

West Central Middle School

Home of the Trojans

Handbook

2023-2024

Mark Rockafellow

Principal

District Mission Statement:

To prepare all students for learning and living in a changing world.

Core Values

We believe in being honest and acting with integrity.

We believe our success relies upon us giving our best effort and being dependable.

We believe by working together we can achieve greatness.

West Central School Personnel Directory

SCHOOL BOARD

Mr. Justin Eich
Ms. Amanda Kayser
Ms. Lexy Klinkhammer
Ms. Kim Lanham
Ms. Alison McGillivray

ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Eric Knight
Superintendent
Ext. 1001

Mr. Mark Rockafellow
Middle School Principal
Ext. 1201

Ms. Krista Stuessi
Business Manager
Ext. 1002

Ms. Brandy Hernandez
Dean of Students
Ext. 1102

Ms. Andrea Johnson
Activities Director
Ext.

Ms. Naomi Mehnert
Human Resources
Ext. 1103

Ms. Caryl Nolz, Admin Asst.
Ext. 1000

Ms. Kathy Lutter
Middle School Administrative Assistant
1200

Ms. Michelle Becker
Director of Special Services
1017

Ms. McKayla Kerkaert
Student Support Counselor
Ext. 1202

MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS

Ms. Nicole Harmon	6 th Math, Social Studies
Ms. Anne Gaspar	6 th Reading, Spanish
Ms. Miranda Henglefeldt	6 th LA, Social Studies
Mr. Austin Lopour	6 th Science, Social Studies
Ms. Madison Anderson	7 th Reading, LA
Ms. Sheri Volbrecht	7 th Science, Health
Ms. Elizabeth Thompson	7 th LA, Social Studies
Mr. Matt Evans	7 th Math, Social Studies
Ms. Kati Pope	8 th LA, 7 th Soc.St., 6 th Soc. St.
Ms. Heather Trefz	8 th Math, Pre-Alg. & Alg
Mr. Joe Caffrey	8 th Science
Ms. Joan Peters	8 th Reading, 6 th LA
Ms. Corissa Sweeter	8 th Social Studies
Mr. Mike Ideker	6 th , 7 th , and 8 th PE
Mr. Danny Eye	6 th , 7 th & 8 th Inst. Music
Ms. Laurie Gratz	6 th , 7 th & 8 th Chorus
Ms. Breanna Welch	6 th , 7 th & 8 th Art
Ms. Jennifer Poulos	Family & Consumer Sci.
Mr. Dylan Kor	Resource/Spec. Education
Ms. Rebecca Jaspers	ESL, Expl.
Mr. Marty Petersen	Computer
Ms. Charity Ragland	Expl., Reading Interv.
Ofc. Neville Smith	SRO
Ms. DaNann Tirrel	Head Librarian

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS – HARTFORD

Ms. Andrea Spisak	Educational Assistant
Ms. Melanie Eichmann	Educational Assistant
Ms. Erin Deitsch	Educational Assistant

CUSTODIAL SERVICE

Mr. Jerry Steen	Middle School
Mr. George Sechser	Building & Grounds Maintenance

FOOD SERVICE

Tanya Parsons	Food Service Manager
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NURSE

Ms. Carly Boom

Attendance

Absence and Attendance

South Dakota Law gives the responsibility for regular attendance to students and parents.

- Students must be in attendance for all classes; school should be a number one priority.
 - Parental support of regular attendance is expected.
 - Attendance is a part of a student's permanent record.

Absence

If a student is absent, parents should call the school between 8:00 and 9:00 a.m. If no call is received by 9:00 a.m., the school will call the home and make every effort to contact a parent to verify the absence. A written excuse or an email is necessary unless the parent has made a phone call.

- A student shall not leave school during the school day without reporting to the principal's office and obtaining permission. Failure to report to the office shall result in being charged with an unexcused absence or truancy.

If a student becomes ill while in school, he/she shall report to the office. An attempt will be made to contact a parent or emergency contact person before allowing the student to go home if he/she lives within the city limits. All students will be asked to list one (1) additional person whom the school may call if contact cannot be made with either parent.

Students who arrive late or leave school early will be checked in or out at the actual time of their arrival or departure.

Students must be in school during their last two contact periods of the day to participate in or attend extracurricular events. (Example: For an evening activity, a student must be in school the afternoon of that day) Any arrangements need to be made prior to the absence. If a student leaves school ill during the last half of the school day, he/she will not be able to participate in or attend an evening activity.

Students must use their planner to record missed assignments for any absence they have with the exception of school-sponsored activities.

In case of an absence, the student shall be allowed two days to make up schoolwork for each day missed. Each day missed consecutively will be given one additional day for make-up. Completed work shall receive full credit. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the teacher for assignments and class activities missed. If a grading period falls within the allowed time to make up the work due to an absence, an incomplete may be recorded. Students may receive less credit for late make-up work. Teachers may extend deadlines for unusual circumstances.

Codes for Absences

- School officials determine if an absence is

- (1) exempt
- (2) excused
- (3) not excused

1. Exempt - does NOT count against student's attendance

Examples but not limited to:

- School-sponsored activities (school sports, school activities)
- Doctor/Dentist Appointments verified by a doctor's office note (only the time of appointment and short travel time is allowed--NOT all day unless the day is excused by doctor). Doctor's note must be given to the HS office within 2 days.
- Funerals/Religious Observations
- Court Appointment (during appointment time; short travel time)
- 1-2 College Visit -Senior year-must have a note signed by college official

2. Excused - does count against student's attendance

Examples but not limited to:

- Doctor/Dentist Appointment (no doctor's note)
- Illness - called in by parent
- Parent request (limited number available)
- Weather-related absences
- Additional college visit (note from college admissions)
- Out-of-school-suspension
- When absences (excused and/or not-excused) exceed 10 or more per semester year, student's absence is considered excessive and not excused.

3. NOT Excused - does count against student's attendance

- Not approved by the school admin and/or whether known or not known by parents.
- Any portion of the day counts as a violation.
- "Excessive Absence" when absences (excused and/or not-excused) exceed 10 or more per semester/year.

Examples but not limited to: skipping school/class, oversleeping, miss a class to work on homework in another class, leaving school (for any reason) without permission, and excessive absences.

