



# WESTERN GATEWAY ELEMENTARY

## FAMILY HANDBOOK

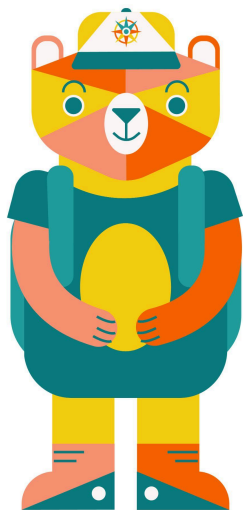
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<https://westerngateway.school/>



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**School Mascot:**

Our school mascot is El Oso who travels the world, exploring and learning. El Oso always comes back excited to share knowledge with others.

**School Mission:**

We create a learning experience that values children, language, culture, and community. We challenge our students to learn, grow, give back to our world – and be confident explorers in life. We invite your family to be part of our school family.

**School Vision:**

Western Gateway Elementary School educates students to understand, contribute to, and thrive in an interdependent world. We foster a spirit of inquiry, service, and social responsibility to the environment, the local community, and the global society.

**The WGES Philosophy:**

1. **Excellent academic performance through language learning** – Western Gateway Elementary School will maintain rigorous academic standards. Research shows that students educated in an immersion environment perform better on standardized tests and have higher scores on college entrance exams than students who learn in a non-immersion environment. Furthermore, students educated through immersion display better problem-solving, critical thinking, and listening skills, in addition to overall language proficiency. Western Gateway Elementary School intends to educate students to the highest academic standards through language education. We challenge and support each student, enabling them to reach their full potential.
2. **Global competence and cultural awareness** – Students' ability to engage in a global society and eventual global workforce is important for future success. Given this, the students at Western Gateway Elementary School will be taught to respect and explore their family heritage and culture, and the backgrounds of their classroom peers, school, and community. They will be exposed to other perspectives, encouraging them to approach ideas with an open mind to understand the differences and similarities between themselves and those around them.
3. **Community-mindedness** – Students at Western Gateway Elementary School will be encouraged to develop a sense of local community, both within the School and surrounding Oklahoma City community, leading to an increase in student well-being and greater overall satisfaction with the school experience.

## **Academic Calendar**

The monthly calendar can be accessed at <https://westerngateway.school/resources/>

Refer to the General Section on our Resource page on the Calendar Button.

## **WGES Arrival/Dismissal Procedures**

*Student Safety is our First Priority*

### **SCHOOL HOURS OF INSTRUCTIONAL TIME**

<b>Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>
8:00 am-3:30 pm All Grades (PreK-4)	8:00 am-2:00 pm All Grades (PreK-4)

**All students will be dismissed at 2:00 pm every Wednesday.**

**All staff will be participating in professional development & instructional planning 2:00-4:00.**

At WGES, every child's safety is important to us. Your patience, understanding, and support of "Operation Cooperation" are appreciated. It remains our highest priority to ensure that students enter and exit cars in a safe and organized way. We need your help to keep the school and your children safe.

We ask everyone to correctly follow our current pick-up and drop-off procedures. Failure to do so creates chaos, frustration, and unsafe conditions. Each family should discuss these loading and walking procedures. Our staff knows that your time is valuable, but **the safety of every student is our first priority.**

#### **General Safety Measures:**

- 👉 Be your child's best example. Please be courteous & follow all the safety guidelines at all times.
- 👉 Use crosswalks to cross streets.
- 👉 Follow all directions from school safety personnel. They can see potential problems you may not.
- 👉 DO NOT BLOCK intersections or accessible marked spaces.
- 👉 Say your goodbyes **before** it's your turn to unload – this will help keep cars moving in line.
- 👉 SINGLE lane in the loading zone ONLY. Do not double up cars side by side to drop off students.
- 👉 Devote more time and be extra cautious on rainy or foggy days. Drive with your headlights on.
- 👉 Please NO CELL PHONE use during drop off or pick up. SAFETY FIRST at all times.
- 👉 Please drive slowly and watch for children and staff members.

#### **Morning Drop-Off Information:**

7:00 am-7:45 am <b>YMCA STUDENTS</b>	YMCA Before Care Students ( <b>GYM Entrance</b> ). Please note that YMCA Drop-off ends at 7:45 am. If you are dropping students off after 7:45 am, please utilize the Car Rider Drop-Off procedures detailed below.
7:30am-7:55am <b>BREAKFAST</b> (breakfast ends at 7:55)	Students eating breakfast enter through the gym entrance and report to the cafeteria.
7:40 am- 8:00 am <b>Students NOT eating breakfast</b>	All students not eating breakfast report directly to the gym or playground.
8:00 am <b>Children report to class.</b>	Gates Close. Students who <b>arrive after 8:00 am are tardy</b> and will need to be signed in <b>by an adult</b> at the front office through School SafeID Kiosk.

- Pull your car as far forward into the loading zone as traffic allows, but DO NOT stop your car in front of a fire hydrant or crosswalks. Police will issue traffic citations for those stopped in fire zones or crosswalks. Drivers may drop off students during supervised times only.
- Students can unload from PASSENGER SIDE of vehicle only. (Move booster seats to passenger side)
- Parents/Guardians, please be alert, ready, and quick. We need to keep the line moving.
- Staff supervise students as they exit vehicles, offer assistance, and guide them along the walkway towards the entrance.
- 8:00 am - Gates/Doors are closed and locked. **Students arriving after 8:00 am must enter through main entrance WITH a parent/guardian.** Students will be counted as tardy and given a tardy slip before being allowed to enter the classroom.

### Afternoon Pickup Information:

- Early checkout ends 30 minutes before the end of the school day (3:00) due to students in transition to their dismissal locations.
- Changing end-of-day transportation is discouraged. However, if you need to change the daily norm of transportation, please send a ***detailed signed note*** to the office that morning or call the office up to one hour before dismissal.
- For another adult to pick up your child, he/she **must be listed on the school record** as authorized to do so. If you have updated information to add to your student's record and dismissal directive, please provide the office with written notification of requested changes. It is imperative that we are able to reach you or another authorized adult in an emergency. **WGES WILL NOT release a child to any person who is NOT listed on the dismissal directive.**
- ***Late Pick-up:*** Students should be picked up no later than 15 minutes after dismissal time. If a student is habitually left at school, he/she will be sent to our YMCA aftercare (onsite). The YMCA charges a fee for students who are left in their care and are not a regular WGES-YMCA registered student. Parents will be responsible for paying this fee to the YMCA for child care.
- We understand that occasionally there are emergencies that come up and we will do everything that we can to assist you. These procedures will enable us to safely dismiss all students in the most efficient and timely manner possible. Thank you for your help and cooperation.

