



**BE PRESENT
BE RESPECTFUL
BE RESPONSIBLE
BE SAFE**

Principals' Message

Welcome to Williamsport Area Middle School. Our middle school offers a new array of opportunities for you to experience academically, physically, and socially. We hope you will be conscious of our traditions and expectations, because they are the foundation for a student's success. WAMS prides itself on community involvement. Please accept our open invitation to get INVOLVED with our school.

Please know that our teachers and staff are committed to you. Our goal is for you to be successful in the classroom and other venues. We encourage you to take advantage of the opportunities afforded through our school. Get involved in activities that will foster positive outcomes for you and our school community.

The purpose of the Student Handbook is to give our students and their parents/guardians an understanding of the general expectations and guidelines for attending and receiving an education in the Williamsport Area School District.

We look forward to getting to know each of you as a productive student in our community, and we encourage you to set goals and to strive to achieve them.

We encourage ALL parents to support Williamsport Area Middle School by promoting the value of a meaningful, relevant education with your children. Believe in your children and our school community! We are the Millionaires!

Respectfully,
Justin Ross
Justin Ross
Principal
Kevin Mumbauer
Kevin Mumbauer
Assistant Principal

Williamsport Area School District Mission Statement:

Developing responsible citizens through excellence in education.

2021-2022 THIS BOOK BELONGS TO:

NAME : _____ GRADE : _____

HOMEROOM: _____

Visit us at: <https://www.wasd.org/our-schools/williamsport-area-middle-school/welcome>

**Williamsport Area Middle School, 2800 West Fourth Street, Williamsport, PA, 17701
Ph: 570-323-6177 Fax: 570-326-6851**

Williamsport Area School District
Williamsport Area Middle School Student Handbook

Visitors

All building visitors **must** report to the main office upon arrival in order to register and pick up a visitor's pass. Visits by parents / guardians are encouraged. Please make arrangements with your child's teacher in advance. We will not allow students from other schools to visit without an appointment with a teacher **after** school hours.

Parent Visitation Requests

The district respects the rights of parents and the privacy expectations of all children. To balance the needs of both, districtwide visitation procedures are in-place at all school buildings, K-12.

A parent or guardian who requests to visit one or more classes must contact the building principal at least 24 hours in advance to determine a mutually agreeable time and condition for visiting. Visitations will be limited to one (1) classroom period of time per course/subject once each academic year. The request will be made in writing and must specify the purpose of the visit. Building principals will share with parents the district's administrative procedure on classroom visitations and request a signature of receipt. A district employee may accompany the parent during the visit and parents will be asked to maintain confidentiality of students, other than their own children.

1. Parent/guardian visits will be scheduled at the district's convenience and be on a typical school day (i.e., no field trips, assemblies, two-hour delays, or classrooms where substitute teacher is covering the class). Observations will not be scheduled during student testing, the day immediately preceding or following a vacation or holiday or during the opening two weeks of the school term.
2. The principal reserves the right to cancel or reschedule a classroom visitation in the event of unforeseen circumstances or emergencies.

Video/Audio Surveillance Notice

The Williamsport Area School District utilizes video surveillance and recordings in its effort to keep students, staff, and property safe. All District facilities and property have video recorders in use and all buses used by the District utilize both video and audio recordings. All those entering district buildings and property should be aware that their activities may be video recorded and those using buses may have their activities recorded, by both video and audio at any time.

Discrimination Concerns

The Williamsport Area School District prohibits any and all forms of discrimination and harassment based on disability. Any student who believes he or she has been subjected to discrimination or harassment based on disability is encouraged to report the incident to **Justin Ross and Kevin Mumbauer, building principals at 570-323-6177**. The district is committed to promptly investigating any alleged acts of discrimination or harassment based on disability. Students or staff found to have engaged in acts of discrimination or harassment based on disability will be promptly disciplined, which may include suspension or expulsion for students and suspension or termination for employees.

Electronic Devices / Cell Phones

Electronic devices may not be used in school unless they are directed to do so by a teacher. Use of electronic devices without teacher permission may result in confiscation. School personnel will not be responsible for any lost or stolen electronic devices.

