

Walt Whitman Middle School 246
Student & Family
Handbook
2025-2026



Student Name: _____

Class: _____

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Principal's Welcome

Dear Walt Whitman Wildcats,

As we kick off a new school year, I am thrilled to welcome each and every one of you back to our school building. The energy and excitement of having our students back in the halls fills us with immense joy and anticipation for the year ahead. It is our mission to make sure that every student that walks through our doors feels seen, heard, valued, welcomed, safe, connected and a part of the WWMS family. Our vision is to prepare all students to become self-sufficient individuals equipped with the skills needed to thrive in an ever-changing world. Students will be provided opportunities to build self-confidence and self-advocacy skills, which will allow them to “make informed decisions and take responsibility for those decisions.” You are the future, and it is our responsibility to create a learning environment where you can thrive.

At WWMS, we have great educators who will spend time getting to know their students to plan and create engaging hands-on learning experiences. Learning will not be limited to the four walls of the classroom. Scholars will have the opportunity to learn not only from their teachers, but also from members of the community. We believe in you. We see you and I am so excited to partner with you on this journey towards excellence.

Welcome to Walt Whitman Middle School 246, where joy and creativity merge to create a learning environment that challenges you to be your best self.

Sincerely,

Vanessa Grenan

Principal

*Here is your student handbook. Be sure to read it thoroughly and remember if you have any questions don't hesitate to ask a member of the WWMS community. **You will be required to sign***

the student and family contract acknowledging that you are aware of our policies and procedures. Here's to a successful, productive and exciting year!

School Contact Information

School Address: 72 Veronica Place, Brooklyn, NY 11226

Main office: (718) 282-5230

Name	Role	Email Address	Extension
Vanessa Grenan	Principal	vgrenan@schools.nyc.gov	1270
Danielle Straker	Assistant Principal	dstraker2@schools.nyc.gov	1090
Sharon Cadogan	Assistant Principal	scadogan3@schools.nyc.gov	2070
Janan Watson	Secretary	jwatson13@schools.nyc.gov	1250
Romelle Nelson	Secretary	rnelson18@schools.nyc.gov	1251
Suze Vixamar	Parent Coordinator	svixamar@schools.nyc.gov	1290
Teresa Hooks	Community School Director	Thooks2@schools.nyc.gov	2220
Amanda Hunte	PCT/Coordinator of Student Affairs & Culture	Ahunte5@schools.nyc.gov	1051
Jelessa Stoll	Asst. Coordinator of Student Affairs & Culture/ Community Assistant	Jstoll2@schools.nyc.gov	1051
Arnile Tassy	6th Grade Guidance Counselor	atassy@schools.nyc.gov	1324

Geraldine Francois	7th Grade Social Worker	gfrancois8@schools.nyc.gov	1321
Carl Beauduy	8th Grade Guidance Counselor	cbeauduy@schools.nyc.gov	1323

Who Are We

Our Vision

Walt Whitman Middle School will prepare all students to become self-sufficient individuals equipped with the skills needed to thrive in an ever-changing world.

Our Mission

The mission of Walt Whitman Middle School is to provide students with a strong academic foundation rooted in STEAM education that equips them with the confidence, knowledge and skill to achieve high proficiency and mastery. We believe that when immersed in a joyous, nurturing and culturally responsive environment that fosters critical thinking, student voice, inquiry and discovery, all students will develop 21st Century skills to succeed.