## Dismissal Times

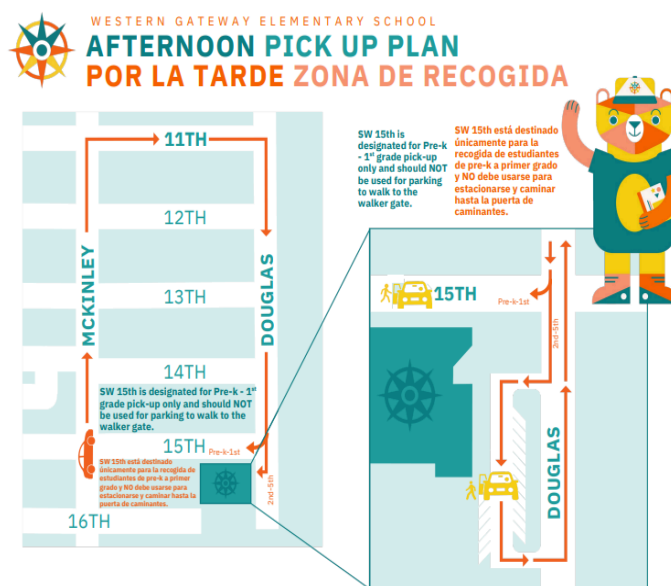
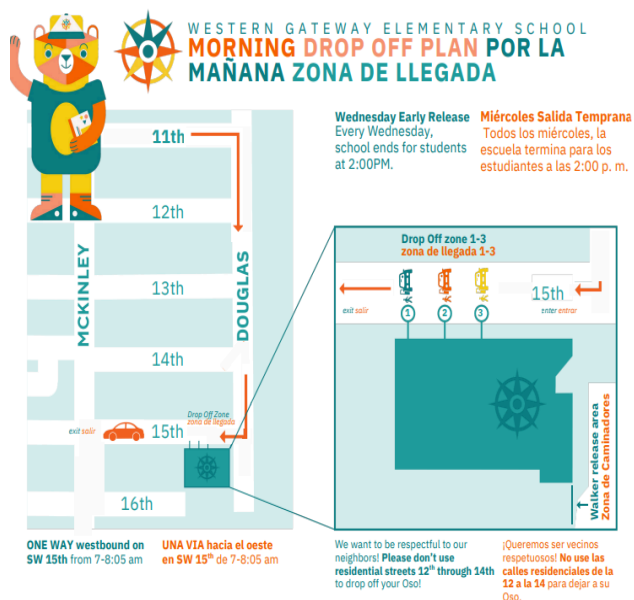
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday	Wednesday
3:30 pm	2:00 pm

### Dismissal Locations:

Car Riders	Front Parking lot	Students remain in classrooms until their number is displayed. Siblings will meet in the holding area prior to loading cars. Parents remain in the car. Car rider tag must be displayed to release students.
Walkers	Southeast Gate	Students remain with designated staff members until released to walking release sites. Students walk directly home. Students in Prek & Kindergarten must be accompanied by an adult.
Daycare Transport	SW 15th	Students remain in classrooms until their Daycare is displayed. Students report to the daycare dismissal area with a designated staff member.
YMCA Aftercare	Cafeteria	YMCA staff will pick students up at 3:20 and take them to the Cafe. Parents pick up YMCA students through the front entrance.

### Car Rider Pickup Procedures:

- Staff will dismiss students at designated loading zones.
- You must remain in your car. Your child will be escorted to your car.
- Supervisors will call students using our Student Match Car Rider System. No child will be released without a matching number card authorized by Western Gateway. No photocopies, printed pictures, or homemade Match Cards will be accepted.
- Students must wait in their classroom until their number is displayed. Students must go immediately to the designated gate. They will not be allowed to stop at restrooms at this time.
- If a student needs assistance buckling into a seat or booster, please pull forward first to allow other cars to load.



## Attendance Policy- add tiers of communication

Student attendance is required for continued enrollment. All schools are required to track attendance according to state law. Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10% (or about 16 days) in a normal 165-day school year, or 2 days a month. Students who do not meet attendance requirements may be found truant and/or withdrawn from WGES by revoking the student's transfer, if applicable, or other disciplinary action may be taken. Truancy, **including excessive late arrivals, (as well as late pick-ups)** may result in referral to appropriate authorities.

All students must attend school regularly. However, if a student has to be absent due to illness or other extenuating circumstances, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to notify the school by 8:30 a.m. on the day of the absence or prior.

Any student who arrives after 9:45 a.m. (9:00 a.m. on Wednesdays) will be counted ½ day absence for the morning. Any students who leave prior to 2:00 p.m. will be counted ½ day absence for the afternoon. On Wednesdays, any student leaving prior to 1:00 will be counted ½ day absence for the afternoon.

**If the Head of School, or designee, determines that a parent and/or student are not upholding their agreement(s) with the School and abiding by School policy, a student may be denied a transfer to the School in future school years, or a transfer may be revoked effective immediately.**



## Before/After School Care

WGES partners with the YMCA for our before/after school care program. The program will be onsite at Western Gateway Elementary School and will be available from 7 a.m. until school begins and when school dismisses until 6 p.m. The YMCA offers childcare during breaks and vacations at the Downtown YMCA facility. For more information, please contact the Downtown YMCA.

## Bullying

Bullying at WGES is taken very seriously and will not be tolerated. Students should always feel safe to notify their teacher or administrator if they feel they are being bullied or witness a bullying event. In 2014, the Centers for Disease Control and the Department of Education released the first federal definition of bullying. The definition includes three core elements:

- unwanted aggressive behavior
- observed or perceived power imbalance
- repetition or high likelihood of repetition of bullying behaviors

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines bullying as any unwanted aggressive behavior(s) by another youth or group of youths, who are not siblings or current dating partners, that involves an observed or perceived power imbalance and is repeated multiple times or is highly likely to be repeated. Bullying may inflict harm or distress on the targeted youth including physical, psychological, social, or educational harm. This definition helps determine whether an incident is bullying or other types of aggressive behavior, such as one-time physical aggression or fights, online arguments, or incidents between adults.

### **Reporting vs. Tattling**

- “Reporting” is telling an adult if a person is doing something harmful or on purpose. It indicates a need for help or that the student is scared.
- “Tattling” is trying to get another person in trouble or trying to get attention.
- Students should be encouraged to report “bullying” behavior. Once reported, they should be acknowledged for doing the right thing and told that the adult will investigate the matter and address it.

### **How to Respond to a Bully**

Students are taught to look the bully in the eye, respond immediately, and assertively say:

1. “Stop. I don’t like what you said (did).”
2. If the bully does not stop what he/she is doing, say... “If you do not stop, it is my responsibility to report you (tell an adult).”
3. If the bully does not stop immediately, report the incident to an adult immediately.