Cell phones must be out of view and off when entering home room at 7:50 AM to begin the school day and remain out of view and off. Students should secure their cell phone in their locker with the device turned off for the entirety of the school day. Cell phone use without teacher permission will result in confiscation. The first offense will result in a teacher confiscating and returning the cell phone to the student at the end of the day. The second offense will result in a teacher confiscating and submitting the cell phone to the main office. The student will be able to pick up the phone at the end of the day. The third offense will result in a parent needing to come in to the main office to pick up the phone for the student. Students must inform parents of the confiscation in order for them to pick up their electronic device. School personnel will not be responsible for any lost or stolen electronic devices.

Cell phones also may not be used by a student to contact home about a sickness. Students must follow the school policy by visiting the nurse to be excused from school for a sickness. Any student that contacts home and is picked up by a parent without an excuse from the nurse will be marked unexcused for the day.

Lockers

Students are assigned individual lockers. Student visitations to lockers may only occur at designated times or with a pass from a teacher. Cell phones, electronic devices, coats, jackets, and backpacks **must** be left in the lockers during the school day. Students and parents should be aware that the lockers are the property of the Williamsport Area School District and that school personnel do have access to all student lockers.

Report to Homeroom

Students should enter the building using their designated entrance at 7:40 A.M. At this time, students will report to their assigned locker to get books and materials for their morning classes. Students must be in homeroom no later than 7:50 A.M. or will be marked tardy.

Entering and Exiting the Building

Students should utilize the following entrances in the morning:

- *7th Grade Bus Students and Walkers – Cafeteria Entrance*
- *8th Grade Bus Students and Walkers – Gym/Locker Room Entrance*
- *7th and 8th Grade Parent Transports – Gym/Locker Room Entrance and then to their designated location (Locker Room Hallway for 8th Grade Students and Cafeteria for 7th Grade Students)*
- *All Visitors and Late Arrivals (After 7:50 AM) – Main Office Entrance*

Dismissal

At the end of the last class period each day the afternoon announcements will be made. All students will be dismissed from classes at the conclusion of announcements and should go directly to their lockers and then exit the building using the exit listed previously. All walking students will use 4th Street to walk from WAMS. No students are permitted in the DSC parking lot during dismissal as this is an active traffic area.

Food Service

WASD contracted food service company is The Nutrition Group. Students may bring their lunch to school or purchase a school lunch from our cafeteria. WASD does offer a free and reduced lunch program for qualifying students. You may request an application for the free and reduced lunch program from the school or cafeteria office. A student carrying a negative balance will not be permitted to charge any a la carte items until their existing balance is paid in full.

Early Dismissal

If it is necessary for a student to leave school for any appointment, an excuse written by the parent / guardian must be presented to a school secretary in the office upon the student's arrival at school in the morning. Students who are granted an early dismissal will be given a form which will be shown to the teacher at the time of the early dismissal. Students must return this form to the office before they leave school.

Williamsport Area School District Attendance Policy

1. Upon the return to school following an absence, the student shall bring a **written** excuse signed by the parent or guardian stating the reason for the absence.
2. If a **written** excuse is not received by the third day following the return to school, the absence may be considered illegal.
3. Excused absences may include: illness, funeral, medical or dental appointments, court appearances, and unavoidable family emergencies.
4. Funeral absences: local funeral = 1 day excused; out of town funeral = up to 3 days excused; exception includes immediate family member = 5 days excused absence
5. Unexcused absences may include: oversleeping, car issues, missing bus, hunting, shopping.
6. Tardy time can accrue and may become an illegal absence.
7. If a student is absent more than 10% of the school year (i.e. – If your child has missed 5 out of 50 days), parents or guardians will be notified by a letter of concern from the principal.
8. If your child is absent 10 or more total days (excused and/or unexcused) and has missed more than 10% of the year, a letter requiring doctor's notes for all future absences may be sent home.
9. Planned absences may be excused by completing the educational trip form **two weeks PRIOR** to the trip. All educational trips **must** be approved in advance by the school's principal. Approval will be at the discretion of the principal based on attendance and grades.
10. Students with three or more unexcused absences will be referred to the school social worker to develop a School Attendance Improvement plan.

