the School celebrates not only matriculating eighth graders, but also the promotion of all other students to the next grade level. All students, faculty, and staff are expected to participate in the graduation ceremony. Families in all grades are welcomed and encouraged to attend in the celebration. Nice attire by all students is the dress code for graduation day.

## Lockers

Students in grades six, seven, and eight will be issued a locker within the first week of school. Lockers are to be used for textbooks, binders, school supplies, lunch boxes, and P.E. clothing. To ensure proper sanitation loose papers, open food, garbage of any kind, laptops without covers are all off-limits for lockers.

Regular locker checks will be conducted to ensure students responsibility with their belongings.

## Lunch

Parents/Guardians are asked to provide their child with a daily snack and lunch. Ordering hot lunch is an option. Lunch times vary depending on the day and the grade of the child, but generally lunch begins between 12:30 and 12:50 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and between 11:20 a.m. and 11:40 a.m. on Friday.

Students in grades K-4 will eat lunch first and then have lunch recess, and students in grades 5-8 will have lunch recess first and then eat lunch. This practice allows our play spaces to have fewer students using those areas which will make for safer play and greater access to play equipment.

We ask that all lunches from home be brought at the beginning of the day to avoid unnecessary disruptions in the office and classrooms. Late lunches brought from home may be dropped off in the front office for staff to deliver, a procedure that further helps avoid unnecessary classroom interruptions.

In addition to bringing a snack each day, we ask that you provide your child with a reusable water bottle for usage throughout the day. For items brought from home, Westerly asks that parents/guardians are familiar with and follow our *Nut Awareness Policy*.

Hot lunch service is offered through Choice Lunch. Orders must be placed by 9am for the next day. For example, Tuesday lunch must be ordered by Monday at 9am.

**Students without a lunch:** If a student does not have a lunch, a Choice Lunch emergency lunch will be provided if available. Choice Lunch will contact you for payment. If there are no extra meals available, Westerly will contact the family for instructions. If there are no other options, the child will be offered snacks at the front office.

## Pizza Friday

The Middle School Student Leadership class also hosts “Pizza Fridays”. Students will be located near the front of the school each Friday from 7:45 – 8:15 a.m. for pre-purchase of that day or any upcoming Friday of the current month. Each lunch is sold for \$4.00 (cash or check only). Lunches include 1-slice of pepperoni or cheese pizza, a juice box and fruit snacks. Gluten-free pepperoni or cheese pizza options may be available for \$6.00. Students using their own reusable water bottle are charged \$3.00 per lunch. Additional slices are available for \$1.00 each.

Pizza Fridays is a student-run activity and we are working to keep the process as simple as possible. Refunds and roll overs will not be issued for students who are absent for any reason.

## Nut Awareness Policy

Westerly's Nut Awareness Policy is designed to protect our students who have life threatening nut allergies. For some students with nut allergies, their immune system responds to exposure by the body mistakenly believing it is harmful. Your adherence to the policy will help ensure a safe environment for Westerly students. Westerly School Administration will review this policy annually to update or add new best practices.

Do not send any food items to school that contain peanuts, walnuts, cashews, hazelnuts (Nutella), pecans, Brazil nuts, pistachios, pine nuts, or macadamia nuts.

**Ways your family can help keep our campus nut-free:**

- Read the list of contents on processed foods and avoid any foods made with the any of the nuts listed above.
- Introduce substitutions for peanut butter, including almond, sunflower, soy, or other nut and seed butters.
- This policy applies to any food items brought to a school event on campus.

## Lost and Found

Clothing, lunch boxes, and other personal belongings that turn up around campus are deposited in the Lost and Found Bin. **We urge parents/guardians to label all personal items with permanent markers to make it easier to return when lost.** A WPA volunteer helps us manage the left behind items. Periodically, and after announcing to families, all items will be taken to a second hand store.

## School Assemblies

The School holds a regular assembly for students Monday at 8:15, as a means of both informing them of important information and upcoming events, as well as to celebrate various accomplishments of classes and individual students. Families are welcome and encouraged to attend.

## Summer Reading

Students in all grades will be assigned summer reading by their homeroom teachers (in lower school) and Humanities teacher (in middle school). It is at the discretion of the teacher how much reading is required and whether any supplemental work is assigned.

