

Whatcom Middle School
Student Handbook
2017-18



School Hours: 9:15 am – 3:45 pm

Main Office	8:45 am – 4:15 pm	360 676-6460 option 4
Attendance office	8:45 am – 4:15 pm	360 676-6460 option 1
Student Services	8:45 am – 4:00 pm	360 676-6460 option 3
Athletics	9:00 am – 12:15 pm	360 676-6460 option 2

810 Halleck St., Bellingham, WA 98225

www.whatcom.bellinghamschools.org

Mr. Jeff Coulter, Principal

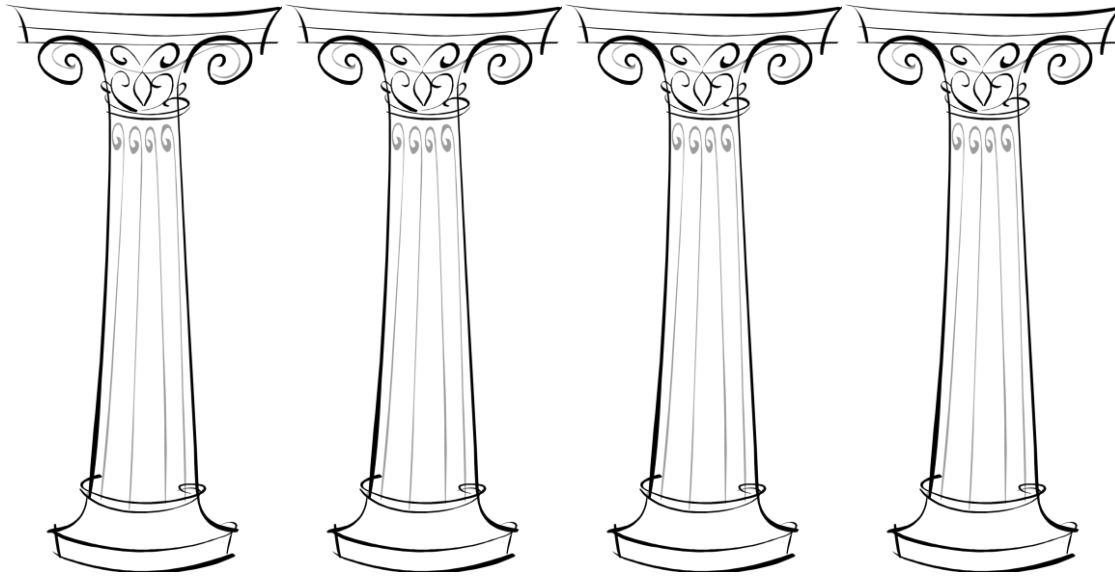
Ms. Ann Buswell, Assistant Principal

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WHATCOM MIDDLE SCHOOL FOUR PILLARS



Tenacity

Compassion

Excellence

Stewardship



MISSION STATEMENT FOR WHATCOM MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Whatcom Middle School community is committed to providing our students educational experiences that promote life-long learning. We are dedicated to helping students develop skills needed to reason, communicate, collaborate and make healthy choices in a safe and respectful environment.

In order to ensure a safe environment for students and staff we respectfully require that when you enter the building all visitors, parents, non WMS students, go to the Main Office to sign in.



THE BELLINGHAM PROMISE

We, as a community, make a collective commitment to Bellingham's children. We will empower every child to discover and develop a passion, contribute to their community, and achieve a fulfilling and productive life.

We collectively commit that our students are cared for and respected, and that they will graduate from our schools prepared for success in the global community. Each will be exceptional in his or her own way, with strong character, a passion for learning, and ready for the widest range of educational and vocational options to support a diversity of life choices.

GETTING STARTED - ARRIVING AT SCHOOL OFFICE/SCHOOL HOURS

School doors to the Commons area open at 8:30 am for the breakfast program at school. The first bell rings at 9:10 am. The late bell rings at 9:15 am. School ends at 3:45 pm.

I may enter at the front of the building through the Commons entrance. I will remain in the Commons until 9:00 am at which time I may go to my locker to put my backpack/school bag and coat away.

The Main Office is open from 8:45 am to 4:15 pm. This is the information center for the school. I may come to the office to inquire about athletics, make an appointment with the Principal or Assistant Principal or if I have general school questions.

The Attendance window/office is open from 8:45 am to 4:15 pm. This is where I report to first thing in the morning if I have been absent, if I am late, if I am leaving early, if I need a bus note, or have a locker question.

The Student Services/Counseling Office is open from 8:45 am to 4:00 pm. It is located across from the Main Office. If I have a scheduling question, need to see a Counselor, or for general registration and immunization questions I will go to Student Services.