Excuse for Absence

A written excuse, signed by the parent or guardian, is required for all absences. The written excuse must be presented to a school secretary immediately upon the student's return to school. A doctor's excuse may be required for extended absences or after a student has missed an excessive number of days. An absence is considered to be illegal after three days without an excuse.

Tardiness

Students arriving after the homeroom bell (7:50 AM) are considered to be tardy and **must** report to the office. Tardy students need a note from a parent/guardian at the time of arrival at school. A tardy is considered to be unexcused after three days without an excuse. Excessive tardy arrival may accumulate and become unexcused days of absence as well as subject to disciplinary consequences. Parents will be informed of excessive tardiness.

Homelessness Policy and Procedures

Some of the objectives of the Williamsport Area School District are to increase awareness about the needs of homeless children, reveal and overcome possible educational barriers, explain current legislation and policies, and provide assistance and support to families.

Under the McKinney-Vento Act homeless students have certain rights including the following:

- Attend their school of origin or school of current residence
- Remain in their chosen school for the duration of homelessness or the remainder of the academic year if they become permanently housed during an academic year
- Immediate enrollment
- Transportation to the school of choice
- Immediate access to educational services for which the student is eligible (e.g. Title I, special education, before- and after-school programs, vocational and technical education or gifted and talented programs).
- Free meals provided by the district through federal, state or local food programs.
- Appeal educational placement decisions made by the district and remain the school of choice pending resolution.

The District's school social workers can support and help students in homeless situations in many ways. Please see their contact information below.

School Social Worker (Grades 9-12)

[570-323-8411](tel:570-323-8411) x66105

School Social Worker (Grades 5-8)

[570-327-5500](tel:570-327-5500) x40332

School Social Worker (Grades K-4)

[570-327-5500](tel:570-327-5500) x40331

Our social workers may assist families with the following:

- Make sure students are enrolled in school immediately, even if they do not have the papers they would normally need.
- Help families and youth get immunizations, immunization records or other medical records, if a student needs them.
- Tell parents and youth about all transportation services and help set up transportation.
- Make sure students get all the school services they need.
- Tell parents and guardians about all the programs and services the school has for their children.

The homeless liaison for the Williamsport Area School District is: Dr. Richard Poole, Director of Student Services, 570-327-5500 x40310, rpoole@wasd.org

Regional Coordinator for Education of Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness: Mr. Jeff Zimmerman, 570-718-4613, jzimmerman@liu18.org

Educational Field Trip (Planned Family Vacations)

Forms for excused absences for educational field trips (commonly known as planned family vacations) are available in the office. These forms need to be submitted **no less than 2 weeks prior** to the start of the trip and approved by the building principal in order for the trip to be considered an excused absence.

Busing

Bus transportation is provided by the Williamsport Area School District for qualifying students only. Bus riding is a privilege which may be revoked as a result of inappropriate or dangerous conduct on the bus. Bus suspensions will be administered at the discretion of the building principal or designee. If it is necessary for a bus student to ride a bus other than the one to which he/she is assigned, he/she is to bring a signed note from the parent/guardian to the office for approval by the building principal. The note should be presented on the day of the expected change. A note is also needed to get on/off at a bus stop other than a student's assigned bus stop.

Homework When Absent

Parent/guardians may call the office by 9:30 AM to obtain assignments on the second full day of absence. Homework may be picked up by parents/guardians after 2:30 PM in the office or sent home with a friend or sibling.

Grading

Each teacher will explain to students his/her system of grading. The Williamsport Area School District grading scale is as follows:

A	90 - 100	Superior – indicates outstanding performance and achievement.
B	80-89	Commendable – indicates performance of quality above that is normally expected of students at this level.
C	70 - 79	Average – indicates satisfactory performance of a quality which might reasonably be expected of students at this grade level.
D	65 - 69	Passing – indicates less than satisfactory performance of a quality which is below average for this grade level, resulting in minimum achievement.
E	Below 65	Not passing – indicates little or no effort, resulting in performance which is unacceptable and not sufficient to justify promotion.