Core Values

- Integrity
- Accountability
- Scholarship

Creativity
Compassion
Respect

Bell Schedule 2025-2026

Period	Start Time	End Time
1	8:00 AM	8:45 AM
2	8:47 AM	9:32 AM
3	9:34 AM	10:19 AM
4 6th Grade Lunch	10:21 AM	11:06 AM
5 7th Grade Lunch	11:08 AM	11:56 AM
6 8th Grade Lunch	11:58 AM	12:46 PM
7	12:48 PM	1:33 PM

8	1:35 PM	2:20 PM
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Attendance

- A. According to the NYC Department of Education regulations, students must maintain a **90% attendance** to be promoted. At WWMS, we have higher expectations. Students are expected to be at school every day. Please consult the DOE / WWMS calendar when scheduling vacations and family events.
- B. Students are expected to make up all the work missed due to an absence. Students and/or parents should contact their teachers via google classroom, ClassDojo, email, or by phone/ text message. Students can also serve as great resources for one another when they are absent. We strongly encourage you to exchange phone numbers with at least one classmate. ***Please see our policy for submitting work below academic expectations.***
- C. Students who consistently do not report to class on time will be required to make up class time and will be excluded from participating in monthly incentives.
- D. Notes for excused absences should be submitted to the main office. If the absence lasts longer than 3 days, WWMS will require a letter from your doctor.

Morning Entry

Scholars will enter the building through Exit **12/13** on Albemarle Road beginning at 7:30 am. Once scholars enter the building, they will swipe their ID card, put their phone/internet enabled device inside the pouch and place the pouch in their assigned class bin. **If a student is not in possession of their pouch, their electronic device must be turned in at entry.** Students arriving after **8:00 am** must enter through the main entrance, where they will swipe their ID card, turn in their electronic devices and be given a late pass to take to class.

Late Arrival

- Students who arrive after 8:30 am must go directly to the Main Office, sign in, get a late pass, and report to class. Cellphones and other internet enabled devices must be placed in the pouch pouches and turned into the main office prior to reporting to class.
- Students who are excessively late will be required to attend a **mandatory** guidance conference with their parents/ guardians and school counselors to

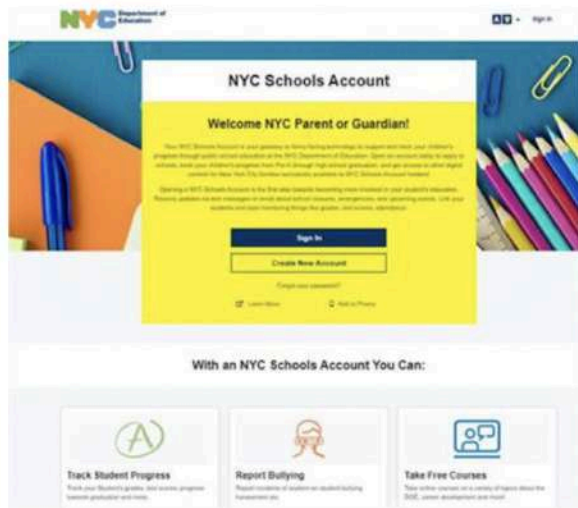
develop a support plan and will be excluded from participating in monthly incentives.

Parent/Guardian Communication:

D) NYC School Account:

Opening a NYC Schools Account is the first step towards becoming more involved in your student's education. Receive updates via text messages or email about school closures, emergencies, and upcoming events. Link your students and start monitoring things like grades, test scores, attendance.

NYCSA Parent Portal



The new NYC Schools Account (NYCSA) Portal will allow you to:

- See your students grades, test scores and more in My Student
- Take classes in Parent University
- Report bullying
- Access forms for your child
- Reset your child's DOE account password
- Access SupportHub

2) ClassDojo:

ClassDojo deepens understanding between teachers, parents, and students. ClassDojo supports over 35 languages. In the classroom, teachers can use ClassDojo to encourage positive behavior. Teachers can also send real-time messages to parents using the Messaging portion of ClassDojo to provide parents with updates on what is happening at school. Parent accounts can be set up with a Parent Code, or with an email invitation. Both of these methods will be provided to you during the first week of school.

3) Backpacking Letters:

In addition to posting/sending important documents on ClassDojo and DOE messenger, we'll also send these documents home with the student. Please make it a practice to check your child's backpack regularly to stay updated on important information.