Bells will ring as follows on regular school days:

9:10 warning bell
9:15 late bell
11:17 no bell (6th grade goes to lunch)
11:47 lunch bell (6th grade goes back to class – 8th grade goes to lunch)
12:17 lunch bell (8th grade goes back to class – 7th grade goes to lunch)
12:47 lunch bell (7th grade goes back to class)
3:45 dismissal bell



TRANSPORTATION

Bikes, scooters and skateboards

I will follow the rules of the road and wear a proper fitting helmet when riding my bike to school. Bicycles are not to be ridden anywhere on school grounds or in parking lots. Bike racks are available on the front blacktop area. I will lock up my bike everytime I bring it to school. The school cannot be held responsible if a bicycle is stolen or damaged. While every effort will be made to cooperate with an investigation of stolen or damaged bikes, it is me, the student who bears the responsibility to secure my bike on campus. The bike rack area is off limits to me during the school day - unless I am leaving the premises early (with parent permission).

Skateboards, roller blades, scooters, shoes with wheels, are not to be ridden on school grounds. I will make sure these items are stored away during the day. Since skateboards and scooters do not fit in lockers, they can be stored in the main office.

Bus

Transportation routes are published prior to the opening of each school year. My parents and I can find my bus stop at: <http://www.infofinderi.com>

These are the bus rules I am expected to follow:

- Drivers are in charge of the bus and students.
- Students crossing roads must do so under the direction of the bus driver and cross only in front of the bus. (City bus rules are different. Children should not cross in front of a city bus.)
- Observe classroom conduct on the bus. Be courteous. Do not use profane language, teasing or name calling.
- Keep the bus clean. Eating, drinking and chewing gum are not allowed.
- Remain seated at all times. Keep head and hands inside the bus.
- No plants, animals or hazardous objects are allowed on the bus.
- All items brought on the bus should be held on the student's lap except for approved musical instruments (see details below).

Note : Washington State Administrative Code 392-145 prohibits the transport of heavy, sharp, bulky or other items in the passenger area of any school bus that may be hazardous in the event of an accident or emergency stop. For transportation to and from school, this includes curriculum-related items such as larger musical instruments (maximum available dimensions: 36x10x8 inches). Items that pose a safety threat such as skateboards, roller blades, kites, etc., are also prohibited.

Bus discipline – School bus transportation to and from school is part of our school. Basic Whatcom rules –

Be safe, Be responsible, Be respectful – apply. The bus driver is to receive the same consideration and respect as any other staff at WMS. When bus rules are not adhered to, drivers will complete a form that is sent to the school for disciplinary action. The school office, under the direction of the Assistant Principal, will handle discipline:

- Bus referral #1 – School discipline
- Bus referral #2 – Loss of bus privilege for 1 week
- Bus referral #3 – Loss of bus privilege long term **2** [return to table of contents](#)

For my safety, bus drivers will conduct emergency drills several times a year so I will know what to do in the event of an emergency.

If I need to ride a different bus home, I must bring a guardian signed note to the attendance office first thing in the morning. My note must clearly state which bus stop location (street names) I need to be let off at. NO bus notes are issued at 3pm.

Drop off and pick up

When I am driven to school, I can be dropped off behind the school on Irving Street or on either side of the school on D Street or F Street. To avoid the traffic congestion, my guardian can also make arrangements with me to drop me off a few blocks away where I can then walk to school. This is the same for pick up after school. If I am going home sick my guardian may park on either side of the school and come in to the attendance office. If I am going home early and have a parent signed permission slip – my guardian does not have to park and come in; I can come outside and meet my guardian at a pre-arranged location.

The front of the School is **CLOSED** to all traffic except school buses when the **ROAD CLOSED SIGN IS OUT!**
NO EXCEPTIONS!

Walking to school

If I walk to school I will walk on sidewalks whenever possible using crosswalks when crossing the road I will also respect the property of school neighbors and stay off their lawns.

ONCE AT SCHOOL – GENERAL INFORMATION

A days, B days and Early Release

Days alternate between "A" day and "B" day as some classes are scheduled on alternating days. For example: PE on "A" days and Band on "B" days. We start the year with an "A" day and continue alternating days.

Early dismissal days are listed on the school calendar. I am dismissed at 12:00 on Early Dismissal Days and am expected to leave the school premises shortly after release time.

Back Packs/School Bags

I will put my backpack and/or school bag away in my locker upon arriving at school. My bag will remain in my locker for the duration of my stay at school.

Closed Campus

Whatcom Middle School is a closed campus - I must remain on campus from first arrival at school until I am dismissed at the end of my school day. Unless my guardian has requested (in writing) for me to leave campus early, leaving the school grounds without permission is cause for disciplinary action.

Dress Code

Part of [The Bellingham Promise](#), our strategic plan, strives to develop students and graduates who are *respectful and compassionate humans*. We want students to respect themselves and others. While we encourage individuality, the district's dress code aims to foster a positive and healthy environment.