## Transporting Students

Westerly relies on the help of parent/guardian volunteers to transport students on off campus trips in many situations. For some trips, the school uses a certified bus carrier to transport students. Additionally students may be transported by air or by outdoor education program transportation. Parents/Guardians who wish to drive must be approved by the front office prior to the trip. In order to be approved, and at least two weeks before the scheduled event, parents/guardians must complete the Authorization to Drive form, provide a copy of their insurance declarations page showing their coverage limitations (and meet the minimum requirements), and pass a DMV check. The minimum liability coverage needed is \$100,000 per person, and \$300,000 per occurrence. Any liability incurred on such outings that is not covered by the driver's insurance will be covered by the school's policy after the driver's liability is exhausted and subject to the limits of the school's liability policy. Faculty and staff are encouraged to review safety protocols with parent/guardian drivers to ensure students' safety (car seat requirements, seat belt use, obeying traffic signals, etc.) Additionally, parents/guardians or authorized drivers must agree to not text or engage in any activity on their handheld device, to ensure the safety of the students and driver. The Authorization to Drive form must be completed every year. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian volunteer to notify the school of any changes to their insurance that may affect their ability to drive for school events.

No person shall operate a motor vehicle while texting, e-mailing, or otherwise using a cell phone or other handheld device without utilizing a hands-free device.

For field studies and athletic games, students are assigned to vehicles by their teacher, coach, or the front office. No changes may be requested. If you are not comfortable with the assignment, you must arrange your own transportation.

## Student Services

### Tutor Policy

On occasion, parents/guardians request that a student be tutored after school on Westerly's campus. If Westerly has recommended the tutoring, you may submit your request to the Dean of Students. Tutors must complete the Live Scan process before they can be on campus.

### Parent/Guardian Education

The school hosts parent/guardian education evenings throughout the year. The events are facilitated by the administration and experts in various fields. The WPA sponsors childcare for these events. Parent/Guardian input is always welcome. A calendar of parent/guardian education is published at the beginning of the year with additional opportunities added as needed.

### Textbooks and Supplies

In general, the School provides all students with the necessary supplies for the classroom, with the exception of a backpack. Students in grades four through eight are provided one PE uniform, and families may order more from Westerly Gear online store.

### Reading and Research Center

With the generous funding of our Westerly Community, we are creating a Reading and Research Center. Lower School will use the Center as the focal point for Reader's & Writer's Workshop, thematic learning, project design, and student presentations. Middle School's PREP Program will have access to the Center's

dedicated tools and space to conduct research, plan together, design and execute digital presentations, and host showcases based on their research, engineering and personal passions.

## Vision Screening

The School provides vision screenings, free of charge, through an outside organization, each year, to all students. Parents/Guardians will be notified in advance and have the option of opting out of the screening.

## High School Visits

Starting in October of each year and running until January, eighth grade students are encouraged to visit any high school they are considering attending the following year. The process is initiated by parents/guardians and, in most cases, requires the application to the school of interest to start the process, whereupon, parents/guardians **are then allowed to make an appointment to “shadow” at the school**. In making an appointment to do so, Westerly asks that parents/guardians check with the eighth grade adviser teacher to avoid making appointments on days where Westerly may have something important planned. Shadow days are considered excused absences, as long as parents/guardians have notified the Registrar, Elizabeth Proven, at [eproven@westerlyschool.org](mailto:eproven@westerlyschool.org) with advanced notice (at least 48-hours in advance).

## Student Records Access

Westerly keeps a file on each Westerly student. The cumulative file is kept in the front office and contains **students’ report cards, immunizations, and standardized test scores**. This file is typically sent on to high schools for matriculating students. Parents/Guardians **are allowed to view their child’s file** at any time with administrative approval on-campus.

## Animals/Pets on Campus

In order to help maintain a clean, healthy campus, the School has implemented a no animal/pet on campus policy. Animals/pets should remain in your vehicle at all times. Any exceptions to this policy must be cleared by an Administrator prior to bringing an animal on campus and proof of current vaccines may be requested. Service animals are exempt to this policy.

## Technology and Technology Use Agreement

Students in kindergarten through fourth grade have access to computer stations in their classroom, shared laptops available on a mobile cart, and iPads to use in classroom or other work spaces.