Excessive Absences

Consequences for excessive absences include:

Number of Absences	Consequence
6 Absences or more(per semester)	A letter is sent home reminding parents of WC policy.
10 Absences or more(per semester)	Administrators will review a student's record and may withdraw a student from a class. Withdrawals from class result in no credit. Alternative pathways to credit will be offered. Any absence beyond 10 per semester is considered excessive. No absence beyond the 10th in a semester can be excused. At 10 unexcused absences per semester, a student is considered truant. The school resource officer may cite students or parents for truancy or refer the student to the State's Attorney's Office for further legal consequences.

Tardiness: A Little Late Is Too Late

Tardiness is defined as a student's appearance in an assigned area at any time after the designated starting time. If a student arrives late to school, he/she needs to report to the office for a late slip. Students who arrive at school or class more than fifteen minutes late, without a parent contacting the office, will be marked as absent unexcused.

Truancy

When a student does not attend school according to/required by law, he/she is considered truant. Truancy is any absence by a student under the age of 18 for part/all of school day(s) during which the school has NOT been notified of the legal cause of the absence by the parent/guardian of the absent student (also for absence school administration has not approved).

Once a student has accumulated a certain number of unexcused (excessive) absences, the student will be referred to law enforcement.

Building Hours

Regular building hours are 8:00 AM-4:00 PM. Middle School students SHOULD NOT ARRIVE AT SCHOOL BEFORE 8:05 AM.

Students must be at school at 8:30 AM. Classes will be held from 8:30 AM-3:30 PM. Any middle school students who arrive at school before 8:05 must go into the multi-purpose room until 8:05. At that time, Middle School students are expected to be in specifically designated areas for each grade level before school begins. Students who arrive between 8:05 and 8:30 are expected to be in supervised areas unless given permission to be in another area of the school.

No student should be in the school building or on school property after 3:50 PM unless they are under the supervision of the principal or a teacher. Students need to leave the school premises after 3:30 PM unless waiting for a bus or a ride home.

BUILDING PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

Student Planners

In order to help our middle school students learn organizational skills, each student will be issued a planner. Students are expected to have their planner with them at all times. Students should bring a planner and work home each night.

Books

Textbooks – Teachers will issue textbooks to students at the beginning of the school year. Textbooks become the responsibility of the students they are issued to. Should the textbook get lost or receive excessive damage, a fine will be levied against the student it was issued to. The teacher and the principal will determine fines. The fine will be determined by the actual cost of the replacement of the book.

Library Books – Library books may be borrowed by all West Central students. It is the responsibility of students to return library books back to the library on time and in good condition. Overdue fines will be issued to students who fail to return a library book in a timely fashion. The cost of replacement for a book will be issued to students who lost a library book or return it in a damaged state.

Busing

The bus driver is an official representative of the school and has full authority to discipline students on the bus. It is the duty of each student who rides the bus to do his/her part to keep the buses in good condition and to abide by the stated rules.

Violation of school bus rules could mean the cancellation of bus privileges on all buses. In the interest of safety, the following incidents should not occur:

- Lighting matches or smoking.
- Scuffling or fighting.
- Using obscene language.
- Disobeying the driver.
- Littering the bus.
- Moving around on the bus.
- Extending any part of their body or possessions out windows.
- Behaving in a loud or boisterous behavior.
- Throwing objects from windows.
- Tampering with a bus or equipment.
- Blocking the center aisle.

The buses will transport children only on the basis of home-to-school, and school-to-school, and school-to-home during the school day. Any exception to this rule will be made only by the action of the school board.

Bus Conduct Policy

A notice of misbehavior will be given to the student, which must be returned to the bus driver with the parent's signature. The first notice is a warning. Second notice of misbehavior the student may result in detention. Third notice of misbehavior by a student may lose bus privileges for 5 days. For the fourth notice of misbehavior, the student may be suspended from the bus for the remainder of the school year.

The loss of bus privilege on one bus means loss of privileges on all buses. If a student is suspended from riding the bus, parents must find an alternative method of getting the student to school at no expense to the district. A student's absence due to suspension of bus privileges is an unexcused absence.

Candy, & Sunflower Seeds

Pop, candy, snacks, or sunflower seeds are not allowed in the school building. However, they are permissible during special occasions such as class parties, birthday celebrations, etc. These

items are distractions in classrooms and can create a mess. Consequences will be issued according to the grade level of the student and may include detention, clean-up duties, etc. Individual coaches/advisors may make exceptions to this policy in regard to snacks and drinks needed by students following practices or activities.

Conduct at School-Sponsored Activities

Any student attending a West Central event (at home or away) is expected to follow guidelines regarding appropriate behavior according to the West Central Middle School Handbook. Violations may result in a conference with the parent/guardian and the student to address the problem and to choose an appropriate consequence which may include suspensions from future activities.

Constitutionally Protected Prayer

West Central Middle School has no policy that prevents, or otherwise denies participation in constitutionally protected prayer in public school as set forth in the guidance of Section 9524 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

Adopted 3/24/03

West Central School District

Curricular

Art

Art classes are offered to all middle school students to help students develop an appreciation of artistic production and perception along with the development of creativity, health attitudes, and an opportunity to learn leisure time activities. Middle School students are involved in art classes during exploratory classes that are 9 weeks in length.

Guidance Program

The middle school guidance program is designed to help students with school and personal problems, social concerns, and to help students plan for future education and training. Our school counselor is a professionally trained specialist with a Masters's degree and a strong background in the behavioral sciences and human relations. The counselor assists students in the development of those lifelong skills necessary for optimum character development, coping with life's challenges, and building cohesive relationships.

Music Classes

Sixth-grade students are required to participate in instrumental or vocal music. Sixth-grade students may choose to participate in both activities or only one activity. Students in grades seven and eight may choose to participate in music. They may also choose to participate in either instrumental or vocal music or both.

All students enrolled in music are expected to participate in two concerts per year as part of the curricular music program. Students

may also choose to be a part of the extra-curricular music program that includes our middle school Jazz Band and Drumline.

Information specific to these activities will be provided by the music instructors.