Stopping bullying is the responsibility of all school personnel. Faculty and staff will investigate all notifications of bullying. If your child has been bullied or witnessed a bullying event, a Student Witness/Testimony Form is to be completed and submitted. This form can be found on our school

website in the RESOURCES Tab under “Bullying Policy.” Results will be reported back to the parties involved, within the boundaries of FERPA laws.

### **Checking Students Out**

Parents must sign their child in and out at the office when a student leaves/returns to the school during the day. The only people who will be allowed to check out a student are those who are listed on their enrollment information as parents/guardians or emergency contacts. If you ask someone else to pick up a child, please notify the office in writing before 2:30 p.m. (M, T, Th, F) and before 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday. Anyone picking up students must be prepared to provide proper identification and must be at least 18 years old. Students who leave during the day and are gone for more than 2 hours will be marked as ½ day absent. Please refrain from picking students up during the last 15 minutes of school. Please follow our normal dismissal procedures at these times.

### **Child Custody Issues/Custodial Rights of Parents**

Each parent or court-appointed guardian shall be assumed to have all legal rights pertaining to parenthood or guardianship. In those circumstances in which children's parents/guardians are legally separated or divorced, the parent(s) must provide the Head of School with a court order delineating the custodial rights of the parties involved. Unless parental rights have been legally waived or revoked, both parents retain full parental rights regarding access to school records, grades, parent-teacher conferences, IEP meetings, and so forth. WGES will remain neutral in custody cases and will rely on a parental agreement or court documents in honoring parental requests. Any changes require the parent(s) to provide the Head of School with the updated court order.

### **Child Find**

The purpose of special education is to minimize the impact of the disability and maximize the opportunity for the student to be successful in school. Western Gateway Elementary School provides programs for children who qualify for special education and related services. If you suspect your child may have a disability, or if you would like more information about special education services, please contact the school.

### **CHILD FIND INFORMATION**

This notice is to inform you that Western Gateway Elementary School is maintaining an ongoing Child Find search to locate, identify and evaluate any child aged 3-21 with an established or suspected disability. Child Find efforts include all individuals aged 3-21 not enrolled in school as well as those who attend public and private schools, Head Start, state institutions, and other child care or treatment facilities.

Western Gateway Elementary School has established and maintains a comprehensive screening and

multidisciplinary referral, evaluation, and eligibility process for the identification of children with suspected disabilities. Child Find activities contain a mandate for public awareness of contact, location and established screening procedures. Information regarding evaluation procedures can be obtained by contacting the school.

As mandated by the Oklahoma State Department of Education, Western Gateway Elementary School is required to fully inform parents that personally identifying information is maintained on all children who are referred and evaluated under the provisions of Child Find. The types of information sought may include but are not limited to: parent concerns, developmental, adaptive behavior, socio-cultural, health/medical, vision, hearing, motor, perceptual/processing, behavior, psychological, vocational, and information gained through observations in the classroom and other environments.

It is the responsibility of Western Gateway Elementary School to inform parents/guardians of their rights under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and their rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Procedural Safeguards.

### **Child Nutrition**

All meals served follow the guidelines of the National School Lunch and the National School Breakfast Programs. A computerized cashiering system is used for all WGES students in the cafeteria. It is the responsibility of the parent to monitor and maintain a positive balance in their account. This system has many advantages for the student. The two most important advantages are:

1. No need for cash each day as the meals may be purchased in advance.
2. A PayPal Account has been set up to facilitate advanced purchase of meals. Contact the office for more information.

Parents are welcome to eat breakfast or lunch with their child, whether it is purchased at school or brought into school. If parents wish to eat the school breakfast or school lunch with their child, they must pay the exact amount in advance at the office. If bringing a meal(s), please be aware that our students are encouraged to eat healthy meals. High-sugar drinks such as soda and high-sugar foods such as candy are prohibited in the cafeteria and classrooms. There are guest tables designated for parents and their children in the cafeteria. Meal prices are set annually and are posted on the Western Gateway website.

#### **Free or Reduced Meal Benefits**

Free and reduced meal forms are sent home at the beginning of school. Forms are also available on the school website or in the office. Applications and DHS Benefit Letters must be processed, eligibility determined and approval notification made before students receive free or reduced-price meals. This process may take up to ten business days.

### **Civil Rights**

The School complies with the Civil Rights Laws [Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973] in assuring the students, parents, and employees of the school that the school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, disability, religion, or age. The Head of School is designated by the Board to coordinate the School's efforts to comply with this assurance.

### **Current Student Information**

For your child's protection in the event of an illness or injury, schools must have the current address, home and work phone numbers, and at least two emergency contacts. Parents and/or guardians must call or send a note to the office if this information changes. All phone numbers must be working numbers with voicemail. It is imperative that the school can contact a parent and/or guardian at all times. It is the school's goal to establish effective communication between parents and staff. Providing accurate contact information helps maintain effective communication and a safe environment.

### **Devices and Technology Use**

If a student brings a cell phone or other device to school, they must keep it in their backpack & cubby during the school day. The phone must be turned off or on silent. The school is not responsible for any device that is stolen or broken at school. Misuse of a technology device could result in a referral to the office and parent/guardian may be contacted.

All students will receive instruction on digital citizenship for using Chromebooks, iMacs, and iPads using [www.commonsense.org](http://www.commonsense.org). Students and parents will be required to **sign a technology agreement** at the beginning of the school year and must adhere to all portions of this contract.

WGES uses a digital web-based filtering system to provide internet safety for all school devices.

**Discipline-** add tiers of parent communication and info about tracking referrals

### **Student Discipline/In School**

The Western Gateway School Board of Education believes that the school's primary goal is to educate. However, education includes establishing norms of social behavior and assisting students in understanding and attaining those norms. Occasionally, corrective actions are necessary for the benefit of the individual and the school. It is the policy of the School that students may be disciplined for any misconduct related to the programs or activities of the School.

Each student shall be treated in a fair and equitable manner. Disciplinary action will be based on a careful assessment of the circumstances surrounding each infraction. The following are some examples of these circumstances:

1. The seriousness of the offense;
2. The effect of the offense on other students and/or staff;
3. Whether the offense is physically or mentally injurious to other people;
4. Whether the incident is isolated or habitual behavior;
5. The manifestation of a disability;

6. Any other circumstances which may be appropriately considered

Standards of behavior for all members of society are generally a matter of common sense. Some behaviors are not acceptable in society generally, and particularly in a school environment. When, in the judgment of a teacher or administrator, a student misbehaves, is involved or has been involved in unacceptable behavior, appropriate remedial or corrective action will be taken.

