

**WESTGATE ALTERNATIVE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK 25-26**



**3080 Wicklow Road
Columbus, OH 43204
Phone: (614) 365-5971 Fax: (614) 365-5149
Janea C. Robinson, Principal**

Dear Westgate Families,

On behalf of the staff at Westgate Elementary, I am excited to welcome you to the 2025-2026 school year! We are delighted to have the opportunity to work with you and your child, and we look forward to building a strong and supportive partnership.

This Parent-Student Handbook has been created to provide you with important information about our staff, policies, and procedures. It is a helpful resource for understanding how Westgate operates and how we can work together to ensure your child's success. If you have any questions or feedback, feel free to call us at 614-365-5971.

We encourage you to be actively involved in your child's educational journey. Parent engagement is a vital part of student success, and open communication between home and school helps every child thrive.

Together, we can create a safe, engaging, and challenging learning environment that prepares our students to be confident, capable, and ready for the future. I am looking forward to a positive, productive, and inspiring school year with the students, families, and staff of Westgate Elementary.

Sincerely,

Janea C. Robinson

Principal

Westgate Elementary

Westgate Staff Roster 25-26

Name	Role	Email
TBD	Special Need Pre-K	
Sabrina Conrad	Special Need Pre-K IA	sconrad@columbus.k12.oh.us
Rachel Townley-Beckelheimer	Pre-K	rtownley@columbus.k12.oh.us
Cynthia Dungey	PT Pre-K IA/General Fund	cdungey@columbus.k12.oh.us
Theresa Hoye	Pre-K IA	thoye@columbus.k12.oh.us
Rebecca Willis	Kindergarten	bwillis5054@columbus.k12.oh.us
Jessica Washam	Kindergarten	jwasham8229@columbus.k12.oh.us
Cathy Donnell	Kinder IA	cdonnell@columbus.k12.oh.us
Stefanie Sheridan	First Grade	ssheridan1@columbus.k12.oh.us
Lindsey Richards	First Grade	lrichards@columbus.k12.oh.us
Virginia Johnson	PT Primary Literacy Specialist (1st)	vjohnson5@columbus.k12.oh.us
Karen Distefana	Second Grade	kdistefano@columbus.k12.oh.us
Darlene Harrison	Second Grade	dharrison2448@columbus.k12.oh.us
Sharon Mabry	PT Primary Literacy Specialist (2nd)	smabry9109@columbus.k12.oh.us
Carrie Smith	Third Grade	csmith8315@columbus.k12.oh.us
Sherri Kiser	Third Grade	skiser9251@columbus.k12.oh.us

Mrs. MiMi	Volunteer	bama1254@sbcglobal.net
Laura England	PT Primary Literacy Specialist (3rd)	lengland3886@columbus.k12.oh.us
Kortney Reed	Fourth Grade	
Julie Burnside	Fourth Grade	jburnside@columbus.k12.oh.us
Ashley Goode	Fifth Grade	agoode3415@columbus.k12.oh.us
Wendy Church	Fifth Grade	wchurch@columbus.k12.oh.us
Stephanie Bassham	Intervention Specialist (ED)	sbassham@columbus.k12.oh.us
Chad Younger	SPED IA	cyounger@columbus.k12.oh.us
Dawn Berenzweig	Intervention Specialist (HI)	dberenzweig@columbus.k12.oh.us
Kelly Marshall	PE	kmarshall1340@columbus.k12.oh.us
Elizabeth Butler	Instrumental Music	ebutler@columbus.k12.oh.us
Philip Baltzer	Vocal Music	pbaltzer@columbus.k12.oh.us
Deena Patete	Art	dpatete@columbus.k12.oh.us
Susan Parsons	Librarian (IA)	sparsons1361@columbus.k12.oh.us
Patricia Hill	Building Sub	phill@columbus.k12.oh.us
Laura Heald	Gifted Specialist (Intermediate)	lheald9703@columbus.k12.oh.us
Sharon Deal	Gifted Specialist (Primary)	sdeal7637@columbus.k12.oh.us
Stefanie Gaddis	Counselor	sgaddis9276@columbus.k12.oh.us
Fitzgerald Megan	Social Worker	mfitzgerald1@columbus.k12.oh.us
Payton Hummer	Psychologist	phummer@columbus.k12.oh.us
Kara Horn	Speech	khorn@columbus.k12.oh.us