Physical Education/Health

Physical education is taught at all levels to help promote physical fitness and healthy habits throughout life. Students participate in physical education/health 2 or 3 periods a week. Students with physical limitations are accommodated with an appropriate level of activity. Clean athletic shoes are required at all levels for physical education. Students in grades 7 and 8 are expected to bring a change of clothes for PE classes.

Special Education

Special Education services are provided for eligible children birth through twenty-one years of age in accordance with the child's individual education plan (IEP). Children are identified through a referral and evaluation process and are educated in the general education curriculum and classrooms to the maximum extent possible.

Each school in the district has resource classrooms that are staffed with certified special education teachers and educational assistants. Support services, such as speech/language therapy, occupational and physical therapy, and adapted physical education are also provided at each school in accordance with the child's individual education plan. Additional information and guidelines can be found in the Educational Comprehensive Plan or by contacting the Director of Special Services at 528-3210.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

Staff and students share responsibility for maintaining a climate in which education can be pursued. What is best for the individual must be balanced with what is more desirable for the entire school population. The following procedures shall be followed in regard to misconduct at school. The Board extends to all its (school) employees, certified and noncertified, the authority to enforce policy and regulations governing student behavior. Students will comply with the directions given them by staff members.

The following principles will be observed by the school staff in maintaining student control and discipline in the schools

1. It is believed that most individuals modify behavior faster under praise than under blame. Therefore, the general approach to discipline will be a positive one. This will include attempting to identify the social, emotional, and academic problems that underlie a student's poor attitude or misconduct and striving to meet social, emotional, and academic needs.
2. Every individual needs to feel worthy and accepted as a person. In criticizing a student for conduct or attitude and in taking disciplinary action, teachers and other staff

members will endeavor to show that it is behavior that is unacceptable, not the student.

3. The best discipline is self-discipline. Modes of student control over classroom management will offer students the freedom to acquire self-control and self-discipline. This freedom will be extended in keeping with the students' maturity.

Within the above guidelines and specific policies regulating conduct and disciplinary action, the following procedure shall be followed:

1. Each teacher shall be responsible for logging behavioral violations that occur in their area of supervision.
2. If behavioral violations continue to reoccur, the teacher shall contact parents by phone or personal conference (after the third violation).
3. Should misconduct continue after parental contact, a meeting will be set up with the principal, teacher, parent, and student to determine the course of action to be taken.
4. Continued misconduct could lead to in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or referral to the Board of Education for expulsion.

The following is a list of examples and definitions of possible violations of school rules. The listing is not to be considered all-inclusive as we are not able to strictly define all behavior that may be inappropriate for the school setting.

At the end of the student handbook, a discipline matrix may be found. It includes suggested penalties for students who violate school rules. The principal has the authority to deviate from the matrix if it is determined that extenuating circumstances exist. The principal also has the authority to determine if a student is moved forward on the discipline matrix.

Bullying

Bullying is defined as any written or verbal expression, physical act or gesture, or a pattern thereof, which is intended to cause distress upon one or more students in the school environment. For purposes of this policy, the school environment includes school buildings, grounds, vehicles, bus stops, and all school-sponsored activities and events.

Bullying can include the use of electronic devices. This kind of bullying often-times begins in times outside the school day, but for those instances that either occur during the school day or have a disruptive effect during the school day, school officials will take action to remedy the situation.

A student who engages in any act of bullying is subject to appropriate disciplinary action including suspension, expulsion, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities. The severity and pattern, if any, of the bullying behavior shall be taken into consideration when disciplinary decisions are made.

Cheating

A student is considered to be cheating if he/she has acted dishonestly in regard to a homework assignment, quiz, or test. Copying, using "crib notes", plagiarizing, etc. will be considered examples of cheating and a violation will be issued. See Flowchart for consequences.

Dangerous and Nuisance Items

Dangerous Items – Any object or weapon that could endanger a student's well-being will be considered dangerous. Examples may include pocket knives, sharp objects, guns, fireworks, cigarette lighters, etc. Parents and local law enforcement will be contacted for any student in violation of this policy. Consequences for violators will be subject to suspension (in or out of school) or referral to the Board of Education for expulsion. Because it is our goal of keeping our school violence-free, anything that resembles a dangerous item, although artificial in means, (toy guns, fake knives, etc.) may result in a consequence under "dangerous item".

Nuisance Items – Objects brought to school which create a disturbance or unnecessary mess on school property will be considered a nuisance item. Examples may include water balloons, confetti, computerized games, pagers, etc. Students violating this policy will be subject to detention or suspension (in or out of school).

Deception/Intentionally Misinforming

Students are expected to be honest in every aspect. Trying to deceive or intentionally misinform a staff member about anything regarding school will result in a deception/intentionally misinforming violation.

Detention

Detentions will be held daily from 3:35 PM – 4:05 PM (except on days of emergency dismissals). If the student arrives at detention late, the missed time will be made up.

Notification of a rescheduling of detention must be made **BEFORE** noon of the day of the assigned detention with a note or phone call from a parent/guardian. Rescheduling will only be allowed with a note or phone call from a parent/guardian.

Drinking/Drugs

No student shall possess, use, sell, or dispense any over the counter medication, controlled or mind-altering substance, or drug paraphernalia including, but not limited to, glue for inhaling,

marijuana, drugs, alcoholic liquor, wine, beer, etc., at a school activity or on school property, which includes buildings, grounds, parking lots, and school buses. Any student who reports to school or an activity with evidence of having used the above substances shall be subject to disciplinary action. Violation may result in referral to a law enforcement agency.

Because it is our goal to keep our school drug-free, anything that resembles a drug (although artificial in means) that a student shall possess, use, sell, or dispense may result in a consequence under “drinking/drugs policy”.

Throughout the school year, West Central will conduct unannounced locker searches using a trained drug dog to search for any illegal drugs. If the dog detects the scent of a drug, the locker, bag, coat, etc... will be searched. If an illegal substance is found, parents will be informed and law enforcement contacted. If a scent is detected, but no substance found, parents will be notified.

Due Process

Students are guaranteed due process procedures under the law and West Central does provide a process of appeal on judgments made by those in authority. Grievances should be filed through the proper channels according to the board policy “JFH” in the West Central Policy Manual, which can be found in the principal’s office. The following steps are used to ensure compliance with state codified laws:

Adequate notice of the charges.