A school-issued laptop will be provided to students in fifth grade and middle school. Families will be required to purchase a padded bag with space to hold a charger separate from their regular backpack. The school reserves the right to not release a laptop to a student until an appropriate bag is presented. Fifth grade students will have access to their laptops as needed. Additionally, parents/guardians and students will be required to read and sign a general computing and acceptable use policy prior to receiving a computer.

## Acceptable Technology Use Policy and Equipment Use Agreement for Middle School Students

Westerly School offers its entire community a wide range of electronic communications resources and technologies to support its educational objectives. These include, but are not limited to, computers and the internet. Their use is a privilege, not a right. Proper usage is based on trust and judgment. Failure to adhere to these standards will result in having the privilege to use these resources suspended or revoked. Additionally, it may result in discipline up to and including expulsion. The following terms and conditions are meant to provide families with examples of prohibited conduct, but are not intended to serve as an exclusive list. Students may be disciplined for engaging in other conduct deemed, in the sole discretion of the school, as detrimental to the school, its mission, and/or harmful to other students.

**Term** – This agreement shall terminate at the conclusion of the 2019-20 academic school year (June 2020). In the event of withdrawal or dismissal of the Student from the School for any reason, parents/guardians and students agree to immediately return any Equipment to the School. Parents/Guardians understand and agree that unless the equipment is returned to the School in good condition and/or have fully complied with the terms of this Agreement, the Student's final grades, transcripts, reports or other documents will not be issued. In addition, if the equipment is not returned in appropriate, working condition by June 9, 2020, the School is authorized to bill for the replacement cost of the equipment.

**Acceptance of Equipment** – Parents/Guardians understand and agree they have **forty-eight (48) hours** from the time the Equipment has been delivered to inspect the Equipment and notify the School of any damage beyond normal user wear and tear, non-conformance, or discrepancies with the Equipment. After this time, Parents/Guardians agree that it will be conclusively presumed that the Equipment was delivered in acceptable and appropriate form. Parents/Guardians and students also agree to maintain a case on the computer at all times (1 new case provided by Westerly), and provide an adequately padded **computer bag for sole purpose of transporting the computer and charger**. Computers are not to be carried inside regular backpacks, regardless of padding.

**Delivery** – The School will not deliver the Equipment for the Student's use under this Agreement until the Student has an appropriate carrying case for the protection of the Equipment.

**Classroom Behavior** – All Westerly standards of conduct apply to classrooms. Classrooms may only be used when a Westerly staff member is present and agrees to supervise. No food or drink is to be brought into the classroom or be **near the student computers AT ANY TIME. Students should adhere by the Westerly IWill Tech Pledge.**

**Proper Usage** – Technology resources are provided to promote education excellence. Computers are to be used for academic purposes only. **During the snack lunch period, computers are NOT to be used.**

Students agree never to use the school computers for purposes such as the following:

- To instant message.
- To access or use any web long (blog), forum, or "social network" web site of any kind, including but not limited to MySpace, Facebook, Instagram etc.
- To visit and post information and/or messages on social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, or Snapchat.
- To access or use chat rooms.
- To send messages using abusive, or otherwise objectionable language.
- To engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
- To harass another person. Harassment is defined as persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person. If you are told by a person to stop sending those messages, you must stop.
- To knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization
- To enter contests, advertising, political lobbying, or personal commercial activities including online purchasing on sites such as eBay or Craigslist.
- To post, send or download copyrighted material without permission. Users are to respect the rights of and the intellectual property of others in accordance with state and federal copyright laws. **Transferring copyrighted material to or from the school's computer without the express permission of the owner is a violation of Federal Law.**
- To access, send, or retrieve pornographic material.
- To post inappropriate text files or files dangerous to the integrity of any network.
- To circumvent security measures on school or remote computers or networks (hacking).
- To attempt to gain access to another's resources, programs, or data.
- To falsify one's identity to others.
- To engage in the unauthorized exploration of the Networking Operating System or to change any installed school software is strictly prohibited.
- To disclose personal information, such as address, phone number, date of birth, on the school system.
- To download or upload software, games, or shareware.
- **To play games AT ANY TIME, other than when a teachers has instructed students to do so.**
- To communicate any credit card number, bank account number or any other financial information.