- Students should dress casually and comfortably for school, while wearing clothing that is well-suited for a school environment.
- Clothing will cover torso, midriff and backside, and have sleeves or straps.
- Head or faces will be uncovered. Appropriate headgear may be worn for warmth and protection outdoors, and inside for religious reasons or special circumstances.
- Clothing, drawings, tattoos and accessories that display or promote negative messages are not permitted. These could include drug, gang, weapon, alcohol or tobacco-related information, obscenities, put-downs, stereotypes, sexual innuendo, offensive words or graphics.
- A violation of the dress code will require a change of clothing.
- Special circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

For more information about our dress code guidelines, please visit bellingshamschools.org/dresscode.

Electronic Devices

The Bellingham School District and Whatcom Middle School accept no responsibility for portable electronic devices (cell phones, portable music players, digital cameras, laptop computers, etc.) lost or stolen on school property. If I choose to carry such devices to school, I do so at my own risk.

If I choose to bring a portable electronic device to school (at my own risk) I can use it in the Commons before school until 9:00 am. Portable electronic devices may not be visible or used between the hours of 9:00 am and 3:45 pm. If I am found to be in violation of these rules, my electronic device will be confiscated and my guardian will need to come pick it up. Progressive consequences will apply if I continue to violate these rules.

Fragrances

I will limit my use of fragrances at school. If my fragrance interferes with learning, health, safety or is offensive to others I will be asked to wash it off.

Gum

Chewing gum at school is a privilege. I will chew responsibly and when I need to discard my gum I will do so in a garbage can. I will not chew gum in the library or in any classroom where I am instructed not to do so.

Hall Passes

I understand that it may occasionally be necessary for me to leave a classroom during class time. I will follow my teacher's classroom procedures as well as carry a hall pass when this occurs. Following these steps helps the entire school maintain a safe, friendly, and well-managed learning climate. If I am found to be in the hallways without a hall pass I will be asked to go back to my class and get one.

Leaving School Early

If I need to leave school during the day I need to bring a guardian signed note to the attendance office in the morning. The note needs to include what time I need to leave school. I will be issued a permit slip that allows me to leave school grounds at my designated time. I may meet my guardian at a pre-arranged location. Guardians do not need to find parking and come inside when they send me to school with a note.

If I need to leave school early and I was not sent to school with a note, my guardian will need to come to the **Attendance Office** allowing themselves plenty of time. I **may not** leave school during the day without a permit slip from the Attendance Office. Therefore, I will remain in class until I am called to the office.

Lockers

I will be assigned my locker the first week of school. I will have my own locker and am expected to:

- Keep my combination confidential - DO NOT TELL FRIENDS.
- Keep locker neat and orderly. NO GARBAGE.
- Refrain from using self-adhering stickers, permanent markings, kicking, pounding, or writing on lockers.
- Violation of the above may lead to the loss of locker privileges. If I am having locker problems – I will go to class. Once there I may report the problem to my teacher who will contact the attendance office.

Lost and Found

Each year the school gives away many quality coats, sweaters, bags, shoes, etc. which are never claimed from our lost and found. I will check the lost and found on a regular basis and claim MY ITEMS only. For smaller items such as jewelry, glasses, keys etc. I can ask at the Main Office. The lost and found is cleared out on a regular monthly basis.

Rights and Responsibilities

WMS rules are: Be Safe, Be Responsible, Be Respectful.

As a student at WMS I have the right to:

- A quality education.
- A safe school environment that respects my dignity and self-worth.
- Participate in co-curricular activities.
- Be informed of my progress in school.

As a WMS student I am expected to:

- Attend all classes every day on time, ready to work, with learning materials, books, pencils, etc.
- Respect the rights of others and the school district, exercise self-discipline, and obey school rules.
- Use appropriate language free of profanity and harassing statements.
- Keep hats, coats and bags in locker.
- Move through halls appropriately.
- Consume food and drink in cafeteria only.
- Avoid public display of affection.
- Dress appropriately.
- Wait for teacher dismissal.
- Use e-mail appropriately.
- Follow individual classroom rules.
- Not use /possess tobacco, alcohol, drugs or drug paraphernalia while on or around school property.
- Keep weapons and imitations of them away from school.
- Remain on campus from the time of arrival at school until the conclusion of the last activity, unless parents have requested permission through the attendance office to leave campus.

Students who experience difficulty in following school expectations receive progressive consequences based upon the number and severity of my infractions. (see Behaviors) (see Student Rights and Responsibility Form on Page 14)

ACADEMICS

PE Clothes

I am required to change clothes for PE as follows:

- Athletic shorts: black, gray, white or green - no buttons or zippers (length at least to my fingertips with the arm/hand extended against the thigh).
- Short sleeved t-shirt: plain white, gray, black or green - no buttons or zippers (with my last name written with permanent marker across the top back).
- Tennis shoes with non marking soles.
- Absorbent socks.
- I may want to keep deodorant in my PE locker as well.

Optional:

- Sweatpants: black, gray or green
- Sweatshirts: white, gray or green



Progress Reports

Progress Reports - are issued at mid-term each semester. The progress report is intended to be a “check-point” indicating my achievement of grade level standards, mid-way through a term.