Reasonable opportunity to prepare for and meet the charges.

An orderly hearing adapted to the nature and circumstances of the situation, and

A fair and impartial decision.

Expulsion

Shall mean denial of a student to participate in any instructional and/or school activity for a period of time as determined by the school board.

Insubordination, Physical or Verbal Aggression, and Fighting

The West Central School District wishes to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from violent words and actions. Any form of violence is strictly prohibited.

Insubordination – Refers to an event where a student refuses to obey, fails to follow instructions or directions of a staff member, becomes defiant, shows rebelliousness.

Physical or Verbal Aggression – Use of force, coercion, threats, intimidation, or similar conduct from students toward another person that constitutes an interference with school purposes. When school officials become aware of threatening language, the principal will determine the seriousness of the threat. If it is determined that there is a threat of serious bodily injury to students

or staff, the offense may be considered “class five” on the discipline matrix.

Fighting – Refers to physical violence between 2 or more students in an angry or quarrelsome manner with the intent to harm, or to disrupt the process of education while on school property or at a school function.

Forgery

Students committing forgery involving any type of passes and/or parental excuse notes will be subject to having a written report placed in their cumulative file and a penalty which may include suspension. Parents will be notified in all instances.

Harassment Policy

It is the policy of the West Central School District to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from religious, racial, sexual, and annoying harassment. The West Central Middle School prohibits any form of harassment.

Sexual Harassment – consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment is behavior or words that:

- Are directed at a person because of his/her sex.
- Are unwanted, uninvited, and unwelcome.
- Cause a person to feel uncomfortable or offended.
- Create an environment that makes learning difficult.
- May be repeated or be very offensive on a one-time basis.

Examples include, but are not limited to discussing sexual activities, unnecessary touching, commenting on physical attributes, displaying sexually suggestive pictures, using demeaning or inappropriate terms (such as ‘babe’ or ‘slut’), using inappropriate gestures, using crude or offensive language, etc.

Harassment as “Annoying Persistently”

This type of harassment relates to excessive teasing, joking, poking, etc. that is unwanted and unwelcome. It may relate to a student’s academic achievement, athletic or club participation, social status, choice of clothing, etc. This harassment has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment. It may be received in the form of words (verbal or written), gestures, or actions.

Harassment-Racial or Religious

This kind of harassment refers to words or actions directed at someone based on their race or religion. It has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment. It may be received in the form of verbal or written words and slurs, gestures, or actions.

Physical or Verbal Aggression Toward West Central Staff

A student who interferes with the educational climate by willfully displaying verbal or physical aggression to a staff member or to their personal property may be subject to suspension, expulsion, and/or referral to law enforcement.

Profanity

West Central expects students to use language that is not offensive at all times. Besides the obvious profane words, there are words that are “gray” and will be considered offensive and may result in a profanity violation. Examples are words detrimental to groups of people.

Recording Devices - Limitations

Students are NOT allowed to record or photograph anyone in school without their permission. Teacher or admin permission is required to photograph or record during class or in school. Reminder: it is illegal to record anyone in a locker room or restroom.

Smoking

Use and/or Possession of any tobacco products and/or smoking materials by a student on or in any school property, including buildings, grounds, parking lot, and buses, is prohibited.

Stealing

Stealing is defined as theft of personal or school property while at school or school-related activities. Students who are involved in theft will be issued a “theft violation”. To avoid loss of personal property students are encouraged to do the following:

Use common sense and do not leave purses and other personal belongings in classrooms and the gym. Do not bring unnecessary amounts of money to school.

Check valuable items into the office if they must be brought to school on any given day.

Accept responsibility for belongings and valuables used each day in the classroom or on school activities.

Mark gym uniforms, tennis shoes, and all other personal equipment or items.

Student Relationships

Students are to refrain from the use of excessive affection in the hallways, classrooms, on school property, or at a school activity. Examples include kissing, excessive hugging, hand-holding, touching inappropriate areas, etc.

Suspension

Shall mean temporary denial to a student to participate in any instructional and/or school activity for a period of time. A school principal shall have the authority to invoke a short or long-term suspension.

Short-term suspension – shall mean a suspension for a period of five (5) school days or less.

Long-term suspension – shall mean a suspension for a period of up to ten days, at the discretion of the Administration.

Work completed during a suspension will be given full credit if it is completed upon return to regular classes. Any student receiving out-of-school suspension may have to make up the day(s) after school is dismissed for the summer.

Vandalism

West Central students are expected to respect the property of the public and private individuals. Vandalism is considered the willful or malicious destruction or defacement of public or private property.

Dress Code

In the interests of cleanliness, decency, and good taste, West Central reserves the right to place restrictions on a student’s dress and grooming as necessary when they create a danger to the student’s health and safety, interfere with the educational process, or cause a disruption in school. The following are some guidelines:

- No hats or caps will be worn in the school buildings during the school day.
- Winter coats and jackets may not be worn during the school day. Students must leave coats/jackets in their locker during school hours.
- No apparel or articles that promote or suggest alcohol, tobacco products, or drugs are allowed in school. Apparel or articles containing messages, lettering, markings, or pictures that convey profane or offensive meanings or may relate to sex (including t-shirts with messages regarding sexual symbolism or innuendo, for example, “hooters t-shirts” or sexually themed jokes), assault weapons, or violent themes, race, gangs, or cults will not be tolerated if worn in school.
- All pants, shorts, skirts, etc. must be worn so that the top rim of the garment sits above the hip bone. Shorts and skirts should be worn in good taste and not become disruptive to the educational environment. All shorts and skirts must extend past the fingertips when the student’s arms are relaxed on their side.
- Tops and bottoms must conceal all undergarments and tops must cover so midriffs are not showing.
- Pocket chains hanging from pants may not be worn.
- Footwear is to be worn in the buildings at all times, no slippers.

School staff may prohibit other forms of dress that are not appropriate. Students who do not comply with the dress code may

be asked to change or cover-up. Future violations may result in detentions, suspensions, or Saturday School.

Early Dismissals Inservice

There will be early dismissals due to afternoon teacher in-services. School will dismiss at 1:30 PM on these days. Buses will run at 1:30 PM on these days as well. After-school activities will follow regular schedules. Early dismissal dates are listed in the West Central Newsletter.