<b>Minor Infraction/Classroom Managed</b>	<b>Major Infraction/Admin Managed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Disruption</li><li>● Disrespect</li><li>● Non-compliance</li><li>● Property misuse</li><li>● Misuse of technology device</li><li>● Physical contact</li><li>● Inappropriate language</li><li>● Lying</li><li>● Cheating</li><li>● Left supervised area</li><li>● Trash/littering</li><li>● Theft/possession of stolen property</li><li>● Name calling</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Habitual misbehaviors</li><li>● Physical aggression or fighting</li><li>● Major defiance or tantrum</li><li>● Class disruption (repeated/sustained)</li><li>● Stealing/theft</li><li>● Threats/harassment/bullying</li><li>● Property damage/vandalism</li><li>● Inappropriate language, exposure, touching</li><li>● Major or repeated lying/cheating</li><li>● Dangerous weapon (threat/harm)</li><li>● Alcohol, tobacco, drugs, e-cigarettes</li></ul>

### **Student Discipline/Out of School**

The Western Gateway School Board of Education recognizes that out-of-school conduct of students is not normally a concern of the Board. However, the Board believes that disciplinary action for conduct occurring off school property or outside of school hours and not involving a school activity is proper if the conduct has an adverse effect upon the School. Therefore, it is the policy of this Board that any student will be subject to disciplinary action including, but not limited to, suspension from School for any conduct, which, in the opinion of the school administrators, has an adverse impact upon the School, even if such misconduct occurs off school property and during non-school time. Such activity includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Damaging school property;
2. Engaging in activity that causes physical or emotional harm to other students, teachers, or other school personnel, including social media;
3. Engaging in activity that directly impedes discipline at School or the general welfare of School activities.

### **Five-Tier Discipline Plan- change to 3 tiers to align with parent communication plan??**

The following is the WGES five-step discipline plan that will be used to maintain fair and consistent consequences for all students. Administrators will work with teachers, parents, and students for the implementation of the plan.

The classroom teacher will document minor infractions as necessary. The child's action will determine the level at which he/she is placed and the consequence received. If further/repeated infractions occur,

the child will advance to the next level. Please reinforce that proper behavior is expected at school so that we can have a safe and orderly environment where everyone can learn. Should you have any questions, please contact a WGES school administrator.

Tier	Procedures & Consequences
Tier 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Conference with student</li> <li>● Parent may be contacted via phone, written notice or electronic notice</li> <li>● Time Out</li> <li>● Loss of privileges</li> <li>● Apology or restitution</li> </ul>
Tier 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parent conference via phone, in-person, or virtual</li> <li>● Student behavior plan/contract</li> <li>● Time Out</li> <li>● Loss of privileges</li> <li>● Apology or restitution</li> </ul>
Tier 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parent conference via phone, in-person, or virtual</li> <li>● Alternative in-school placement (ISS-in-school suspension)</li> <li>● Apology or restitution</li> </ul>
Tier 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parent conference via phone, in-person, or virtual</li> <li>● Out-of-school suspension (OSS- out of school suspension)</li> <li>● Apology or restitution</li> </ul>
Tier 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Revoke transfer to WGES</li> <li>● Alert appropriate authorities</li> <li>● Long Term Suspension or expulsion</li> </ul>

### **Student Suspension and Revocation of Transfer**

It is the policy of the Western Gateway School Board of Education that the Head of School may suspend a student or revoke a student's transfer to the School for any of the following reasons:

1. Acts of immorality;
2. Violations of School policy or regulations;
3. Possession of an intoxicating beverage, illegal drug, or other illegal substances;
4. Possession of missing or stolen property if the property is reasonably suspected to have been taken from a student, a school employee, or the school during or after school activities;
5. Possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled dangerous substance (Uniform Controlled Dangerous Substances Act);
6. Possession of a firearm;
7. Any act that disrupts the academic atmosphere of the school, or endangers or threatens fellow students, teachers, or officials or damages property; and
8. Adjudication as a delinquent for a violent or non-violent offense.

A student who has been suspended from any school within the state of Oklahoma, or another state, for a violent act or an act showing deliberate or reckless disregard for the health or safety of employees or other students, shall not be entitled to enroll in the School until the term of the suspension has been met or the time of suspension has expired and may be a consideration by the School as to whether to approve a transfer.

### **Emergency Protocol**

Western Gateway Elementary School has established a Standard Response Protocol (SRP). Weather events, fire, accidents, and intruders, and other threats to student safety are scenarios that are planned and trained for by students, teachers, staff, and administration.

The SRP is based on these four actions: Lockout, Lockdown, Evacuate, and Shelter. In the event of an emergency, action and appropriate direction will be taken. Western Gateway Elementary School is required by and complies with the Oklahoma School Security Commission (OSSC) to complete Security, Tornado, Fire, and other drills and to report when these drills take place.

### **English Language Learners**

Western Gateway Elementary School has established an English Language Learners (ELL) Program. The Board recognizes English to be the primary language spoken and taught within the School in the single-language program. In the Dual Language program, the Board recognizes that both English and Spanish will be spoken and taught in the framework of a 50/50 immersion program. The School will provide programs, services and activities designed to meet all state and national academic standards for English language learners equivalent to those standards expected of all learners.

#### **ELL Testing**

Appropriate testing (WIDA) will be administered to students in grades PreK-12 whose primary language is not English in order to determine English language skill proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. All English language learners will be identified for testing, appropriate placement, and specialized instruction. For more information, contact the Head of School.

### **Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

- 1) The right to inspect and review the student's educational records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the Head of School or designee a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Head of School or designee will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should send written notice to the Head of School or designee, clearly identify the part of the record they want to be changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3) The right to consent to the disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's educational records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a person serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in the performance of his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the School discloses educational records without consent to officials of other school schools or post-secondary schools in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance Office U. S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue SW Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

### **Guidelines for Visiting Animals**

To limit the risk of injury and allergic reactions from animals to students and teachers, the school has established guidelines for animals in the classroom that include animals that parents bring to visit a classroom. Parents who would like to take an animal to visit a child's classroom need to contact the child's teacher in advance to obtain the specific guidelines and fill out the necessary form. Teachers wanting to have a classroom pet must also check for allergic reactions of students prior to obtaining a class pet.

#### **Service animals**

A service animal means any dog that is individually trained and certified to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Tasks performed can include, among other things, pulling a wheelchair, retrieving dropped items, alerting a person to a sound, reminding a person to take medication, or pressing an elevator button.



Emotional support animals, comfort animals, and therapy dogs are not service animals under Title II and Title III of the ADA. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not considered service animals either. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability. While Emotional Support Animals or Comfort Animals are often used as part of a medical treatment plan as therapy animals, they are not considered service animals under the ADA and are not allowed at school.