4) **Google Classroom:**

Google Classroom is an online learning platform that helps students stay organized and connected with their classes. Teachers post assignments, resources, class announcements, and feedback all in one place. It's an easy way for students to keep track of what's due and what they've completed. Parents and guardians can receive email summaries about their child's progress in Google Classroom. These summaries include missing work, upcoming assignments, and teacher announcements. Please make sure the school has your current email address.

Parent-Teacher Conference Schedule

2025-2026

Evening Parent-Teacher Conference:

Thursday, September 18, 2025

Afternoon and Evening Parent-Teacher Conference:

Thursday, November 13, 2025 **(Half-Day)**

Afternoon and Evening Parent-Teacher Conference:

Thursday, March 12, 2026 **(Half-Day)**

Evening Parent-Teacher Conference:

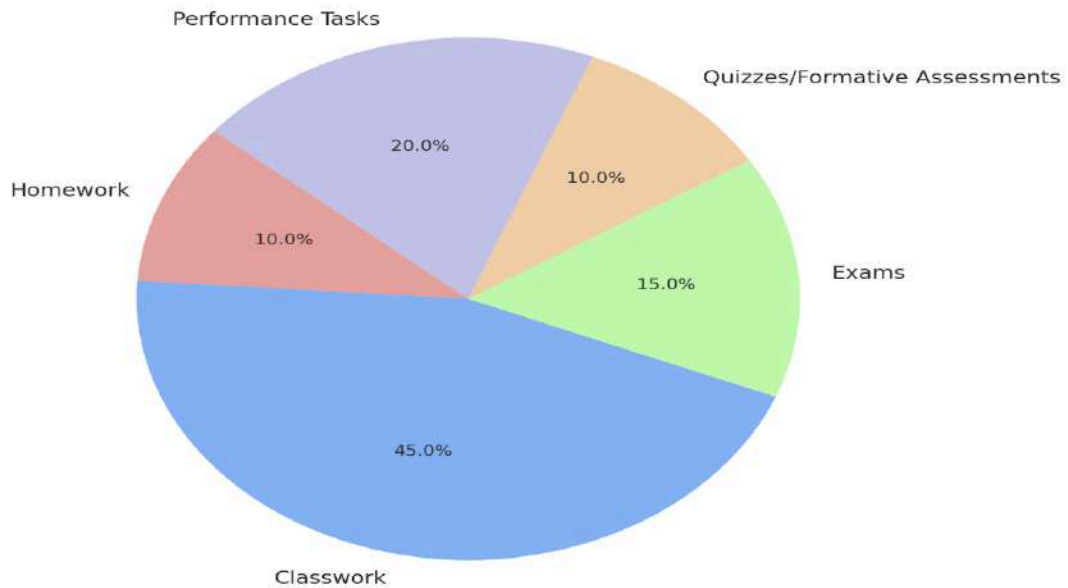
Thursday, May 14, 2026

Academic Expectations:

- At our school, we strive for excellence in education. Students are expected to pass all core subjects, as well as electives, with a **minimum grade of 75**. It is

essential that all assignments are completed and submitted on time. We encourage students to prepare for each class by studying and coming ready to engage and learn. Together, we can achieve academic success!

School-Wide Grading Policy



- To ensure continuity across all core subject areas, we'll be utilizing a school-wide grading policy for ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies. Elective classes will set their own policy.

Missing Work:

- Students will have **one week** from the day they return to school after an absence to complete any missing assignments. It is the student's responsibility to communicate what they need to their teacher. If a student is experiencing a

unique challenge, the matter should be brought to the teachers' attention. The teacher and administration will decide on the next steps. However, this will be on a case-by-case basis.

Grading Late Work:

- Teachers will deduct **a full letter grade** for each late submission. It is the student's responsibility to plan effectively to get assignments completed within the designated timeframe. Students will have an opportunity to work in the library during lunch or sit with a teacher or classmate for assistance prior to an assignment due date.