Excursions/Field Trips

Excursions or field trips may be planned by teachers during the school day as the planned culmination of a class or an enrichment to a subject or topic. Students are expected to comply with district busing rules when school vehicles are used and to leave and return on school vehicles provided. Students on field trips are expected to behave in an orderly manner. Permission slips signed by parents/guardians are necessary for students to be able to go on the field trip. The privilege of attending a field trip may be restricted by the teacher and/or principal due to disciplinary problems at school or lack of academic effort.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Students are encouraged to participate in a host of extra-curricular activities throughout their school experience. Destination Imagination (DI) is open to students of all ages. In grades 7-8, students may participate in basketball, football, gymnastics, volleyball, cheerleading, oral interp, drama, wrestling, student council, quiz bowl, improv, golf, track, and cross-country throughout the school year. Eligibility for these activities is based on academic performance (see Eligibility Requirements). In grade 6, students are able to participate in oral interp, student council, drama, quiz bowl, and may audition to be part of the improv troupe.

Family Night

In keeping with Board Policy, there are to be no school activities scheduled on Wednesday evening after 6:00 p.m. and no formal practices or rehearsals will be regularly scheduled on Sundays or other legal holidays. Any deviation from this standard procedure must be cleared through the principal's office. Teachers will also make an attempt to keep homework assignments to a minimum on Wednesday nights.

Grading Policy

The grading system will evaluate and record student progress. Students in grades 6-8 will receive the following marks or grades:
A=Mastery
B=Approaching Mastery
C=Beginning
D=Developing
I=Insufficient Evidence
M=Missing/No Attempt at Mastery

An 'I' grade will be given to a student if he/she has not satisfactorily completed his/her work

Health Policies

Some Infectious Diseases Affecting School Attendance

Fever – Any child noted to have a fever above 100.4 degrees during the school day, will be sent home due to contagiousness. Parents will be expected to pick up their child as soon as possible. Children should be fever-free (without fever-reducing medication) for 24 hours before returning to school. A child may also be sent home by the school nurse or office staff, regardless of fever, if exhibited symptomatology deems this action appropriate.

Common Cold - Children with fevers above 100.4 degrees severe coughs, severe nasal drainage, or fatigue making them unable to complete the normal classroom tasks, should not attend school until symptoms have resolved.

Influenza – This is a respiratory disease with symptoms of sudden onset of fever, headache, chills, muscle aches and pains, sore throat, cough, fatigue, stomach ache, and occasional vomiting and diarrhea. The child is contagious one day before symptoms start, and for 5-7 days after onset of symptoms. The child will be excluded from school for at least 5 days and until fever and behavior changes are no longer present.

Chicken Pox - Rash begins as red bumps that develop into blisters. The blisters then dry and form a scab. Cases must be excluded from school until all scabs are dry and there has been no new pox for 2 days (this is usually 5-6 days).

Covid-19 - Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) is a newly identified (2019) pathogen. Common symptoms: fever, chills, headache, sore throat, smell and taste disorders, shortness of breath, and cough. Stay home if symptoms are severe. **ASAP, report symptoms to school personnel and follow the established "screening" process.** Students must follow quarantine and safety guidelines. Potential safety precautions: frequent hand washing, wear face-covering, social distance (6 ft), and cover mouth when coughing.

Impetigo - A disease characterized by pustules (crusted sores with oozing) appearing on the face, neck, and hands - occasionally on the body. Exclude from school as long as lesions are draining and until treated with an appropriate topical antibiotic for at least 24 hours.

Pink Eye - Redness of the eye together with itching are present. The most obvious symptom is a discharge of pus. Once on antibiotic eye drops, children may return to school the next day.

Ringworm - Ringworm usually begins with a small red scaly patch and gradually increases in size. The infected area should be covered when the child is in school. Inspection of all contacts should be made.

Strep Throat, Scarlet Fever, Scarletina, Scarlet Rash- Children having strep infections may return to school 24 hours after treatment is initiated.

Shingles (Herpes zoster) - shingles is the reactivation of the chickenpox virus already present in the body, which is characterized by a painful skin rash with blisters, typically in a limited area on one side of the body, often in a stripe. No exclusion is necessary if lesions can be covered. If lesions cannot be covered, exclude until rash or lesions have crusted over.

Diarrheal Disease - exclude while symptomatic only if a person is unable to practice independent hygiene.

Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) and other antibiotic-resistant bacteria infections - exclude only if confirmed MRSA or other antibiotic-resistant bacteria is present from a wound in which drainage is occurring and cannot be covered and contained.

Head Lice

Anyone can get lice. Head lice are found on the hair of the head, especially behind the ears and at the nape of the neck. They attach each egg (nit) to a hair shaft with a gluey substance. Head lice are communicable by direct contact and sharing personal items such as combs, brushes, or towels. Symptoms include itching, the presence of lice or nits, or a secondary infection. Exclude child from school if live lice are present. The student may attend if nits are present but will be sent home if lice are present. All contacts should be inspected.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION POLICY

HANDLING, STORAGE, AND DISPOSAL

The parent/guardian must deliver the medication to the school and to a qualified staff member. Medication must be in the original and properly labeled container.

- All medication; prescription and non-prescription, must be in the ORIGINAL bottle. For prescription medications, please ask your pharmacist for a duplicate bottle, so one can be kept at home and one at school. Both bottles should contain the name and phone number of the pharmacy, the student's name, the physician's name, the medication name, and instructions with dosage for administration.
- School personnel receiving the medication should document the quantity of medication delivered. The parent verifies the quantity by his/her signature, if needed designated school personnel may be the second verifying signature.
- In extenuating circumstances, the medication may be delivered by another person; provided, that school personnel are notified in advance by the parent or guardian of the arrangement and the quantity of medication being delivered to the school.

All medications to be supervised by school personnel should be kept in a securely locked cabinet.

Access to stored medications should be limited to persons authorized to supervise medications. Access to keys and

knowledge of the location of keys should be restricted to the maximum extent possible.

Parents/Guardians may retrieve the medication from the school personnel at any time.

Parents/Guardians are responsible to pick up unused medication when a student is finished or within one week of the last day of school. If medication is not picked up within one week after school is out, it will be destroyed.