Standard Based Assessments

Teachers use ongoing classroom based assessments to personalize instruction, monitor student progress and measure achievement. Teachers may use observations, discussions, quizzes, tests, presentations, performances and other tools to assess students’ understandings. The state and district use assessments to provide information about individual and group achievement. District assessments measure students’ reading, writing and math proficiency. They also help identify students who may benefit from additional interventions or enrichment. The state assessments given each spring in grades through eight are the Measurements of Student Progress (MSP). Other assessments may include: Degrees of Reading Power (DRP), Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and Oral Reading Fluency (ORF). These assessments help improve student learning. Families will receive individual score reports from their schools in the fall.

A report card will be mailed home to me at the end of each semester.

Class Transfer request

I must follow the procedure listed below if I wish to transfer classes after the start of the school year:

- No transfers will be authorized within the first 10 teaching days.
- To request a transfer, my guardian must address a letter to the school counselor. The reasons for the requested transfer must relate to my positive educational interest.
- Upon receipt of a transfer request, a meeting with me, my current teacher(s), and administrators and/or counselor occurs during which transfer rationale and options will be explored.
- If the transfer is authorized, I will meet with my new teacher for orientation purposes.

Following these procedures will provide a stable educational situation for me.

ACTIVITIES

I will find a variety of events taking place throughout the school year. Events may be sponsored by the PTSA, Whatcom ASB, Whatcom Middle School or a combination of the three. Some events may include:

ASB

Associated Student Body – I may run for president, vice president, secretary or treasurer to represent my classmates. I can also run for class representative. I must be an active and participating member of the ASB leadership club to run for office.

ASB Card

I am required to purchase an ASB card if I wish to participate in sports or any before or after school club. Scholarships may be available – I can check with the student services office.

Assemblies

I will have the opportunity to experience cultural, educational and recreational experiences through school assemblies that will take place at various times throughout the school year.


Athletics & Insurance

Sports are organized on an intramural and inter-school basis. Intramural play is when students from Whatcom compete amongst themselves. Interschool play is when students compete amongst other middle schools.

Intramural sports will be determined each season. I will listen to the morning announcements to see what is being offered.

Interschool Athletics:

<p style="text-align: center;">***6th Grade Sports Offerings</p> <p>Fall (September – October) Track Boys and Girls Soccer</p> <p>Pre-Winter (November – February) Floor Exercise & Dance Intramural Basketball</p> <p>Winter (February – April) Wrestling Intramural Volleyball</p> <p>Spring (April – June) Cross Country</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">***7th and 8th Grade Sports Offerings</p> <p>Fall (September – October) Track Boys and Girls Soccer</p> <p>Pre-Winter (November – February) Boys Basketball Floor Exercise & Dance</p> <p>Winter (February – April) Wrestling Girls Volleyball</p> <p>Spring (April – June) Football Girls Basketball Cross Country</p>
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2017-18 Athletic Fees

Athletic Fee	\$0
ASB Fee	\$10

We have a new online activities and athletics registration form within Skyward Family Access. Use your Family Access login/password to complete the form. If you need assistance with your log in, please contact your student's school registrar. After completing the online registration forms, you will need to be cleared for each sports season in the main office before you can participate in any sport.

A Physical Examination - is required before participating in interschool middle school athletics. The physical exam needs to be done by a medical authority licensed to perform a physical exam. This physical is valid for a 24-month period. Physical exams are not needed for participation in intramural athletics.

If I choose to participate in the athletic program I must be covered by school insurance or my guardian must supply a signed waiver indicating that they have an insurance plan equal to the school insurance program. Please check carefully as all medical plans do not cover athletic participation

Forms can be turned in to the Main Office at anytime during the year – **sign up deadlines will be adhered to.** Coaches will provide me the details I need such as times and schedules. Activity buses will transport students to and from my games only.

BBQ

I can enjoy the all School BBQ held once in September and again in June. Regular school lunch prices will apply. I can purchase my lunch in the cafeteria and then will go outside where I will be served.

Book Fair

The PTSA will host a book fair to help raise money for the library. I can look through the great selection and purchase a variety of books and items during my lunch time.

Concerts

Band/choir/orchestra will have evening performances during the school year. My music teacher will give me specific details.

Clubs

Whatcom may offer before and/or after school clubs throughout the year. Clubs are usually run by a staff member or parent. I may choose to sign up for clubs but will need guardian approval. I can find out about clubs by listening to the morning announcements, checking our WMS webpage or checking the information televisions located in the Commons and in the Main Office.

Dances

I can choose to participate in school parent and staff chaperoned dances/activities. If I choose to participate in a school dance/activity I need to be in the appropriate locations where dances/activities are taking place. Once I leave the school I may not re-enter the building. School rules and dress code applies to all activities. If I choose not to follow school rules my guardian will be called and asked to come pick me up.