Effort and Conduct

Effort and Conduct Marks – (1) Outstanding, (2) Satisfactory, (3) Needs Improvement, (4) Unsatisfactory

Honor Roll

Any student achieving grades of all A's and B's and having effort and conduct above the needs improvement level will be acknowledged on the honor roll at Williamsport Area Middle School at the end of each nine-week marking period. Distinguished Honor Roll status is accorded those students achieving a grade of 95% or higher in all subjects and having effort and conduct above the needs improvement level. High Honor Roll status is accorded those students achieving a grade of 90% or higher in all subjects and having effort and conduct above the needs improvement level. Honor Roll status is accorded those students achieving a grade of 85% or higher in all subjects and having effort and conduct above the needs improvement level.

Interim Progress Reports

Interim progress reports are mailed to parents/guardians periodically throughout each nine-week grading period. These reports serve as notification of a student's progress and are sent at the discretion of individual teachers or teams.

Report Cards

Report cards are issued to students at the end of each nine-week grading period.

Parent Portal & Schoology

Parents and guardians are able to check on the classroom progress of their children in Grades 7 through 12 by accessing the Parent Portal or Schoology Platform. The Parent Portal is part of our student information management system, PowerSchool. Information on test and quiz scores, homework completion and accuracy, and class attendance is available to parents and guardians from records maintained by teachers. Schoology Platform is the district Learning Management System that parents can also check students work completion and assignments. Please contact your child's school counselor or visit www.wasd.org for more information.

Retention in Grade

Any student failing more than two courses taken in the following areas – language arts, mathematics, social studies, science – or any student failing more than half of all courses taken during a given school year – or any student failing either language arts or mathematics in consecutive years, may be retained at that level for the next school year. A student may be retained no more than one time at any grade level during the middle school years.

Student Activities and Athletics

Intramurals: Boy's and girl's intramural activities are held in the morning before the start of regular school time. Involvement is totally voluntary. Students can be asked to leave if they do not follow activity expectations.

Interscholastic Athletics are offered to grade 7 and 8 students at the middle school level. WASD requires a \$50 participation fee for extra-curricular activities for a given school year.

Boy's Athletics – Football, Basketball, Wrestling, Track, Soccer, Cross Country
Girl's Athletics – Softball, Basketball, Track, Soccer, Cross Country, Cheerleading

Student Dress

Your dress attire reflects the quality of the school, of your conduct, and of your work. All students are expected to dress and groom themselves neatly in clothes that are suitable for the season and activity. The wearing of clothing that exposes the midriff, cleavage, or buttocks is not permitted. The wearing of clothing that does not properly cover under garments is not permitted. The wearing of pants and shorts below the waist is not permitted. The wearing of shorts or skirts where the length does not extend past a student's fingertips is not permitted. Gloves, hats, and scarves are not permitted to be worn during the school day. Clothing with slogans or statements that could be considered offensive is not permitted. The wearing of clothing/jewelry that exhibits references to drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, violence, sex, profanity, or gang-related activities is not permitted.

Examples of dress not permitted: flip flops, slippers, tank tops, spaghetti strap tops, midriff shirts, muscle shirts, sleepwear or lounge pants, hats, bandanas, and head scarves while inside the building. Head coverings worn for religious purposes are permitted.

Proper footwear is required. Footwear must fasten at the front and back of the foot. Pants with holes may only be worn if the skin is not exposed above fingertip length.

Students may be required to wear certain types of clothing while participating in physical education classes, labs, extracurricular activities, or other situations where special attire may be required to insure the health or safety of the student.

School Activity Dress Code

If a student is representing their school in any type of school related activity (sports, concerts, etc) they must be dressed in attire that is requested by the coach, director, or advisor. This attire for males may include a collar shirt, sweater, button-down shirt, casual dress pants, and dress shoes. Female students may be requested to wear dresses or slacks, collared shirt or sweater, and dress shoes.

Gym Clothes

Students need a change of clothes for gym class: warm-ups, T-shirts, shorts, socks, and sneakers. Jeans are not permitted. All jewelry must be removed from all body parts before participation. Student lockers are assigned for their physical education rotation. Students must provide their own locks for their P.E. locker.