## **Head Lice**

When a student is found to have live head lice or nits:

1. The parent is notified and information related to detection and elimination of head lice and nits may be provided to the parent or guardian.
2. The student will be sent home from school to avoid any other students or staff from being infected.
3. The parent is instructed that the student must be treated before returning to School, and evidence of the treatment should be provided to the School (e.g., used treatment container/note/ store receipt).
4. The school may check the student's head upon return to School. If live lice or nits are found, the student should not return to the classroom. Parents will be instructed to remove all live lice and nits before the student returns.
5. If only nits are found, the parent will be notified to keep combing them out with a lice comb at least daily for the next two weeks.
6. School staff may do follow-up head checks to confirm lice and nit elimination efforts.
7. If live lice or nits are found, the process of notification to parents/guardians begins again.

**When to check beyond the identified student with live lice or nits:**

1. Determine if the student has siblings in the School. If yes, then check the siblings.
2. Full classroom screenings for head lice may be done as deemed necessary. Full class checks are not customary but will be conducted only in extreme cases as determined by the school nurse or administrator.

## **Health Screenings**

Each year various health screenings are conducted at school. While each school is different in the screenings they conduct, the following health screenings may be performed at Western Gateway Elementary School: vision, hearing, and/or dental. If you do not want your child screened, please call WGES and specify which screenings you do not want to be performed on your child. You will be asked to provide, in writing, any requests.

## **Home & School Communications**

In an effort to streamline the many outlets in which communication is distributed, we have developed a plan to assist families. This plan will help guide, manage, and improve communication between Western Gateway Elementary School and its families. The plan outlines which channels the school plans to use for timely, accurate information. These communication tools have been separated into two categories: essential and recommended.

### **Essential Tools**

**School Status Connect:** This is the go-to resource for day-to-day information from classrooms and the school. Teachers issue invitations to parents to join their accounts and then use this app as their primary communication tool. School administrators may also post announcements by grade level or for the entire school. Parents may sign up for activities and send direct messages to teachers. The app can be downloaded at [classtag.com](http://classtag.com) or in the App Store. Parents may adjust their settings to receive text or email alerts as well as notifications. SCHOOL STATUS CONNECT will be used as the main source of school information. If you need assistance downloading and/or accessing School Status Connect, your child's teacher can also provide help. The "help section" for parents in School Status Connect is another great resource. School Status Connect also has a translation tool built into the settings. Please ask your child's teacher if you need assistance with setting up messages in another language.

<https://www.classtag.com/schools/western-gateway-elementary-school>

**Email:** All-school email "blasts" are used for monthly newsletters from the main office and for more in-depth school communication, such as Board Highlights. (If you are not receiving email blasts, please contact the office and you will be added to the distribution list.) Additionally, classroom teachers are expected to send out weekly classroom newsletters either through our School Status Connect app, direct emails, or Thursday Folders.

**Website:** Our website has detailed information about Western Gateway Elementary School, including frequently asked questions and enrollment information. A great feature is the Parent Resources Tab which includes curriculum information, various forms, the family handbook, procedures, etc.

<https://westerngateway.school/>

**Take-Home Folders:** Students are sent home with folders each Thursday. These folders contain completed schoolwork, behavior charts, the school community monthly newsletter, notices about special events, not-for-profit community group fliers, or important documents that require parents' signatures (e.g. re-enrollment forms, report cards).

Please check the backpacks every Thursday for the **BRIGHT GREEN FOLDER**. Remove all items, read and sign any documents that need a parent's signature, and then return the BRIGHT GREEN FOLDER to your child's backpack every FRIDAY. Teachers will check backpacks Friday morning for any documents that need to be reviewed, signed, and returned.

**School Newsletters:** Monthly newsletters are sent to parents and the school community from WGES. This newsletter contains celebrations, information, and communication.

**Main Lobby:** The school's main lobby/reception area makes available a variety of information we receive from for-profit groups. Materials typically include upcoming events in the OKC area, discounts, and promotions available from local businesses.

The main lobby is designed to be a secured entrance that protects the students and staff at Western Gateway Elementary School. Please be sure to bring identification with you so you can be permitted to enter the building. The staff at WGES will do their best to make every guest and visitor feel safe, welcomed, and valued.

### **Recommended Tools**

**WGES Facebook:** Social media platforms celebrate and promote the school! This gives the community a glimpse into the school's current events, celebrations, and activities.

- Communicating with school leaders, teachers and staff are best conducted through personal visits, phone calls or emails; WGES employees will NOT engage in messaging using Social Media.

**WGES Instagram:** The school posts pictures and videos that celebrate and promote school events, teacher highlights and classroom projects.

- Communicating with school leaders, teachers and staff are best conducted through personal visits, phone calls or emails; WGES employees will NOT engage in messaging using social media.

**Parent Organization Website & Facebook Page:** These resources are maintained by a parent organization and promote parent organization events, fundraisers, and volunteer opportunities. Learn how to get involved with other families and teachers!

**Facebook Closed Groups:** Private forums allow families to connect as they see fit. Families use these groups to make new friends, network, and share stories with other parents. Information shared and commented upon in these forums may be accurate, but should not be considered official school information. Parents should refer to one of the essential outlets listed in the section above for official school news.

WGES school leaders, teachers, or staff do not moderate or participate in discussions in closed groups.

## **Homework**

At WGES, we acknowledge the potential value of students working at home on tasks and assignments. Research indicates that the type of homework varies depending on the age of the child. Although there are mixed findings on whether homework actually increases students' academic achievement, many teachers and parents agree that homework develops students' initiative and responsibility. Studies generally have found homework to be most helpful if they are carefully planned by the teachers and has applicable meaning to students.

### **What Is Homework?**

Homework is defined as out-of-class tasks assigned to students in support of skills taught in the classroom. There are three types of homework: practice, preparation, and extension.

- Practice assignments reinforce newly acquired skills
- Preparation assignments help students get ready for activities that will occur in the classroom
- Extension assignments are projects that should parallel classwork

An emphasis on differentiated homework assignments is highly encouraged. In addition, homework will not be assigned as a disciplinary consequence.

### **Effective Homework Assignments**

- Are curriculum-based and meet the needs of students through differentiation/choice
- Are designed to require NO additional teaching outside of the classroom
- Are engaging, relevant to student interests, and help students connect with the real world
- Should not require resources or technology to which a student may not have access
- Should not require parents/guardians to teach new concepts; and
- Are reviewed, given academic feedback, and returned to the student in a reasonable time

### **Timeframe for Homework**

The WGES school day is longer than most schools. Recognizing that students also need quality time with family/friends and may participate in other activities (e.g. music lessons, sports), homework may be provided to students up to 2-3 days per week within these approximate timeframes:

- Pre-K & Kindergarten: 20 minutes of daily at-home reading\*, flashcard practice,
- 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> grades: 30 minutes, including the 20 minutes of daily at-home reading\*
- 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> grades: 40 minutes, including the 20 minutes of daily at-home reading\*

\*All students are expected to participate in at least 20 minutes of daily at-home reading. Activities may include reading to/with your child and/or independent reading. Typically, most children enjoy being read to, regardless of their age. Depending upon your child's developmental reading stage, she/he may be ready for more independent reading. Independent reading levels are predictably one grade level less than the current instructional reading level. Reading for pleasure at an independent reading level builds fluency and comprehension while also inspiring a lifelong love of reading.