	Pathologist	
Sarah Aldridge	Occupational Therapist	saldridge@columbus.k12.oh.us
Lynette Cosby	Physical Therapy	lcosby7854@columbus.k12.oh.us
Catherine Moseley	PEAK (IA)	cmoseley7409@columbus.k12.oh.us
Amber Davison	Secretary	adavison@columbus.k12.oh.us
TBD	Nurse	
Trisha Winkfield	Food Service	twinkfield@columbus.k12.oh.us
Jennifer Hermann	Latchkey	jhermann2949@columbus.k12.oh.us
Laurie Grashel	Latchkey IA	lgrashel@columbus.k12.oh.us
Jerome Bostic	Head Custodian	jbostic@columbus.k12.oh.us
Bruce Lines	Night Custodian	blines@columbus.k12.oh.us
Janea Robinson	Principal	jrobinson6@columbus.k12.oh.us

WESTGATE ALTERNATIVE VISION STATEMENT

100% of Westgate students will meet or exceed grade level benchmarks by the end of the school year.

EXPECTATION STATEMENT

At Westgate, we believe that our school must be a welcoming, safe, academic environment. Our actions will show we are committed to and believe the following: All staff members are responsible for creating a trauma-informed culture and climate to all learners at all times; All learners will have access to rigorous academic, standards-based curriculum and assessments that are driven by research-based instructional practice and data.

“Educating students at Westgate is a team effort.”

WESTGATE STUDENT VISION STATEMENT

Westgate Gators are:

Responsible Leaders

Safe at all time

Focused on fitness

Respectful to all

and

Ready for Success

BREAKFAST

Breakfast will be provided for all students starting at 8:35 a.m. each morning. If your child will be eating breakfast at school, they should arrive by 8:45 a.m. to allow enough time to eat before class begins. Instruction starts promptly at 9:00 a.m.

After breakfast, students will go directly to their classrooms to prepare for the morning. Students who are not eating breakfast should plan to arrive between 8:50 and 9:00 a.m., as we do not have supervision before 8:50 unless they are in the cafeteria for breakfast. Those arriving early without eating breakfast will need to wait outside until classrooms open at 8:50 a.m.

LUNCH IS FREE FOR ALL STUDENTS!

If your child packs a lunch, please make sure his or her name is clearly labeled on the lunchbox or bag. Students should not bring soft drinks with their lunch. Water or fruit juice is recommended instead.

We also ask that families refrain from having breakfast or lunch delivered to the school for students, as it can disrupt classroom instruction and pose safety concerns. This includes deliveries from services such as DoorDash, UberEats, and similar providers.

CLASSROOM VISITATION BY PARENTS

1. Please contact the teacher to pre-arrange a visit. However, to maximum and protect the educational time for our students, visits should not last longer than 15 minutes
2. All visitors are required to check in at the school office to sign in and state the purpose of their visit before entering a classroom.
3. Please remember that classroom visits are not the appropriate time for a parent-teacher conference. During instructional time, the teacher's attention is focused on the class and cannot be diverted for individual conversations.

When visiting, we ask that you quietly take a seat toward the back of the room and exit when you are ready, without interrupting instruction. If you would like to discuss your child's academic progress, behavior, or any

concerns, please schedule a separate conference at a later time. You may leave a note with your request at the school office, and our secretary will ensure the teacher receives it.

4. Any items for your child should be clearly labeled and brought to the school office. Our staff will deliver them to the classroom to avoid disrupting valuable instructional time.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline serves two main purposes:

- Creating a classroom environment that supports and enhances learning.
- Guiding each child in developing self-control.

All students will receive a **Guide to Student Conduct**. We ask that parents review this document with their child(ren) and return the signed form included in the guide, confirming it has been reviewed together.

STUDENT EXPECTED BEHAVIORS

- Listen and follow all directions.
- Complete all assigned classwork and homework.
- Respect yourself.
- Respect property.
- Respect others.