- To gamble.
- To use the name of Westerly School on a social networking site.
- To agree to meet with someone he/she has met online.
- To engage in any illegal act, such as arranging for a drug sale or the purchase of alcohol, threatening the safety of a person, etc.
- To post chain letters or engage in "spamming." Spamming is sending an annoying or unnecessary message to a large number of people.

If you mistakenly access inappropriate information, you should immediately tell your teacher, Dean of Students, or an available administrator. Additionally, to the extent parents/guardians inform the student that there is additional material that they think would be inappropriate for the student to access, Westerly School expects that the student will follow his or her parent/guardian's instructions in this matter.

**Communication is Not Private** – Each student's online communication is a reflection of our school. E-mail to and from our school is like a postcard: it is not private and may be monitored as needed. Therefore, students have no right to privacy as it relates to use of the school's electronic resources. The school has the right to monitor all communications on its server and electronic equipment.

**Safety** – It is essential that Westerly School computers never be disrupted by any virus. For that reason, using school computers to open any internet-based e-mail system (AOL, Hotmail, Yahoo, etc.) is strictly prohibited. All students will receive a Westerly email address that they may use to communicate with teachers, classmates, and parents/guardians. **Westerly email should only be used for educational purposes.**

**Vandalism** – The entire community suffers when computer systems are disrupted. Students agree to refrain from vandalism, including the following: attempting to access the files or folders of others or to bypass the security software; revealing passwords to others; unauthorized installation, removal, or copying of any software or data files; modifying or circumventing any computer software or network settings; or changing any hardware connections or cabling.

**Risk of Loss or Damage** – Parents/Guardians agree that they assume any risk of loss or damage to the Equipment from any cause. Parents/Guardians understand that the School will maintain insurance coverage for the Equipment. In the event of any claims, Parents/guardians agree to reimburse the School the amount of the deductible, **currently at \$100 per incident**. If the Equipment is lost or damaged, Parent/Guardian understand and agree that they will be financially responsible for any loss or damage (including the cost of repair or replacement) to the extent it is not covered by the School's insurance policy or the manufacturer's warranty.

**Password Protection** – Students agree to respect others' privacy and not use another person's account or password, even with that person's consent. Students must also not disclose or allow others to use their passwords.

**Copyright & Plagiarism** – Students are responsible for producing their own work in completing school assignments. Downloading and copying another individual's work from the Internet without crediting the author is plagiarism. Copyright violations include the copying of computer software or written materials without the permission of the author.

**Misuse** – Students agree to report any misuse of the system to an appropriate staff member.

**Title, Assignment and Inspection** – This Agreement does not pass title of the Equipment to the Parents/Guardians or Students. If at any time the School determines that the Equipment is being improperly used or cared for, it may, at its sole discretion, terminate this Agreement, at which time the Parent/Guardian agree to immediately return the Equipment to the School.

This agreement is a legally binding contract between the undersigned and Westerly School. Your signature below indicates your agreement to support the Technology Policies stated above and must be on file before access to the computers is granted. A student who does not adhere to these policies will be suspended from computer use and may receive further discipline.

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## PARENT/GUARDIAN CONTRACT

I understand that all members of the school community must behave in a way that supports the essence and character of Westerly School. Thus, as a parent/guardian of a child enrolled at Westerly School:

1. I will abide by school rules and policies and will support the Mission Statement.
2. I will actively communicate with other members of the school community openly, directly, promptly, and constructively, without resorting to gossip and rumor.
3. I will treat Westerly faculty and staff members with the professional respect due to them.
4. I will model appropriate ethical behavior for my students and others and will exemplify integrity, inclusion, compassion, and respect for all.
5. I will fulfill my volunteer obligations and will be an active participant in volunteer opportunities for parents/guardians.
6. I will commit to reading and responding to oral and written communication from the school, including emails and school publications such as *Hip Pocket News* and Family Handbook.
7. I will abide by the agreements laid out in the Technology Responsible Use Policies and Best Practices.

I understand that my signature below indicates that I will adhere to the items listed in this covenant, in the Family Handbook and in the (Re) enrollment Contract for the duration of the 2019-20 academic year. Failure to sign or acknowledge the Parent/Guardian Contract does not constitute a lack of accountability.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Grade      Print Student Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Parent/Guardian Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

Sign and return to front office by the first week of school.