Academic Intervention:

- Three times a year, students will undergo assessments to evaluate their academic performance in relation to their grade-level peers. If a student scores below a specified percentage, they will be required to participate in intervention services. These services will be available during the school day, after school, or on Saturdays. A staff member will contact you if your student requires these services

Honor Roll:

Each term, you will have an opportunity to achieve honor roll status. To be on the honor roll, you should have an overall **average of 80**. Below are the 3 different levels of honor roll:

Gold: Achieving an overall average of 90 to 100 percent.

Silver: Achieving an overall average of 85 to 89 percent.

Bronze: Achieving an overall average of 80 to 84 percent.

Additionally, students who earn an overall average of **85** or higher will have an opportunity to be inducted into the **Walt Whitman Chapter of the National Junior Honors Society**.

Student Athlete Requirements:

As a student athlete,

- You are responsible for attending all practices and games.
- You are a representative of Walt Whitman Middle School. You are expected to follow team rules and codes of conduct.
- You are required to maintain good academic standing. *This means that you should pass all classes.* If your G.P.A. falls below a 75, you will be placed on academic probation and limited from attending practices until your grades improve.
- While on academic probation, you will be required to attend mandatory study hall after school.

Promotional Criteria:

To be promoted to the next grade, students must:

- a. Pass Math, Science, ELA, Social Studies and all electives with a grade of **75 or higher**.
- b. Pass all NYS Assessments in ELA and Math, or submit an equivalent portfolio
- c. Have greater than 90% attendance for the year.

Students who do not meet these requirements must attend summer school or repeat the academic year.

Senior Activities:

- It is essential to emphasize that involvement in senior activities is a privilege, not a right. We follow the student code of conduct and regulations set forth by the Department of Education. Students who have a consistent pattern of insubordinate behavior, lack of self-control, suspensions, and other patterns of negative behavior will be excluded from senior activities.

Shared Practices:

Bathroom Policy

- Be sure to utilize your bathroom time wisely.
- Bathrooms will be locked during transition. It is your responsibility to report to class and obtain a pass from your teacher in order to use the bathroom.
- You may not use the bathroom during the **first** 10 minutes or the **last** 10 minutes of the period.
- You must sign the bathroom log and leave the pass on the desk before entering the bathroom.
- You may not enter the bathroom with your bookbag or jacket/hoodies.

Traveling in the Hallway / Common Spaces:

- Students should be mindful of their noise level as they travel throughout the building. As you wait to enter your class, you should line up and wait for directions from the teacher.
- Running is strictly prohibited in the building.
- Staff members monitor the hallway and will intervene with any disruptive behavior.
- Students are expected to walk to the **right** when traveling in the hallway to assist with the flow of traffic.
- Students are never to be in the classroom without a teacher. Line up outside if there is no teacher in the classroom. The class monitor should notify the AP, Deans, or main office.
- Students must be supervised at all times. Students must leave the building at dismissal unless they are registered for the after-school programs or have an appointment with a teacher. Students are NOT allowed to linger in any areas of the school unsupervised by adults.

Entering/Exiting the Classroom:

- Students are expected to enter and exit the classroom quickly and silently.

Food/Drinks:

- Food and beverages should only be consumed in the cafeteria during breakfast and at lunchtime, except for scheduled events, celebrations or with teacher permission. Only water is permitted in the classroom. All trash should be placed in a garbage bin. ***We must work together to keep the building clean.***

Auditorium:

When you are in the auditorium, you are expected to:

1. Sit up
2. Remove any outerwear
3. Place your book bag underneath the chair
4. Track the speaker/performance
5. Show your appreciation by remaining positive (clapping, snapping, etc.)

Use of School Devices & Equipment

1. **Treat all technology & equipment with care-** Laptops, iPads, headphones & chargers are shared resources – handle them gently and responsibly. Report any damage or issues immediately to the classroom teacher.
2. **Use only what you are assigned-** Do not switch devices or equipment without permission from your teacher.
3. **Stay on task-** Use technology only for school-related activities. No games, social media, or personal browsing.
4. **Ask before using-** Always get permission before using technology or classroom equipment outside of assigned times.
5. **Keep food and drinks away-** To avoid spills and damage, do not eat or drink near any electronic devices.