PEAK Center (*Positive Efforts for Adjustment and Knowledge*)

The PEAK Center is staffed by a trained PEAK instructional assistant and serves as a supportive space for students who need help managing their behavior in the classroom or on the playground.

PEAK is used in two ways:

1. **Time-Out** – Provides students with a safe space and time to calm down, reflect on their behavior, and create a plan for positive change. Students return to class once it is determined they are ready.
2. **In-School Suspension (ISS)** – Allows students to remain in school and continue their education while learning strategies to change inappropriate behaviors. Students work on assignments from their

classroom teacher and/or academic activities from PEAK staff, as well as develop a behavior improvement plan. Additional activities may include problem-solving, self-esteem building, and goal-setting exercises.

In both cases, students complete academic work while in the PEAK Center, ensuring that learning continues alongside behavior support.

PLAYGROUND BEHAVIOR

Students are expected to demonstrate safe, respectful, and responsible behavior at all times. The directions and guidance of adult supervisors should be followed respectfully.

Students may not enter the building without permission. Basketballs and playground game balls will be provided by the school, personal toys and balls from home are not allowed.

School playground equipment must be used appropriately and safely. Rough play, fighting, pushing, tripping, or any other unsafe actions will not be tolerated. Such behavior may result in time-out on the playground or a visit to the PEAK Center. Repeated time-outs could lead to a loss of recess privileges for an extended period.

DRESS CODE

Students must follow Columbus City Schools district dress code at all times, no exceptions. At Westgate, this means: no hats (unless it's a designated Hat Day), no hoods, crop tops, short shorts, sagging pants, explicit or inappropriate graphic T-shirts, or house shoes. Closed-toe shoes are required for safety, as students play outside at recess daily and participate in gym twice a week.

Students who are out of dress code will have a call home, and a change of shoes or clothing will be requested. If that's not possible, students will be provided with new or gently worn items to wear for the day. Being appropriately dressed is essential for safety, comfort, and readiness to learn.

CELL PHONES

Students must follow the Columbus City Schools cell phone policy. Cell phones must be powered off and kept in a backpack (please note: the school is not responsible for lost or stolen items) or turned in to the teacher to be stored in a locked, secure location.

Cell phones given to the teacher will be returned at the end of the school day, just before students leave their classroom.

MEDICINES AT SCHOOL

Only medications prescribed by a doctor may be administered at school. Parents must provide the school nurse with the original documentation before any medication can be given. A new medical form is required each school year. Students are not permitted to share or distribute any type of medication, including cough drops, to other students.

If your child has a medical condition that requires frequent restroom use, please notify the principal and/or your child's teacher.

BUILDING SECURITY

Your child's safety is our highest priority. Each day, you entrust us with their care, and we are committed to doing everything possible to keep them safe at all times.

ARRIVAL

All school doors are locked at 9:00 a.m. each morning. After this time, students must enter through the **front doors**. They will press the intercom button to contact the office for entry and will receive a late pass to give to their teacher.

To protect valuable instructional time, encourage student independence, and maintain safety, parents are not permitted to escort students to their classrooms. If it is necessary for a parent to enter the building, they must sign in at the office and obtain a visitor's pass.

DISMISSAL

During dismissal, parents should wait by the outside doors near the school parking lot. Student dismissal is at **3:30 p.m.**, and for safety and efficiency, early dismissals will not be permitted after **3:00 p.m.**

WALKERS

Students who walk to and from school should go directly between home and school. They must stay on sidewalks at all times and use only designated crosswalks when crossing the street.

CAR RIDERS

Parking is available along Huron Avenue, and parents may also use the Westgate Recreation Center parking lot at the start and end of the school day. For safety reasons and due to limited space, parents should not park in the school lot during **arrival** or **dismissal**. The school lot must remain available for staff parking. We appreciate your support in keeping our students safe.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Bus stop locations, route numbers, and pick-up/drop-off times will be available to families through the **Parent Portal**. Please help your child learn their bus number.

If you plan to pick up your child and do not want them to ride the bus, you must send a note or call the school before **3:00 p.m.** If we do not hear from you, your child will be placed on the bus. At times, students have told us they are not riding the bus, but the parent did not arrive, which creates confusion. Calling before 3:00 ensures we have enough time to deliver the message during our busy dismissal period.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping us ensure every child gets home safely.