Field Trips

Field Trips will take place throughout the year. Individual classes will send home information and permission slips. I may not participate in any field trip unless I have the proper guardian signed papers on file with my teacher. If I choose not to meet the deadline on returning my paperwork I will not be allowed to participate on the field trip. I will be required to be at school doing my school work.

Picture Day

In September I will be given my picture packet information to take home. If I choose to purchase pictures, I will return my envelope and money on picture day to give to the photographers. I am required to have my picture taken regardless of whether I purchase any. This picture will be on my ASB card. (ASB cards are purchased separately in the Main Office.)

Yearbook Sales

I may choose to purchase a yearbook during the sales period. I must purchase a yearbook by the deadline or I will not have a yearbook in June. I will listen to the morning announcements where this information will be given to me and check the information board in the Commons. I will receive my yearbook at the end of the school year. If I have outstanding fines at school my yearbook will not be released to me until all my fines are paid. No yearbooks will be available for sale in June.

8th Grade Celebration

During the last week of my 8th grade year, I will have the opportunity to celebrate my middle school years as a group. I understand that this is not a graduation (as that occurs in high school) nor is it a formal occasion. It will be a fun, organized way for me and my friends to remember our years together and to celebrate our promotion to high school. School dress code will be in effect. Specific details will be given to me closer to the end of the year.

ATTENDANCE

Absences – planned or unplanned



My school believes there is a direct correlation between attendance and performance. Therefore, I am urged to attend school on a regular basis. Participation and performance are integral parts of my grade.

When I am absent from school, my guardian needs to call the school office on or before the morning of the absence and leave a message with the following information: My name; the reason for my absence and if they give permission to excuse or not to excuse me for my absence. Upon returning to school I must check in at the attendance office before school starts *with a guardian signed* explaining the absence. For pre-arranged long-term absences, I will notify the school well in advance. I will need to get a work contract from the attendance secretary; this is taken to my teachers to receive assignments I will miss when I am gone. My teachers will explain the time allowed for makeup work due to absences.

Homework Requests

When I am absent, it is my responsibility to get my missed assignments. My guardian or I may email my teachers directly or I may choose to ask a friend. I will keep in mind that some classes will not be able to provide homework as it may be things we are working on in class, such as science labs.

Tardiness

When I arrive late to school I need to report to the attendance office with a guardian signed note if I am excused. I am considered tardy to class if I am not at school and ready to work in my first period class or at the beginning of every class period. I will be expected to make up missed time. If unexcused tardiness continues, sanctions will increase up to and including after school detention and Saturday school.

Truancy

I am truant if I am absent from class or school without proper permission, or given a pass to a certain place and do not report in a timely fashion.

Withdrawing

Should it be necessary for me to withdraw from Whatcom Middle School, my guardian will need to notify the school counseling office prior to my last day. My school records will be transferred to other schools within the Bellingham School District. Schools outside the Bellingham School District will need to request my records in writing. I will be required to return all my library books, text books and athletic uniforms prior to being released. If there is money on my lunch account I will get reimbursed.

BEHAVIOR

Classroom/School Behaviors

I understand that behaviors that lead to a productive, co-operative working and learning environment are promoted at Whatcom. Behaviors that distract from learning will necessitate consequences designed to discourage such behaviors. It is critical that I, my guardian and teachers work together to promote a positive school environment.

I understand that discipline includes removal from class, lunch detention, before school detention, school service, and Saturday school. For exceptional or continual misconduct, disciplinary action includes short-term suspension, long-term suspension, and expulsion.

Major offenses are of such a nature that they warrant an immediate referral to the Principal or Assistant Principal. I understand that the following list of major offenses is not all-inclusive: (criminal acts may require police action)

- Extreme disrespect to staff persons.
- Illegal substances (use or possession)
- Weapons/explosives (use or possession)
- Repeated classroom and/or behavior plan offenses
- Use of tobacco
- Fighting
- Truancy
- Theft
- Vandalism
- Arson
- Assault
- Inappropriate use of email



The consequences for major infractions are severe and progressive. I will face:

- Saturday School
- Short term suspension (up to 10 school days)
- Long term suspension (11 days or to the end of trimester)
- Emergency expulsion (indefinite period)

The rules as reviewed will apply to me on school property during or immediately before or after school hours, while attending a school activity, or event off the school grounds, while riding a school bus to or from school, or at any school sanctioned activity or event.

Harassment, intimidation and bullying

I understand that I am entitled to a safe, non-threatening learning environment free from harassment, intimidation, and bullying. Harassment, intimidation, and bullying can take many forms including: slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendos, demeaning comments, drawings, cartoons, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats, or written, oral, or physical actions.

If I am a victim of bullying or harassment, it is important that I report it. I can report the offense to a teacher, Assistant Principal, Principal, counselor or any available adult staff member, who will help me find a safe solution to the problem.

If I choose to engage in an "intentional act" of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, discipline will be determined with policy 3200 of the Bellingham School District policy. If I choose to engage in inappropriate behavior at school, there will be consequences.