Laptops & iPads

6. **Carry with two hands-** Always carry laptops and iPads carefully using two hands. Never hold them by the screen.
7. **Log in with your own account only-** Never use someone else's login. Keep your password private.
8. **No unauthorized downloads or changes-** Do not install apps or change settings unless instructed by your teacher.
9. **Plug in when done-** Charge devices properly and return them to their designated place after use.

Classroom & Lab Equipment

10. **Classroom & Lab Equipment are shared resources** – Handle them gently and responsibly.
11. **Follow all safety instructions-** Especially when using science, art, or technical equipment. Wear protective gear if needed. Do not misuse or play with any tools or supplies.
12. **Clean up after use-** Return all items to their proper place. Wipe down devices or lab areas if required.

Dress Code/Uniform

- Dress and proper grooming reflect a sense of pride and a positive attitude towards school and self. Wearing a uniform creates unity and school pride. It eliminates visible social and economic differences based on clothing. **We are a uniform school**, so it is expected that **all** scholars are in uniform daily. Our uniform consists of the following:

Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
<p>Top: Navy blue/light blue, polo shirt or Crewneck T-shirt/long sleeve shirt with school logo.</p> <p>Bottom: Navy blue, Gray, or Black pants or appropriate length of shorts or skirts. Navy blue or gray joggers with the school logo.</p> <p>Jeans and leggings are not a part of the uniform.</p>	<p>Top: Gray polo shirt or Crewneck T-shirt/long sleeve shirt with school logo.</p> <p>Bottom: Gray, Black, or Navy blue pants or appropriate length of shorts or skirts. Navy blue or gray joggers with the school logo.</p> <p>Jeans and leggings are not a part of the uniform.</p>	<p>Top: Black polo shirt or Crewneck T-shirt/long sleeve shirt with school logo.</p> <p>Bottom: Black, Gray, or Navy blue pants or appropriate length of shorts or skirts. Navy blue or gray joggers with the school logo.</p> <p>Jeans and leggings are not a part of the uniform.</p>

Shoes: Any color sneakers or black shoes/boots preferred.

*****Scholars are only permitted to wear Walt Whitman hoodies. Hoods should not be worn inside of the building.**

The following items are not to be worn during the school day:

- **Garments:** Crop Tops~ Leggings
- **Accessories:** Ski Masks~ Bonnets~ Hats
- **Footwear:** Crocs~ Open toe shoes~Flip flops~Slippers w/ socks~Yeezy slides

Cell Phone Policy

In alignment with New York State legislation enacted by Governor Kathy Hochul and Chancellor's Regulation A-413, all public schools are now required to implement a **Distraction-Free Learning Policy** that limits student access to internet-enabled personal devices—including cell phones, smartwatches, earbuds, airpods, tablets, and similar technology—during the instructional day.

Our school is committed to fostering a focused, safe, and engaging academic environment for all learners. Beginning **September 4, 2025**, students will no longer be permitted to access or store internet-enabled devices in their bookbags or on their person during the school day.

Collection and Storage Procedures

To ensure compliance and support a distraction-free school experience:

- Upon arrival, students must **turn off** all personal internet-enabled devices.
- Devices will be **secured in a pouch and stored in designated collection bins located in the main office.**
- Devices will be **returned to students at dismissal** in select locations for each grade.
- Students who arrive late or leave early will follow check-in/check-out protocols with designated staff.
- The school is **not responsible** for any lost, damaged, or stolen devices that have NOT been submitted for collection.
- If a pouch is lost and/or damaged, scholars will be required to turn their devices into the main office for the duration of the school year.