Completion of work due to an absence(s) may result in a longer time commitment than the above approximated times. Parents should contact the teacher to arrange for missed work.

We encourage students to have well-balanced lives outside of school and we value the time away from the classroom. Students may be involved in a range of after-school organized activities such as dance, singing, sports, drama, and cultural activities. And, finally, we firmly believe that students should have relaxation and recreational times.

## **Illnesses**

When students and staff are sick, we encourage them to stay home. It is important to stay home at least 24 hours after a fever (chills; sweating or flushed appearance) has disappeared **without** using fever-reducing medicine. A student needs his/her fever to be below 100 degrees without medicine for a minimum of 24 hours. Twenty-four hours is also the minimum amount of time since they last vomited or had diarrhea, before returning to school.

### **Immunizations**

Oklahoma's Immunization Act was passed by the state legislature in 1970. It requires all students to meet immunization requirements **BEFORE** they enter or attend any public or private school in the state. Please help us follow the law & make certain your child can legally attend school on day one.

The law states that the Oklahoma State Board of Health (*not the school*) will establish the regulations specifying which vaccines and how many doses of each vaccine are required. The immunization requirements are specified by the State Board of Health. For more information, visit this website: [Immunizations](#) .

When enrolling at WGES, bring one or more of the following to the school.

- A record of your child's current up-to-date vaccinations
- A record showing your child is in the process of receiving the required vaccines
- Apply for an exemption. (Oklahoma law allows exemptions for medical, religious or personal reasons. Students may have an exemption to one or more vaccines and receive the other vaccinations.) Schools must send a copy of all exemption certificates to the Oklahoma State Department of Health Immunization Service for their approval.

Contact our school nurse if you have questions or need assistance.

## **Instructional Framework**

### **WGES Educational Program**

The curriculum and instruction model of Western Gateway Elementary School has one pathway: the dual-language immersion program. WGES promotes a love of languages and positive cross-cultural interactions, designed to provide an advantage to children living in an increasingly globalized world. Teachers at the School are highly trained to provide a challenging and enriched curriculum through a myriad of strategies and activities designed to teach core areas and promote language acquisition.

### **Dual-Language Education Path**

In the Dual Language (DL) Path, both English and Spanish are utilized to provide literacy and content instruction to students. The goals for students who complete the dual-language education program are:

- To achieve high linguistic proficiency in two languages,
- To achieve average or above-average academic proficiency in two languages,
- To develop positive cross-cultural attitudes.

In order to meet the educational objectives of the DL Program, students should begin the DL Program in preK, Kindergarten, or 1st grade. Students will not be enrolled in the DL Program if they did not begin as DL students by 1st grade unless they can demonstrate Spanish language proficiency appropriate to grade level according to a standardized assessment selected by the Head of School, such as the NWEA MAP Assessment.

Language acquisition requires time, commitment, and support. To ensure that students succeed in a supportive environment, the parents and the School must form a partnership. Parents of students participating in the DL Program are expected to:

- Support their children's linguistic, academic, and socio-cultural development,
- Commit to completing the elementary DL Program (six years),
- Support the continued development of the native language and Spanish at home,
- **Become involved in the classroom, school functions, and events,**
- **Maintain the child's attendance rate and reduce absenteeism,**
- Attend (monthly) dual-language education meetings,
- Promote, advocate, and support the DL Program,
- Encourage the use of the second language at home and in the community.

To ensure that children succeed in the DL Program, the student should continue in a DL Program for a minimum of six years. Parents need to be aware that research shows that, although dual-language students will generally surpass their monolingual peers, this heightened achievement often becomes apparent only after about six years.

## **Lost and Found**

We request that your child's name be clearly marked on all items that come to school. If you want the lost item returned, put your child's first and last name on it. Lost items that are unclaimed will be donated quarterly to local charities. Any unmarked items will be donated to local charities.

## **Meal Charge Policy**

In compliance with the *Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010* and SP 46-2016, **Western Gateway Elementary School** implements the following meal charge policy:

### **Local Meal Charge Policy Considerations**

1. Students who are unable to pay for their meal at the time of the meal service may charge either breakfast or lunch;
2. The limit for student charges is \$150;
3. If a student charges a meal, the student may be allowed to receive a reimbursable meal with no limitations;
4. Families can find assistance by contacting the Family Liaison and/or Head of School;

5. The school will notify households of negative balances by email or direct mail;

#### **Local Meal Charge Policy Communication Requirements**

1. Households will be notified of the charge policy at the beginning of each year;
2. Transfer students will be notified of the charge policy during enrollment;
3. Parents will be notified at the time of any changes to the charge policy;
4. Staff will be trained annually on the lunch charge policy.

#### **Alternate Meal Policy Considerations**

1. If a student charges a meal, the student may be allowed to receive a reimbursable meal with no limitations.

#### **Delinquent/Bad Debt Practices**

1. Households will be notified of delinquent debt monthly;
2. Households who are delinquent will be reviewed and/or encouraged to submit an application;
3. Households will be notified by mail of unpaid meal charges, expected payment dates, and collection efforts;
4. The Superintendent/Head of School will determine whether the achievement of program purposes would be jeopardized by the diversions of staff time and effort to collect payment;
5. The school may solicit donations or use general fund collections to ensure that funds will be obtained to restore any unallowable bad debt to the School Food Service Account.

*Reference: SP 46-2016; Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-296)*

### **Medical Alert Form**

Parents are requested to complete the “Annual Medical Alert” for each child enrolled at WGES. This form alerts all staff to any medical issues your child may have (i.e. allergies, asthma, diabetes, seizure disorders, hearing or vision problems, etc.) This also alerts all staff to the treatment or restrictions that need to be followed in case of an emergency.

### **Medications Given At School**

If possible, parents are advised to try to give medication at home on a schedule other than during school hours. It is the responsibility of the parent to inform appropriate school personnel of medical conditions of the student and medications that the student is taking that may have an effect on their child’s educational success, even if the medications are not taken at school. This information will be kept in confidential health records. If, however, it is necessary that medication be given during the school day, compliance with the following instructions is required. For the safety of all students, students are not allowed to have any medication in their possession (unless pre-approved items such as EpiPens). All medication to be given at school must be kept in the school clinic regardless of the student’s age. The “Authorization for Administering Medication” form must be on file with the WGES

office in order for students to receive medication during the school day. For the complete list of regulations on giving medications at school, contact the office.