Food and Drinks (Water Bottles)

Students are permitted to carry water bottles with them throughout the school day. The water bottle must be clear and contain only clear liquids. Glass water bottles are not permitted. All other outside food and drink must be disposed of upon entering the building or secured and placed inside the student's locker until lunch or the end of the school day. Any food or drink that cannot be secured will be disposed of upon entering the building.

Backpacks

Backpacks are permitted to and from school. Backpacks are not permitted to be carried during the school day and must be stored in their lockers. Females may carry small purses for hygiene products, no larger than a piece of 8 ½" x 11" paper folded in half twice.

Bicycles

Bicycles are to be secured with a lock on the designated bicycle rack. WAMS or WASD is not responsible for stolen bicycles. Bicycles are to be dismounted and walked while on WAMS campus.

Medication

All prescription and non-prescription medications require a physician's order and parent's permission. An adult must bring all medications to the office in the original, pharmaceutically dispensed container. Students are not permitted to keep in their possession any medication, including inhalers, while in school unless a family physician gives written permission.

School Wide Positive Behavior

The Williamsport Area School District Middle School implements school wide positive behavior (SWPB). The aim of this initiative is to recognize and reinforce the school district's behavioral expectations for all students. Student expectations are the 4 B's:

- Be Present
- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible
- Be Safe

As part of our school wide positive behavior program, students who demonstrate outstanding behavior and citizenship will be given a Be Card (Be Present, Be Safe, Be Respectful, and Be Responsible). These students can turn their Be Card in every day during their lunch period for an instant prize and will then have a chance to win one of many incentives set up on a monthly basis throughout the school year.

Cherry and White Awards

Cherry and White Awards recognize those students who demonstrate consistent effort and those qualities of responsibility that are often overlooked in the well-rounded student. These students are the foundation of our schools because they demand minimal attention and yet are so rewarding to teachers. All students are eligible for nomination. Teachers nominate students monthly and each nominee must receive unanimous approval from the staff. Among the qualities sought in nominees are promptness, preparation, reliability, courtesy, and consideration.

Technology

Williamsport Area School District retains sole right of possession of all technological equipment including, but not limited to, computers, iPads, and iPods. Equipment will be issued to students according to guidelines established by the WASD Technology Department. Each student must sign WASD's Acceptable Use Policy to have access to District technology. Any misuse or tampering with District hardware or software is susceptible to school consequences.

Remote Learning

Throughout the school year there may come a day when schools will be closed due to an emergency situation. Through our Williamsport Area School District Continuity of Education Plan, we will use remote learning to stay connected to our students. Please note that students will be assigned a device to use at home and will be responsible for its safety. Students will be expected to check in and participate in the day's activities in order for them to be marked "Present" for the day.

S.A.P

A team of faculty known as S.A.P. identifies at-risk students having school-related problems because of alcohol or drug use or who are at risk of suicide or other mental health problems. The members of the S.A.P. team work closely with agencies that can provide resources to help students and families in need of service. Parents may make referrals to the S.A.P. team by contacting the school at 323-6177 and ask to speak to a S.A.P. team member or school counselor.

Harassment / Bullying

The Williamsport Area School district strictly prohibits both verbal and physical harassment of students, including bullying and sexual harassment. Any student who feels that he/she had been subjected to harassment or bullying should report the incident to the guidance counselor, teacher, or building principal. Each situation will be dealt with confidentially and on an individual basis.

Right to Records

The student's parents or guardians, or their legal representatives, shall have access to student records. Prior notice must be given to obtain access to certain types of student information.

Smoking / Tobacco

Act 145 of the PA Crimes Code prohibits the use or possession of any tobacco product on school property or at any school-related function. Tobacco products will be confiscated and discarded. Parents will be notified of all tobacco use violations. Violations may be subject to a \$100 fine. There will be consequences for possession or use of tobacco products, including vapes, at school or school-sponsored activities.

Vandalism

Vandalism is the willful or malicious defacement or destruction of public or private property. Students and parents need to know that the legal definition also includes carrying indelible markers or aerosol spray paint cans with the intent to vandalize.