Communication During School Hours

If you need to contact your child during the school day, please use one of the following school numbers:

1. **Main Office:** Romelle Nelson- (718) 282-5230 **Ext. 0**
2. **Parent Coordinator:** Suze Vixamar (718) 282-5230 **Ext. 1290 or (929) 269-3043**
3. **Community School Director:** Teresa Hooks (718) 282-5230 **Ext. 2220**

Students may also request permission to use the main office phone in emergencies.

Authorized Use Exceptions

Students may only use personal devices during the instructional day when:

- Authorized for educational purposes by school staff.
- Required by a student's IEP or 504 Plan.
- Needed for a documented medical reason.
- Needed in an emergency situation.
- Approved for translation or caregiving needs.

Violations & Consequences (Aligned to Chancellor's Regulation A-413)

Students found with an unauthorized internet-enabled device will face the following progressive consequences:

- 1st Offense:** Device held in the main office and returned at dismissal.
- 2nd Offense:** Parent/guardian must retrieve the device from school.
- 3rd Offense and beyond:** Meeting with school leadership. Additional interventions may apply based on the NYC DOE Discipline Code.

Use of Devices Outside Bell-to-Bell Instruction

Internet-enabled personal devices may be used at the following times only:

- After 2:20 pm
- The CAMBA after-school program will outline their policy for students who attend the program. (See Ms. Kaveen)

Monthly Incentive Trips

In order to participate in the monthly incentive trips, a scholar must:

- Attend school daily
- Attend all classes on time
- Wear uniform daily
- Adhere to the Cell Phone policy
- Be passing all classes with a **75 or higher**
- Embody the core values of WWMS

Community Service

At Walt Whitman Middle School, we hold the belief that "**service is the rent we pay for the privilege of living on this earth.**" To embody this principle, we offer students monthly opportunities to engage in a variety of community service initiatives, both within the school and in the wider community. Participating in these activities can earn students additional points towards the monthly ClassDojo incentives.

If you are interested in participating in our monthly community service initiative, please speak with **Ms. Hunte**, **Ms. Dorfeuille** or **Ms. Negron**.

Why Participate in Community Service?

- Helping Hands:** Volunteer to assist in local shelters, food banks, or community events.
- Team Effort:** Work with classmates or friends to make a bigger impact together.
- Respectful Attitude:** Treat everyone with kindness and understanding while serving.
- Active Participation:** Engage fully in activities; don't just stand back and watch.
- Learn and Grow:** Take the time to understand the needs of the community and what you can do to help.
- Be Reliable:** Show up on time and follow through on your commitments.
- Share Your Experience:** Talk about what you learned and how it felt to help others.
- Have Fun:** Enjoy the experience and make new friends while giving back!

Standards of Discipline and Intervention Measures

As a member of the NYC Department of Education, Walt Whitman Middle School follows the Citywide Standards of Discipline and Intervention Measures that gives a more detailed description of the district's behavior expectations, policies, and consequences.

If students choose to break their commitments by violating any of the WWMS policies, WWMS may employ any of the following interventions to help address the problem.

- * Teacher Conference and/or Team Conference
- * Meeting with Guidance, and/or Assistant Principal, or Principal
- * Family Conference with teacher, team and/or Principal
- * Loss of privileges; detention; community work time
- * Exclusion from field trips and/or special events
- * Principal's Suspension; Superintendent's Suspension

Suspensions

- WWMS takes student suspensions very seriously and the effects of one can last beyond just the missed class time. A principal suspension means the student attends school and completes their class work in a separate location. A superintendent suspension means the student attends school at another location. School suspensions go on the student's permanent record as well as being logged into the DOE automated system called OORS. (Online Occurrence Reporting System).

Sexual Harassment Policy

- The NYC Department of Education defines Sexual Harassment as “sexually suggestive comments, written messages, innuendoes, propositions or physical conduct of a sexual nature such as pinching, touching, or patting.”

- Sexual Harassment cases are taken seriously. Depending on severity and frequency of the incident, disciplinary responses will range from a parent conference to police involvement and criminal charges.