<p style="text-align: center;">Bellingham Safe Schools Alert Text or call (844) 310-9560 Confidential and anonymous reporting Text or call if you have a concern about safety, you know something about a possible threat or you are concerned someone you know could be in trouble. Call or text to report: Bullying, Intimidation, Fighting, Weapons, Drugs, Other Safety Concerns</p>

Public Display of Affection (PDA)

I understand that public displays of affection are not appropriate at school. I will keep my hands to myself.

COMMUNICATION

Back to School Night

Back to School Night is held in early fall and provides an opportunity for my guardian and teachers to get acquainted. This is a night when *general* information will be provided about the curriculum, course content and special activities planned for the year. Students are not expected to attend this event.

Bulletin

The daily bulletin is read each morning over the intercom system and is how I will receive important school information. I am expected to be listening during the announcements so that I don't miss information such as sports deadlines or upcoming activities. The daily bulletin is also posted on the WMS web page daily and can be viewed on the monitors in the Commons and Main Office.

Deliveries/Communication for students

I understand that if I have forgotten something at home, my guardian may need to deliver this to the office. My item will be left on the table in the Main Office with my full name on it. I will check in the office for deliveries if I know an item is being delivered. It is also my responsibility to check the office when I realize that I don't have my lunch to check if my parent delivered it.

I will make after school plans before I leave for school whenever possible. My guardian may call the school to leave me an important message and the office staff will do their best to deliver messages to me when they are available to do so. I understand that in case of an emergency, administrators will be contacted to give me my message.

Email

At the beginning of the school year, a list of staff email addresses will be made available for my family's convenience. I may also access our Whatcom Middle School web page at: <http://whatcom.bellinghamschools.org/> to get staff emails.

Info Finder I (Bus schedules)

My guardian can access infofinder1.com on the web page to view my school bus route or see what bus I should be taking if I move.

Newsletter

WMS creates a monthly newsletter with information about upcoming school activities and events. The newsletter is posted on the school webpage and is sent via SchoolMessenger to anyone signed up to receive our emails.

Family Access

Family Access is a Web-based program that allows my guardian to view my student information. With a log-in and password, guardians may be able to view my grades, homework, attendance records, school meal choices, schedules, progress reports, transcripts and more, *depending on how the school is using the program.*

Phone Calls home

I may call home using my classroom phone, with permission from my teacher. If I am not feeling well, I need to call home from the attendance/nurse's office only. I can also use the phone at the attendance window to make calls home providing I have permission to be out of class.

Phone Calls For Staff

My teachers have voice mail and can be left a message during the day at 676-6460 option 7. If my guardian needs to speak with a teacher they can call the Main Office at 676-6460 option 4 before 9:15 am or after 3:45 pm.

SchoolMessenger

SchoolMessenger is a quick alert messaging service that the Bellingham School District and its schools use for emergencies, weather-related closures/delays, attendance and general communications such as important school announcements and for other general e-news. My guardian can sign up to receive communications from SchoolMessenger by setting preferences in Skylert.

Skylert

Skylert enables you to receive notifications concerning your child(ren), including messages from Bellingham Public Schools and your child's school. You have control over which notifications to receive and how you would like to receive them. Skylert is accessed via Skyward Family Access, so it is no longer necessary to log in to a separate portal for School Messenger to manage contact preferences.

Tandem Calendar

My guardian can view this district wide calendar at: <http://bellingshamschools.org/calendars> where they can filter to see just the events for Whatcom Middle School or events for any of our Bellingham schools. This calendar will have all school events posted. My guardian can also access the tandem calendar via a link on our Whatcom webpage.

Webpage

My school's webpage is: www.whatcom@bellingshamschools.org This is a great site to check for school events and activities. Our daily bulletin is posted on our webpage along with our monthly newsletter and other pertinent information. Athletic schedules and links to various other events are also posted here.

HEALTH

Health Problems

My guardian will inform the attendance office and/or school nurse if I have any special health conditions (e.g. diabetes, severe allergies, asthma, seizures etc.) This information also needs to be included on the health section of my student's registration form. The school nurse will address serious health concerns.

HIV/AIDS

HIV/Aids - In response to the health threat of HIV to our population, the 1988 Washington State Legislature mandated that a program of prevention education be presented to students yearly, beginning with fifth grade. (AIDS Omnibus Act, RCW 28A.230.070) The Bellingham School District has adopted an appropriate program for HIV prevention education to meet the intent of this law.

State law provides that my guardian must preview the curriculum materials before they can have me excused from participation in the HIV prevention program. Opportunity to preview the curriculum materials is provided each year at a guardian information night. The HIV prevention program is usually taught during the spring. Information letters reminding guardians are sent out prior to the presentation of the curriculum.



Immunization

Certificate of Immunization (CIS) – TDAP Tetnus booster is **REQUIRED FOR 6th Graders!** Immunization forms need to be signed by my guardian in the space provided and the date of the TDAP vaccination recorded. **No other forms will be accepted** other than the one that was provided to me in my packet.