Weapons

Any student involved in the transportation, possession, use, or concealment of any weapon, including but not limited to, any knife, mace, cutting instrument, tool, lighter, firearm, or instrument that could be deemed a weapon by administration or law enforcement on school property or on school district transportation, will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, and may face expulsion. Appropriate authorities will be notified as needed.

Corporal Punishment / Reasonable Force

“Corporal punishment, namely physically punishing a student for an offense, may not be administered by any school district employee.”

“Reasonable force may be used by teachers and school authorities when required to maintain order or to enforce compliance with proper directions including but not limited to: (1) to quell a disturbance; (2) to obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects; (3) of the purpose of self-defense; or (4) for the protection of persons or property.”

Student Behavior

When a student fails to reach established behavioral expectations, one of two courses of action will result: the teacher will handle the inappropriate behavior, or, the teacher will refer the student to a principal or administrator.

Examples of consequences which may be imposed for failure to meet expectations include, but are not limited to the following: discussion, verbal reprimand, parental contact, time out, making up off task time, detention (24 hours notice is required), loss of privileges (extra-curricular, co-curricular, school-sponsored, school-related events), in-school suspension, or out-of-school suspension. Serious repeated acts of student misbehavior may result in the student being sent to office, required to pay replacement cost of lost or damaged property, placed on in-school or out-of school suspension, or assigned after school detention. Police involvement is an option for serious acts of aggression, violence or endangerment and for possession/use of a controlled or illegal substance or weapon.

When students fail to meet expected behaviors, consequences will occur. The following behaviors are considered to be unacceptable and either detention, In-School Suspension, Out-of School Suspension, or other consequences will be administered accordingly. *It is the discretion of the building administration to assign consequences appropriately dependent upon frequency or severity.* Please review the discipline plan below thoroughly with your child.

Detention (2:45 -3:15 PM) (Parents are responsible for transportation)

<u>Offense or Behavior</u>	<u>Detentions</u>	<u>Offense or Behavior</u>	<u>Detentions</u>
Tardiness (3) unexcused	1	Skipping or Leaving Class	1 – 5
Use of profanity	1 – 5	Lying	1 – 3
Disrespect to staff	1 – 5	Cheating	3
Unacceptable Cafeteria Behavior	1 – 3	Rude/Discourteous Behavior	1 – 5
Harassment / Bullying	1 – 3	Skipping Detention	1 (added)
Technology Violation	1 – 3	Bus Misconduct	1 – 5

In – School Suspension

<u>Offense or Behavior</u>	<u>Suspensions</u>	<u>Offense or Behavior</u>	<u>Suspensions</u>
Malicious pushing or shoving	1 – 3	Skipping school	1 – 3
Insubordination	1 – 3	Lying	1 – 3
Forgery	1 – 3	Disrespect to staff	1 – 3
Harassment / Bullying	1 – 3	Leaving school w/out permission	1 – 3
Play Fighting	1 – 3	Disruptive in Class	1 – 3
Theft	1 – 5	Profanity	1 – 3
Technology Violation	1 – 3	Any repeated violation above	1 – 3

Out-of-School Suspension (Police intervention and/or expulsion possible)

<u>Offense or Behavior</u>	<u>Suspensions</u>	<u>Offense or Behavior</u>	<u>Suspensions</u>
Weapons possession	1 – 10	Possession of tobacco	1 – 2
Arson	1 – 10	Vandalism	1 – 10
Assault	1 – 10	Theft	1 – 10
Extortion	1 – 10	Threatening staff	1 – 10
Drug possession	1 – 10	Bomb threat	1 – 10
Disorderly conduct	1 – 10	Fighting	1 – 10
Technology Violation	1 – 10	Any repeated violation above	1 – 10

Suspension of Bus Privileges

<u>Offense or Behavior</u>	<u>Suspensions</u>	<u>Offense or Behavior</u>	<u>Suspensions</u>
Profanity	1 – 5	Endangerment/Disruption	1 – 10
Fighting	1 – 10	Disrespect	1 – 5
Misbehavior at bus stop	1 – 5	Harassment/Bullying	1 – 10