## **Meningococcal Meningitis**

**What is meningococcal disease?** Meningococcal disease is a disease caused by the bacteria *Neisseria meningitidis*, also called meningococcus. This bacteria can infect the blood, causing septicemia. It can also infect the covering of the brain and spinal cord, causing meningitis.

**How is this disease spread?** Meningococcal disease spreads by direct contact with the saliva or with respiratory droplets from the nose and throat of an infected person.

**Who is at risk of getting this disease?** Some groups of people have a higher risk of meningococcal disease, such as first year college students living in dormitories or new military recruits living in barracks. Other persons at increased risk include household contacts of a person known to have had this disease, immunocompromised people, people without a spleen, and people traveling to parts of the world where meningococcal disease is more common. Exposure to tobacco smoke and having a concurrent upper respiratory infection also increase the risk of meningococcal disease. Infants are at highest risk, but rates decrease after infancy and then increase in adolescence and young adulthood.

**What are the symptoms?** Ten percent or more of people are thought to be carrying *Neisseria meningitidis* in their nose and throat without being ill, which is called “asymptomatic carriage”. Of these people, about 1% can develop illness, which may be meningitis or a bloodstream infection called septicemia or meningococcemia. As described above, some people can carry the bacteria in their nose and throat without ever becoming ill. Signs of illness may include fever, severe headache, nausea, vomiting, and a rash. People who develop meningitis can have fever, intense headache, nausea, vomiting, stiff neck, and extreme sensitivity to light. It is important to seek care from a healthcare provider as soon as possible if these symptoms appear. Meningococcal disease has a 15% risk of death if it is not treated promptly.

**How soon do the symptoms appear?** The symptoms may appear two to ten days after infection, but usually within three to four days.

**What is the treatment for meningococcal disease?** Antibiotics, such as penicillin or a cephalosporin such as ceftriaxone, are used to treat meningococcal disease.

**Should people who have been around a person infected with meningococcal disease receive treatment?** When meningococcal disease occurs in one person, only the people who have had recent close contact with that person’s respiratory secretions are recommended to receive antibiotics. These include household members, intimate contacts, health care personnel performing mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, daycare center playmates, etc. Such people are usually advised to obtain a prescription for a specific antibiotic (rifampin, ciprofloxacin, ceftriaxone, or azithromycin) from their physician. The health department will contact the individuals who are recommended to receive antibiotics, and advise



them of options to obtain antibiotics. Casual contacts including classmates, co-workers, or those in a factory setting are not at increased risk of disease when a single person has meningococcal illness. When clusters or outbreaks occur, the health department may expand the recommendations for which groups need to receive antibiotics to prevent possible spread. Antibiotics do not protect people from future exposure to *Neisseria meningitidis*.

**Is there a vaccine to prevent meningococcal disease?** Three types of meningococcal vaccines are available in the United States. They are effective against four of the five most common disease-causing types of meningococcal disease: A, C, Y, and W-135. An additional vaccine is now available that protects against serogroup B, but is currently only licensed for high-risk children over ten years of age. Consult with your healthcare provider or the local health department about receiving the vaccine.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

In furtherance of the Mission of Western Gateway Elementary School (the “School”), it shall be the policy of the School’s Board of Education (the “Board”) to prohibit discrimination based on race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, socio-economic status, mental or physical disability, veteran status, citizenship, family and marital status, or any other status protected by federal, state, or local law. In addition to the classes identified above, the School shall also not discriminate against a student for enrollment purposes based on proficiency in the English language or measures of achievement, aptitude, or athletic ability.

This nondiscrimination policy shall apply to members of the Board, teachers, staff and students of the School. A copy of this policy shall be distributed to Board members, teachers, staff, parents, and students.

The Board’s intent with this policy is to foster an environment that is inclusive and welcoming for all students, parents, staff, volunteers and members of the community.

### **Notice Regarding Directory Information**

Please read carefully this notification of rights concerning the privacy of student information. If you wish to restrict the release of information about your child, please annually notify WGES in writing.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a federal law, requires that WGES, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child’s education records. However, WGES may disclose appropriately designated “directory information” without your written consent, unless you advise the school to the contrary. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow WGES to use this type of information from your child’s education records in certain school publications or media stories.

Examples of these uses may include:

- Recognition lists such as academic achievements or citizenship awards,

- School directories,
- Printed programs showing student roles in plays or other fine arts programs,
- Stories written or taped by newspaper, television, radio or Internet media

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to:

- Companies that publish yearbooks
- Companies that provide tutoring

WGES has designated the following information for possible disclosure:

- Student's name
- Parent's or guardian's name
- Address
- Email address
- Telephone number
- Grade level
- Honors and awards received
- Student statements/quotes
- Photographs
- Audio or video or files which identify the student's participation in and/or achievements earned in enrolled courses or recognized activities and sports.

The school will be free to release or use directory information as appropriate without prior consent, unless parents notify the Head of School in writing within 10 days of the date of receiving this handbook that the above information should not be released without consent. Parents/guardians may submit a written request to WGES. Requests must be submitted each academic year.

## Parties

No more than three parties are planned during the school year. When these parties occur may change from year to year. Teachers may plan special events (not additional parties) that are an extension of the regular curriculum. Parents may assist with special activities anytime during the school year under the direct supervision of the classroom teacher. A certified teacher must be always responsible for students.

**Please bring healthy snacks and treats for parties. WGES asks that parents refrain from a large amount of sugary treats, cookies, cupcakes and soda for parties.**

Floral or balloon bouquets that are delivered to school will not be delivered to classrooms but kept in the office. The student may be called out of his/her class to see the arrangement, but will not be delivered to class. Please refrain from sending flowers or balloons to school.

If you are planning a private birthday party, please work with the teacher to distribute invitations in an unobtrusive manner. Invitations are allowed to be distributed in class only if the entire class is being invited. You may wish to obtain a school directory for published personal information.

### **Photo/Media Release**

The WGES enrollment form includes a section in which parents sign to grant permission for their student's image to be used in school publications. Student photographs are commonly used in yearbooks, websites, newsletters and other school publications. Parents who do not wish for their child's image to be used in school publications must notify WGES in writing each academic year.

### **Problem Solving Procedures**

From time to time, problems may arise that need to be addressed. The following procedures have been put into place to secure a fair and equitable resolution for the problem.

1. A parent-teacher conference should always be the **first level of communication**.
2. If an agreeable solution cannot be reached, a Parent and Head of School conference may be arranged. These procedures will be kept as informal and confidential as may be appropriate in order to facilitate reconciliation, communication, and the strengthening of our school community.

Using social media for problem solving is not an acceptable mode of communication or solution. Please contact your child's teacher to begin the process of problem solving.