DOCUMENTATION AND RECORD-KEEPING

Each school that assists students with the self-administration of medications should maintain a medication record for each student.

- At a minimum, the record should include a daily log and parental authorization to assist with the self-administration form.
- The daily log should contain:
 - the dose or amount of medication taken.
 - the date and time that medication was taken, or omitted, including the reason for the omission.
 - the full signature of the school personnel assisting with self-administration. If the medication is taken more than once in a school day, the personnel assisting the student may initial the record, subsequent to signing a full signature.
- All documentation should be recorded in ink and should not be altered.
- The completed medication record and records pertinent to self-administration are filed in the student's cumulative records.

REPORTING AND DOCUMENTATION OF MEDICATION RECORDS

A medication error includes any failure for a particular student to take medication as noted on the parent/guardian authorization form.

This includes:

- failure to take the correct medication;
- within the appropriate time frames;
- in the correct dosage;
- to the correct student;
- by the correct route.

In the event of a medication error, school personnel should notify the parent or guardian immediately and should document the effort to reach the parent or guardian. The parent or guardian should be responsible for contacting the physician, if necessary.

Medication errors should be documented by school personnel on the medication error report. These reports should be maintained in a designated location or in the student's health record.

School personnel should review reports of medication errors and take necessary steps to ensure appropriate medication administration in the future.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

Self Administration

A student may be responsible for taking his/her own oral medication without assistance from school personnel. Prior to each school year and upon parent request, a *Request and Authorization for Medication in School* form must be completed by the parent choosing option II. If the medication is not a prescription or is not taken for an ongoing condition a physician's signature is not required. With option II the student may have one day's dosage in his/her possession each school day. The medication is to be kept in the original container.

Staff Administration

The *Request and Authorization for Medication in School* form should be completed by a parent/guardian. This form is required for all medications, whether prescription or over-the-counter, including cough drops and homeopathic medications. If the medication to be given is a prescription medication, the form must also be completed by a physician. This includes long-term medication, such as ADHD medications, and short-term medication, such as antibiotics. Homeopathic medications will also require a physician order and signature prior to administration. Over-the-counter medications may be administered by a qualified staff member but will need to be supplied by the parent/guardian and a *Request and Authorization for Medication in School* form.

Prescription and over-the-counter medications will be given to students as per the written instructions on the Request and Authorization for Medication in School form by the school nurse or designated personnel.

OUT OF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

In the event of a school-sponsored field trip, the student's medication will be sent with designated personnel in the amount to be administered during the activity unless otherwise specified by a parent/guardian, this includes rescue inhalers and EpiPens.

Approved 5-12-97

Revised 6-11-12

Revised 5-9-16

Homework & Extended Learning Time

Homework will vary with the grade level, teacher, and subject involved. In middle school, there will be times when students are required to complete assignments at home. Assignments are expected to be completed neatly and fully by the designated due date. Late work may result in a student receiving less credit.

Completion of assignments is crucial to a student's success at school. Students with incomplete homework will be required to sign up for Extended Learning Time. If the assignment is completed and at a high-quality level prior to the end of the day,

the student will not be required to attend ELT. Students who do not complete high-quality assignments by the end of the day will be required to inform parents and attend ELT from 3:35-4:00 on the day the assignment is late.

Exceptions from the after-school extended learning time may be granted by the principal if it is determined that an alternative will serve the needs of the student in completing the homework. Exceptions from the extended learning period **WILL NOT BE MADE** for a student involved in extracurricular practices. If such an absence occurs, the coach/supervisor of the activity will be immediately notified and the student will either be returned to ELT or **will not** participate in that activity for the night. If an exception is granted or a student does not stay for the ELT, the student may be required to attend a morning session with the teacher in whose class the late assignment occurred, or attend a session during lunch in which the student is expected to work on the incomplete homework.

Grade level teams will discuss, design, and implement a plan for students who consistently have incomplete homework. Students will be referred to the Teacher Assistance Team if they do not meet grade-level team plan expectations. The plan may include, but is not limited to, checking in with an advisor (or another teacher) before or after school, positive incentives, staying after school on designated days to work on homework, increased communication with parents or other team-generated solutions. Teams will track student success and adjust plans as necessary.

Injuries

Students are encouraged to play safely and avoid injuries, but if injured the student should report injuries, no matter how small, to the teacher in charge or to the office. This is especially important for insurance reports. An accident report form will be completed for an injury that requires medical attention.

Insurance

Student accident insurance is available to all students. This is a service to the students. Application forms are sent out in the fall of the year. The school does not carry accident insurance.

Lockers

Each middle school student in grades 6-8 will be assigned a locker. Students will use this locker for the storage of items needed in school. The locker itself remains the property of the West Central School District. **Students have no expectation of privacy with respect to what is in the locker. West Central School District officials may open and search any locker, at any time, for any reason.** The student is fully responsible for the locker issued to them. Any damage to the exterior, interior or lock will be the responsibility of the student who was issued that locker. Students may personalize their lockers but must keep all personal items on

the inside of the locker. Pictures and other personal items may not be secured to the locker with tape of any kind. Students are encouraged to use magnets or a removable putty to affix these items to the locker without causing damage to the paint. Lockers are to be kept in a neat, orderly condition at all times. Absolutely **NO** food is to be kept in the lockers except for sack lunches or exceptions allowed by coaches and/or advisors regarding snacks and drinks needed following practice or activities. Students will be permitted to return to their lockers during the school day at times specified by middle school teachers. Students are encouraged to not keep valuable items in their locker and to keep their combination number confidential so unwanted entries will be avoided. Students invading other student's lockers could be charged with theft. Any bending of the lock that results in a student not having to use the combination (allows the student to lift up on lock and locker comes open) often results in breakage of the lock. Such occurrences may result in detention or repair costs of the lock being charged to the student.

Lost and Found

A lost and found box will be maintained in the school in a designated area. Lost articles should be reported and found articles turned into the office. Items will be discarded at the end of each month.

Lunch and Lunchroom Policies

A hot lunch program is offered for all West Central Students. Students will not be permitted to leave school for lunch unless accompanied by a parent or guardian. Lunch accounts are computerized and students are issued an ID number. It is preferred that students bring money for lunch accounts for one month at a time. Lunch prices are set by the school board each year.