Completed Immunization Forms must be returned PRIOR to C.A.T. day (which takes place the last week of August) or I will not be able to preview my schedule with the rest of my classmates.

Illness

If I get sick at school, I will check in with the attendance secretary. There is a temporary health room where I can wait for my guardian to come pick me up. It is important that I have my current phone number, emergency number, and address on file.

Injuries

If I am injured at school I will receive first aid by office personnel or when available, by the school nurse. My guardian will be contacted if the injury warrants it.

Medications at School

I am aware that the Bellingham School District has a strict policy on the possession and/or taking of medicines at school.

If I need to take oral medicine (prescription or over the counter medicine such as aspirin, Tylenol, cough drops, etc.) at school, I understand that:

- An authorization form, signed by my physician and guardian, with written directions filled out by the physician must be on file. This applies to ANY medication taken at school – including cough drops!
- A new medication form is required for any changes (e.g. time, dosage, or medicine).
- All medications must be in the original container and not require any preparation to administer.
- My guardian must bring medication to school. (Not me!)
- Medication will not be given on field trips unless prior arrangements have been made.
- Authorization forms must be reissued each September for ongoing medications.

If I am responsible and choose to bring my 1 day's dose to school each day, I may opt for the "Self-medication" form instead but still be subject to:

- An authorization form, signed by my physician and guardian, with written directions filled out by the physician must be on file. This applies to ANY medication taken at school – including cough drops!
- A new medication form is required for any changes (e.g. time, dosage, or medicine).
- All medications must be in the original container and not require any preparation to administer.
- I can carry my one dose on me each day along with my paperwork which I must present if an adult inquired about the medication I have in my possession.

Either one of these forms can be picked up from the attendance office.

**MEDICATIONS WILL NOT BE DISPENSED WITHOUT A SIGNED PERMISSION FORM ON FILE
IN THE SCHOOL OFFICE.**

Vision, Hearing & Scoliosis Screening

If I am a 7th grader, I will receive vision, hearing and a scoliosis screening test in the winter. If there are any problems, my guardian will be contacted by the school nurse.

MEAL PROGRAM

Cafeteria

I can deposit money to my lunch account for me to use when I need it. I will use the same lunch ID# that I received in elementary school. If I am new this year I will get a number issued to me. If I need financial assistance, forms for Free or Reduced meals are available in the Main Office (also mailed home in August) and need to be completed at the start of each school year. I may also choose to pay cash to buy my breakfast or lunch. My guardian may also add money to my account by using our online system **MyPaymentsPlus**.

Regular meal - includes protein, vegetable and/or fruit, bread or bread alternate, milk.



The Deli - a selection of pre-made sandwiches, chef salad, bagels with cream cheese, vegetables with low fat dip, fruit, milk.

The Hot Spot - pizza and pasta will be served one or two times per week. The entrée changes daily and may feature: Burger Bar, Cuban Sandwiches, BBQ Beef Sandwiches, Chicken Quesadillas, Chicken Gyros and Philly Cheesesteak Sandwiches.

Grab & Go (pre-made subs, wraps, and salads) will be provided on Early Dismissal days.

Monthly menus are available on line at www.bellinghamschools.org

Food for School Parties

If parents wish to distribute food to students (parties), they are encouraged to purchase packaged food that meets the nutrition standards and to open and share that food at the time of consumption. The Food Services Department will provide and annually update a list of suggested items. (www.bellinghamschools.org) Home baked goods are not permitted.

Lunch Time Procedure

When I am dismissed for lunch I will get my lunch from my locker (if applicable) and report to the Commons. If I am having hot lunch I will line up in the appropriate line and wait for my turn. I will not cut in or hold a spot for my friends. After I discard my trash and clean up around my area I may leave through the Commons to go play out front. If I have a lunch bag/box I can leave it in the bins provided for me. When the bell goes indicating that lunch is over, I will pick up my lunch bag/box from the bins and re-enter the school through the front doors.

If I have any questions I will ask one of the lunch time supervisors, who will help me.

Lunch Time- Where can I go?

Whenever possible, the following areas will be available for me during lunch: front area of the school (sides and back of school are off limits during lunch), the library, and the auditorium on rainy days. From time to time any or all areas may be closed due to other circumstances. Always be prepared to go outside during lunchtime. I will ask a lunch time supervisor for help when needed.

RECOGNITIONS

PAWS – Pillar AWard Student

Pillar **A**Wards are given to students that a staff member wants to recognize for demonstrating one of the four pillars: Stewardship, Compassion, Tenacity and Excellence. Pillar **A**Ward Students take their award to the Assistant Principal who will trade it for a special treat and hang the award on the '*Wall of Wonderfulness*'.

Wildcat Pride Award

Wildcat Pride Awards are given to students nominated by any staff member for their exceptional work or significant improvement in areas of our four pillars: Stewardship, Compassion, Tenacity and Excellence. When a student receives a Wildcat Pride Award their family will be invited to attend an afternoon celebration where students will be awarded a certificate.