Acts of Violence:

- Students are expected to report all conflicts and or vandalism to an adult staff member as soon as possible; hurtful acts such as name calling, using profanity, **inappropriate physical contact, play fighting, or violence of any kind will not be tolerated.**

- Students are expected to abide by school expectations when engaging in communications, including electronic exchanges such as email, chats and instant /text messages, with other students outside of the building. Physical acts of violence will result in a suspension. There are **NO EXCEPTIONS** made for play fighting.

Weapons, Drug, and Alcohol Policy

- According to the *NYC Department of Education Code of Conduct*, students who are found with alcohol, drugs, or weapons of any kind, will be automatically suspended and face possible criminal charges.

- Students are not permitted to smoke inside or directly outside the school building.

- This applies to students inside and in the vicinity of the building; before, during, and/or after school hours.

Student Bill of Rights

- A. All students have a right to an education and should behave in a manner that allows other students their right to an education.
- B. All students have the right to be in a safe and healthy environment and have the responsibility to maintain this environment.
- C. All students are accountable for their own behavior by developing self-discipline.
- D. All students have the right to be respected and have the responsibility to respect others.
- E. All individuals have the right to have their property respected. All individuals have the responsibility to respect the property of others.
- F. Students will engage in the care and up-keep of school property (books, furniture, school building, etc.).
- G. Students will not disrupt the teaching and learning process.
- H. Students' records shall be confidential and should be open only for inspection in accordance with the rules and regulations as adopted by the NYC Department of Education
- I. Students have the right to due process of law.

Teacher Bill of Rights

Teachers have the right to:

- A. Be respected by students.
- B. Have students follow class rules and regulations.
- C. A safe environment.
- D. Be protected against violent acts/bodily harm.
- E. Due process of the law.

Parent/Guardian Copy

Student and Family Contract

We fully commit to the vision AND mission of the Walt Whitman Middle School

As a Walt Whitman Middle School scholar, I will practice:

Personal and academic integrity

I will respect the rights and property of others

I will discourage bigotry; while striving to learn from the differences in people, ideas, and opinions

I will demonstrate concern for others, their feelings, and their need for conditions that support their work and development.

-Adapted from the Morehouse College Student Creed

As a Walt Whitman scholar, I pledge to adhere to the rules and responsibilities outlined in this handbook in order for me to have a successful school year.

Student Name

Date

Class

As a **parent** of a scholar at Walt Whitman Middle School, I pledge to support my child's academic/social endeavors. I will fulfill my pledge in the following manner:

At Home:

- I will check/sign my child's homework daily
- I will help my child maintain a clean/quiet homework area in our home.
- I will instruct my child on appropriate behavior in and out of school.
- I will ensure that my child arrives at school on time and every day.
- I will assist my child in being prepared for school activities.
- I will make sure that my child is in the correct uniform every day.
- I will check **google classrooms** at least once a week to monitor my child's progress.

In School:

- I will inform the school of any change of address, phone number, or emergency contact promptly.
- I will maintain consistent communication with the teachers, guidance counselor, and administration.
- I will collaborate with the administration and staff of the school via in-person or virtually.
- I will attend monthly Parent Teacher Association meetings and volunteer my time when possible.
- I will attend Parent workshops hosted by the Parent Coordinator/Guidance Counselor and other staff members.
- I will attend school sponsored assembly programs.
- I will attend Parent Teacher Night or Day and Curriculum Night.
- I will return school forms when requested.
- I will listen with an open mind when discussing my child with any staff member.
- I will support all policies of Walt Whitman Middle School and the New York City Department of Education.

WWMS Student & Family Commitment

Please sign both pages of this document. Keep a copy for your records and return the 2nd copy to your student's classroom teacher.

I understand that failure to adhere to these commitments can cause my child to lose various WWMS privileges.

I have received, read and understand the above Walt Whitman Middle School Parent Creed and Pledge.

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

School Copy

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Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