Students may choose from one of three alternatives:

Eat school lunch.

Eat a sack lunch from home. No soft drinks are permitted at lunchtime.

Do not eat. However, a signed note from the parent must be presented to the principal explaining the reason for not eating lunch.

Students who bring lunch may only bring their lunch for themselves. Students may not bring lunch "to pass" for multiple students.

We encourage parents to eat lunch with their children. We believe that this can be a good experience for both parents and students. We ask parents to keep in mind that soda pop is not allowed in our lunchroom. We also ask that parents only bring lunch for their own children. Please do not bring any food "to pass".

It is a privilege for students to be able to eat at school. The lunchroom should be a pleasant place to eat but certain rules must be followed. Students are expected to comply with all lunchroom rules. Continuous violations of rules result in parental contact and suspension from the lunchroom.

Middle School Activities

Middle School activities for students in grades 6-8 will be scheduled throughout the year. Admission will vary to cover the costs of the activity. Students participating in Middle School activities will follow the West Central Activities Code of Conduct. Eligibility will be determined on a weekly basis.

Students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner and in accordance with the Middle School Handbook at any Middle School activity.

Any student who comes to the activity and leaves will not be readmitted. Only West Central Middle School students are permitted to attend these activities.

Eligibility Rules

Middle school students who participate in any school-sponsored extracurricular activities must meet the requirements and training regulations. Students must have no missing work, have no in-progress or quarter grade of 'I', and have two or fewer behavior referrals in a week.

Physicals

Athletic physicals are required as stipulated in Article 1, Section 11 of S.D. High School Activities Association constitution and By-Laws: "Doctors Health Statement". Each school year every student before being allowed to participate in inter-school athletics shall be certified as to the adequacy of his/her health for such participation, by a duly licensed doctor of medicine or a duly licensed four-year college-trained osteopath, on official blanks furnished by the Executive Secretary. The date of such required health certification shall be one of the entries on the annual report of student athletic participation made to the Executive Secretary by each member's school. **Students are not eligible to participate in athletic practices or games if the student does not have on file with the athletic director, a physical exam signed by a physician and a parent's permission form.**

The student shall be responsible for the cost of his/her physical.

Student Due Process Policy

In the event that it becomes necessary to consider action for an alleged violation of a conduct rule:

The supervisor has an obligation to the student to discuss the alleged violation and to allow the student to explain his/her position.

If further action becomes necessary, the supervisor shall file a written charge with the building principal and activity coordinator, with copies given to the student and parents. At the time the student is notified in writing of the alleged violation, the supervisor shall also inform the student of the district's due process procedure.

Student Due Process Procedures

In the event that the student or parent requests a hearing, the supervisor or building principal shall:

Designate the time, date, and place for the hearing being reasonable for both parties.

Inform the student and parent that the student will be suspended from participating or practicing in the activity until the hearing has been held.

Notify all concerned parties including the student, parent, activity coordinator, and supervisor of the time, date, and place of the hearing.

The hearing shall be conducted so that the accused student and parent will have an opportunity to review the alleged violations of policy and ask questions appropriate to the situation. The same courtesy will be extended to the supervisor and building principal.

The disposition of the alleged violation will be made by the activities coordinator and building principal.

A decision adverse to the student may be appealed in the following manner:

To the superintendent

To the West Central school board

To a court of law

Comments on the Rules

The West Central School District retains active membership in the South Dakota High School Activities Association and in doing so approves and abides by the constitution and by-laws which are on file with the superintendent, high school principal, and activities coordinator.

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The West Central School District #49-7 does not discriminate in its employment policies and practices, or in its educational programs (including career and technical education programs) on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, age, sex, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, or other human differences.

Title VI (discrimination based on national origin/race) Special Services Director

Title IX (discrimination based on gender) Activities Director
Section 504 (discrimination based on disability) Special Services Director

Both Special Services and Activities Director can be reached at:

West Central School District
705 E. 2nd St.
Hartford, SD 57033
605-528-3217

Or

Kansas City Office
U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
8930 Ward Parkway, Suite 2037
Kansas City, MO 64114-3302
Phone: 816-268-0550
Fax: 816-823-1404; TDD: 877-521-2172
E-mail: OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

1. The District will work with the parents/guardians of a student to determine what is best for the student who is being considered for retention. The student will be promoted if they are passing the core courses, unless the parent and the administration, because of physical, mental, or social conditions, want the child retained.
2. If professional educators recognize early in the child's school career that the child's mental or physical development will progress at a rate that would be best served by retention, the child should be retained in the earliest possible grade level. The educators in these instances should share their concerns with the building principal.
3. A child should be passed or retained on the basis of their overall grades in core courses. Reading should be of specific focus, as it has shown to be a scientifically effective measure of student achievement in all other course content.
4. Students in grades 3-8 are expected to pass 80% of the core subjects during the school year and maintain a level of proficiency as indicated on state-approved assessments before they are automatically promoted to the next grade. If students are not proficient on state assessments but are passing at least four of the five core courses, the student shall be referred through the Teacher Assistance Team process to develop instructional goals for the student. If any student is passing fewer than four of the defined five core courses, they will be considered for retention.
5. In the event that a child is being considered for retention, the teaching team, the building principal, the parent/guardian of the student, and any other educational staff relevant to the child's instructional program will meet in a retention conference for that child.

6. The District administration will make every reasonable effort to include the parents/guardians in the discussion of their child's retention. The District reserves the right to retain any child, including in the event that a parent/guardian does not agree with the District's decision, or wishes not to participate in a retention conference.
7. Students who do not meet the guidelines to be promoted should be promoted only if the District believes that promotion is in the best interest of the student and the school. Any retention decision should be determined in the retention conference, and with the approval of the superintendent. The following items are examples of when a student may be promoted even though they did not pass 80% of the core courses:
 - a. A student has been retained one or two times previous to the year in consideration for retention.
 - b. Physically and socially, he or she is much more mature than the other students in the grade.
 - c. The professional educational staff do not believe an additional year in the current grade would provide academic benefit.