SAFETY

Earthquakes, Fire Drills and Lockdowns

Earthquake, fire and lockdown drills will occur at specific times throughout the school year. I will learn how to leave the building in a quick and orderly fashion in case of an emergency alarm and will follow all safety procedures.

Visitors

All visitors must report to the Main Office to sign in and receive a Whatcom Middle School sticker. Classroom visits during class time need to be prearranged with teachers. All visitors to any part of the school must first report to the Main Office. If my guardian wishes to visit a classroom they must first pre-arrange the visit with my teacher.

Volunteers

Anyone volunteering on a regular basis **MUST** register online at the BSD website. Anyone who will have regularly scheduled, unsupervised access to children or developmentally disabled persons **MUST** have a **State Patrol Background on file**.

Weather Emergencies



Severe weather or other emergencies may cause changes to the school day. When this happens, schools may need to close, start late or dismiss early. Plan in advance for such emergencies. Please ensure that your child's school has your family's current emergency contact information. We understand that decisions about school schedules and bus route changes have an impact on our families. We appreciate your patience during these situations. While we know that our students and families are best served when we are open, our main concern is the safety of our students and staff.

Typically, decisions regarding schedule changes are made in the early morning before school. This allows for the most current weather information to factor into the decision. This information is communicated immediately, generally before 6 a.m. In severe weather or an emergency situation:

- Check the website: bellingshamschools.org;
- Call 676-6400 for a recorded message.
- Tune to broadcast media, including:
 - KGMI Radio 790 AM and 96.5 FM
 - KAFE Radio 104.1 FM
 - KOMO-TV Ch. 4
 - KING-TV Ch. 5
 - KIRO-TV Ch. 7

• Make sure your communications preferences and contact information are current in Skyward. You must opt-in for Early AM notification by phone or text. If your e-mail address is in Skyward Family Access, you will automatically receive an email. For assistance, please contact your school secretary or call (360) 676-6520.

LIBRARY

Email/Internet Use

I will receive an email account and access to district network resources after participating in a yearly **Acceptable Use Policy** presentation.

Internet access is available to further educational goals and objectives. I will be safe, smart and a responsible user of all district network resources, including email and access to the Internet. Violations of the **Acceptable Use Policy** will result in a loss of access.



Library Books

Library books are borrowed for a 2-week period. I can check out up to 5 books at any one time. If I have late books out I will not be able to borrow any additional books until those are returned. Books that are lost or damaged will be billed to me. Fines that are not paid by the end of the year will result in the holding back of report cards and yearbooks.

Text Books

Textbooks are loaned to me for my use. If I damage a book or lose a book I will be required to pay for them. Books are bar coded for easy tracking. Fines that are not paid by the end of the year will result in the holding back of report cards and yearbooks.

Who's Who on Campus



Cafeteria Staff - prepare, plan and serve breakfast and lunch for all students and staff. They follow health regulations to ensure healthy meals. My lunch accounts is maintained by the cafeteria staff.

Counselors - encourage and enhance the academic, social and emotional growth of Whatcom students. I can see the counselors by going to the counseling office and signing up with the counseling secretary for an appointment. The school counselors work closely with students, families, and staff and act as a liaison with community agencies.

Custodial Staff - maintain the cleanliness and appearance of the building and grounds. They also repair and replace defective furniture and equipment.

Itinerant Staff - travel between a number of schools to provide special services to students. They are: Psychologists, Speech Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, English Language Learner Teacher, Highly Capable Learner Teacher, Nurse etc.

Library Media Specialist and Assistant - are responsible for the books, equipment and other materials in Whatcom's Learning Resource Center. The library media specialist teaches lessons on the available resources, assists all students and

teachers in the use of resources, and supervises the checkout system for library books and materials. The library media specialist also serves as the resource person for dealing with the computer labs and resources.

Principal and Assistant Principal - are responsible for the overall operation of the educational, social and recreational programs of Whatcom Middle School.

PTSA - are a volunteer group of parents who work together with administration, staff and students to help provide enrichment opportunities that may not otherwise be available due to lack of funding. The PTSA also helps connect volunteers who wish to help at school in some capacity. Please join your PTSA.

Secretaries and Para-Educators - assist the Principal, Assistant Principal, counselors and teachers in accomplishing their responsibilities. Secretaries and Para-Educators deal with student records, instructional materials, attendance procedures, and serve as references for parent and student inquiries.

Student Council (ASB) – is a group of student officers and representatives who are elected by my classmates. They plan student activities and represent students on ASB committees.

Students – we are here to participate in and receive a public education. We are responsible for attending school on a regular basis, providing individual educational materials and participating in lessons and learning activities. We may also choose to take part in a variety of optional activities.

Teachers - are responsible for the required and elective courses at Whatcom. They plan instructional lessons and activities designed to meet the educational goals of the Bellingham School District and Washington State.