PARENT PORTAL

Stay connected with your child's education by signing into the Columbus City Schools Parent Portal. The Portal is your secure place to find:

- Teacher contact information
- Grades, schedules, and daily attendance
- Missed assignments
- Bus stop, route, and time details
- Paperless applications for School Choice, Summer School, and Career Tech
- Pay school fees online
- Update your contact information, address, and emergency contacts
- Complete important annual forms

Keeping your contact information up to date ensures you receive important calls, texts, and emails from the school and district.

Instructions for setting up your Parent Portal account can be found **under the Students and Families tab** on the district website (**ccsoh.us**). For help, call the Parent Portal Assistance Line at **380-997-7245**.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

We recognize each child's birthday during our morning announcements. For the safety of all students, birthday parties and treats are not permitted unless approved in advance by the teacher or principal, due to allergy concerns.

FOOD AT SCHOOL

We are committed to providing a safe school environment that protects every student's well-being. Because some food allergies can be severe or life-threatening, **no outside food will be distributed** except through the school's breakfast and lunch programs.

On rare occasions, the principal may approve a school-wide celebration involving food, or teachers may request specific food items for a classroom or grade-level project. In these cases, parents will be notified in advance with details about the event and any food being served.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Please remember that Westgate is an **alternative school** with a focus on *Academic Excellence and Physical Fitness*. To ensure your child can fully participate in physical education classes, they must wear **appropriate, closed-toed shoes**(such as tennis shoes).

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Emergency medical cards are kept on file in the office. If there is new information, such as medical problems, change of address/telephone number, contact person or other important information, please call the office. In an emergency, the office will call both the squad and the parents. Current information is vital for the safety of your child. We want to be able to reach you in an emergency situation.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

School closing decisions are made by the Superintendent. Please listen to local radio or TV stations for closing announcements.

During inclement weather, when the temperature or wind chill is below **23°F**, or when snow, rain, or icy conditions exist, students will remain indoors for recess. If weather permits, students will go outside and should come prepared with clothing appropriate for cold conditions.

All students are expected to participate in outdoor recess unless a doctor provides written instructions otherwise. In the event of an early dismissal due to weather, please make sure your child knows your family's plan in advance.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is essential to your child's success. Academic progress depends greatly on being at school every day and on time. Students who attend daily gain the maximum benefit from instruction.

If your child is absent, parents must call the school to report the reason. A written note may also be sent to excuse absences for illness, family emergencies, or doctor appointments. Without communication from a parent or guardian, the absence will be marked unexcused.

Frequent absences or tardiness will prompt contact from the school social worker. Please note that **early dismissals and tardiness, even by 5 or 10 minutes, are recorded and reflected on attendance reports.**

All Westgate students are in session from 9:00am – 3:30pm. It is crucial that your child arrives on time every day.

Students arriving after 9:00 a.m. must enter through the front doors, be signed in by an adult, and will receive a tardy slip before going to breakfast. Please aim to have your child at school by **8:50 a.m.** so they are ready to begin learning promptly at 9:00.

Even a few minutes late can disrupt your child's day and affect their learning. Under Ohio Department of Education guidelines, attendance is measured in **minutes**, not just days, making every minute count.

CONTACTING THE SCHOOL

When calling the school, please let the secretary know your request so she can take an accurate message. Teachers are with students from **8:50 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** and will usually return calls during lunch or after school. Teachers are available from **3:30–3:45 p.m.** for return calls.

The school office is open **Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.**

Phone: **614-365-5971**

ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

In accordance with federal and state laws and district policy, Columbus City Schools will not tolerate harassment against any staff member or student. **At Westgate, everyone should feel safe and respected.** Harassment, such as mean jokes, name-calling, threats, or physical harm, based on someone's **race, gender, religion, age, disability, or who they are** is never allowed.

If you see or experience harassment, tell a teacher, principal, or another trusted adult right away. **We have zero tolerance for harassment, take every report seriously, and will take immediate action to stop it and protect everyone involved.**

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are an important part of Westgate's community. They may help tutor students, assist with classroom displays, support school events, work in the library, and more.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please contact the school at **614-365-5971**