PUBLIC NOTICE OF THE INTENT OF WEST CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT #49-7 TO RELEASE PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION REGARDING STUDENTS OR FORMER STUDENTS

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

West Central School District designates the following personally identifiable information regarding its students as Directory Information:

- Name
- Address and phone number
- Date of birth
- School attending
- Dates of attendance activities
- Parents or guardians of the student
- Participation in school-recognized activities
- Weight, height, age, and grade of members of an athletic team
- Awards received
- Individual and group photographs pertaining to school activities
- Similar information that denotes accomplishment or achievement.

RIGHT OF PARENT, GUARDIAN, OR STUDENT TO PROHIBIT RELEASE OF INFORMATION

A parent, guardian, or student over 18 years of age may refuse to permit the release of any of the Directory Information by notifying the Principal of the student's school in writing which of the above Directory Information may not be released in respect to the particular student. Such notification may be made at any time.

STUDENT RECORDS POLICY

The Board of Education has adopted an educational records policy and, in implementing the release of information, that policy shall be considered.

Pupil Progress Reports

Access to learner progress will be available daily using online resources. Reports may be sent to parents or guardians without access to online resources. The purpose of the progress report is to keep parents informed of their child's school performance. Reports will include information relative to learner progress toward proficiency and behavior. Parents will be expected to work closely with the teachers and the school so that the child's deficient area(s) improve.

Saturday School

Students in middle school may be given a Saturday School assignment for various behavioral violations. Saturday school will meet from 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM each Saturday at the high school or middle school (students will be notified of the location before Saturday School). Students will be expected to come to Saturday School on the assigned date unless parents/guardians request the date to be changed due to a weekend conflict. The change must be approved by an administrator no later than by noon on Friday or the last school day before the assigned Saturday School. Failure of the student's family to obtain a change in the date will result in a violation of skipping Saturday School. Students must arrive on time for Saturday School. All established rules for Saturday School must be followed by the student or he/she will be asked to leave and will be reassigned for the next two Saturday Schools. Saturday School will take precedence over all extra-curricular activities.

School Closing

In the event of severe inclement weather or mechanical breakdown, school may be closed or starting time delayed. The same conditions may also necessitate early dismissal. School closing, delayed starting time, or early dismissal will be announced by a school reach phone call to parents/guardians and over the following TV and radio stations: KSFY, KDLT, KELO TV, and KSOO, WSN/KRRO, KXRB/KKLS/KIKN, KELO radio. If no report is heard it can be assumed that school will be in session. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL IF NO REPORT IS HEARD OVER THE RADIO OR TV STATIONS.

STUDENT'S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Supply List

It is the Student's right to:

- Attend school free of charge.
- Attend school until age 21 or graduation from high school at public expense including free textbooks and instructional materials.
- Attend school and participate in school activities at no expense even though married or pregnant.
- Expect that the school will be a safe place for all students to gain an education.
- Expect that the school will provide an educational program that meets his or her special needs, abilities, and talents and also meets or exceeds standards established for all schools by the state legislature and the South Dakota Board of Education.
- Exercise freedom of speech, press, and expression of views. This freedom shall not interfere with the school's learning and working environment.
- Exercise freedom of assembly.
- Receive due process and equal protection of the laws.
- Dress in such a way as to express individual personality.
- Establish and participate in student government.
- Make recommendations regarding the operation of the school.

It is the Student's Responsibility to:

- Attend school daily, except when ill, and to be on time for all classes. Protect and show respect for public property.
- Attend school regularly and pay only costs that are of a personal nature or for participation in voluntary activities.
- Obey restrictions on students in accordance with board rules and regulations.
- Be aware of all rules and regulations for student behavior and act in accordance with them.
- Participate in and take advantage of educational opportunities provided by the school.
- Respect human dignity and the worth of all other individuals.
- Refrain from libel, slanderous remarks, and written expression.
- Refrain from disobedience, misconduct, or behavior that disrupts the educational process.
- Respect the reasonable exercise of authority by school administrators and teachers in maintaining discipline in the schools and at school-sponsored activities.
- Dress and appear so as to meet fair standards of propriety, safety, health, and good taste.
- Take an active part in student government by running for office, or voting for the best candidates, make problems known to the school staff through student representatives.
- Assume that until a rule is waived, altered, or repealed, that is in effect.

GRADE SIX

- 1 plastic carrier pouch
- 24 #2 pencils
- 1 box of crayons, colored pencils, or markers
- 2 hi-liter markers
- 6 ballpoint pens
- 1 pkg. Expo markers
- 1 pointed scissors
- 1 - 12-inch ruler (metric & inches)
- Elmer's glue
- 1 book bag (**WITHOUT** wheels so it fits in student's locker) 1 large tissue box, 210 count
- 3 one-subject notebooks
- 6 two-pocket folders
- 1 organizer (either trapper keeper style OR accordion style) 1 set of headphones for computers
- 1 stylus (pen for the iPad)

GRADE SEVEN

- 1 scissors
- 1 box of crayons or colored pencils
- 1 small glue bottle
- 24 #2pencils (1 pk to be w/ Advisory teacher in case pencils are lost) 6 ballpoint pens (2 red)
- 4 highlighters (varying colors)
- 1 pencil pouch
- 1 12-inch ruler
- 1 large tissue box, 210 count
- 1 pack of 3 x 5 index cards
- 1 set of headphones
- 6 one-subject notebooks
- 1 Organizer – Trapper Keeper or Accordion folder

GRADE EIGHT

- 1 scissors
- 1 box Crayola colored pencils Manual Pencil Sharpener
- 12 #2 pencils
- 6 ballpoint pens (2 red)
- 1 12-inch ruler
- 1 large tissue box, 210 count
- 2 notebooks
- 1 notebook for LA
- 1 two-pocket folder with prongs 5 folders
- Earbuds

Middle School PE – Grades 7 & 8 require shorts, T-shirt, tennis shoes, personal hygiene supplies. Grade 6 PE requires clean athletic shoes for participation in the class.

Telephones

The office phones in all buildings are to be used for official school business. Cell phones and Other Electronic Devices Cell phones, Apple watches and the like, and other personal electronic devices are to be in silent mode or left in the student's locker during the school day. To avoid discipline consequences, students need to inform teachers that they need to use their personal devices to contact parents.