### **Safe & Healthy Schools**

Schools play a critical role in promoting the health of young people and helping them establish lifelong healthy behaviors. Research shows that healthy schools can help improve students' academic performance and overall health. Our goal is to serve the whole child, including strategies and resources for all students to be safe, healthy, challenged, engaged, and supported.

As part of safe and healthy schools, WGES asks that parents help ensure our students are making good, healthy choices. **Please send snacks that are healthy and non-sugary.** Please do not send candy or soda pop to school for breakfast, lunch, or snack. Please also do not send cupcakes or other sugary treats for your child's birthday to school. The school and parents partner to encourage healthy habits and frequent physical activity for children.

### **State Mandated Testing**

Beginning in the third grade, Western Gateway Elementary School will be participating in the Oklahoma Criterion Curriculum Test (OCCT). We again would like to stress the importance of ensuring your child's attendance during the testing time and ask for parental commitment to this vital piece of assessment. For more information on this, please visit the Oklahoma State Department of Education's website at [Oklahoma School Testing Program \(OSTP\) for Families | Oklahoma State Department of Education](#).

### **Student Acceptable Use/Technology Policy**

Computer network resources, provided by WGES, enable communication with electronic communities around the world. The use of electronic resources shall be consistent with the purpose, mission, and goals of the Western Gateway Elementary School and used only for educational and professional purposes. The purpose in providing these services is to facilitate access to information and resources.

All students will receive instruction on digital citizenship for using Chromebooks, iMacs, and iPads using [www.commonsense.org](http://www.commonsense.org). Students and parents will be required to sign a technology agreement at the beginning of the school year and must adhere to all portions of this contract.

Student Chromebook/iPad policy states:

1. I understand this Chromebook or iPad is property of Western Gateway Elementary School and as such is a privilege that can be revoked at any time.
2. I understand this Chromebook/iPad is an electronic tool for learning first and foremost.
3. I understand this Chromebook/iPad is for my sole purpose as designated by my signature below.
4. I understand under no circumstances should this device leave the premises of Western Gateway Elementary School.
5. I understand that I am not permitted to remove the device from the [westerngateway.school](http://westerngateway.school) domain.
6. I understand that I am not permitted to alter the design of the device (no stickers or markings may be removed or added).
7. I understand that this device is school property and if I damage or destroy the device, I am responsible for those damages.
8. I agree with the WGES internet usage policy.
  - a. "I understand WGES provides computer network resources. The use of electronic resources shall be consistent with the purpose, mission, and goals of WGES and used **only** for educational and professional purposes."

WGES uses Securly, a provider of Chromebook and Apple Device management and protection software for schools. The goal of Securly is to help keep students on-task and away from inappropriate content. Teachers can see all student screens in one place to ensure students are on task. They are able to close student browsers or lock student computers when an issue arises. Alerts are sent to school administration when a student accesses explicit content or self-harm content. The policy agreement must be signed by the parent and student prior to the use of technology.

### **Student Creed**

As a part of our culture and climate, we ask all students and teachers to learn and live out our Western Gateway Creed. Your child will be taught hand movements that go with our school creed. Please help your child practice our school creed and live by the creed.

## **Substance Abuse By Students**

The Western Gateway Elementary School recognizes that the need for student safety is imperative in order to promote a climate that is safe and conducive for learning.

### **Student Substance Use, Possession, Being Under the Influence**

Whenever a student is suspected of using, consuming, possessing, or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the Head of School shall verify such suspicion by observation and/or documentation.

Use, Possession, or Being under the Influence of Drugs or Alcohol/Distribution of Controlled or Non-controlled Prohibited Substances: The following discipline shall be imposed on students who violate the policy provisions relating to (a) the use, consumption, possession, abuse or being under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, low-point beer, narcotic drug, stimulant, barbiturate, marijuana, depressant, hallucinogen, opiate, inhalant, counterfeit drug, any controlled substances, controlled substances without a valid prescription, mood altering chemicals or drug paraphernalia, or (b) the sale, transfer, distribution, or exchange of any over-the-counter medications, counterfeit drugs, alcoholic beverages or low-point beer.

For any student attending the School on a transfer, the Head of School may either immediately revoke the transfer such that the student shall return to the school that would otherwise be their home/resident school, or the Head of School may impose other disciplinary action as appropriate and revoke the transfer to the School at the semester or the end of the school year as determined by the Head of the School.

For students who reside within the residence boundaries of the School, the following disciplinary actions may be taken:

**First Offense:** Upon verification of a first offense, the Head of School or designee shall notify the student's parent or guardian. The Head of School or designee shall suspend the student found to have violated these provisions for a minimum of 10 days. The Head of School or designee may modify the suspension. Furthermore, the Head of School or designee may recommend long-term suspension up to the remainder of the semester/term depending on the circumstances of the violation and/or lack of compliance.

**Subsequent Offenses:** Upon verification of a subsequent offense, the Head of School or designee shall notify the student's parent or guardian. The Head of School or designee may recommend long-term suspension for the remainder of the current semester/term and the succeeding semester/term.

## **Title IX Procedures**

Title IX protects students and employees from all forms of sex discrimination, including discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, parental status, or marital status. Western Gateway is committed to providing an environment that is free from all forms of sex discrimination, which includes gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment and sexual violence, as regulated by Title VII and Title IX, and to ensuring the accessibility of appropriate grievance procedures for addressing all complaints regarding all forms of sex discrimination and sexual harassment.

Western Gateway Elementary School reserves the authority to independently deal with sex discrimination and sexual harassment whenever becoming aware of their existence, regardless of whether a complaint has been lodged in accordance with the grievance procedure. Any student, parent/guardian, current or prospective employee or other individual within the school community who believes he/she has experienced and/or observed sex discrimination or sexual harassment should promptly report the matter to the school's Title IX Coordinator, Tom Deighan, via email at [tdeighan@westerngateway.school](mailto:tdeighan@westerngateway.school) or any other school administrator. Title IX Policy and forms can be found on the school website on the Board of Directors tab.

### **Uniform Dress Code**

The Western Gateway Elementary School Board of Education requires the wearing of student uniforms in order to promote and to maintain an orderly and safe learning environment, to eliminate distractions while at school so as to increase the focus on instruction, to minimize socio-economic differences so that all students are treated equally, and to encourage and to promote professional and responsible dress for all students. In recognition of the right of students to express themselves in the manner of dress, students have the right to choose their own grooming and clothing styles subject to the requirements of this policy.

No student shall be denied attendance at school or be otherwise penalized for failing to wear clothing that complies with the school uniform if such failure is due to financial hardship. Parents of any student who may not be able to comply with the school's uniform requirements should advise the HOS that obtaining the required uniform will present a financial burden. The School will offer to assist students who are having difficulty complying with their school's uniform requirements due to financial hardships and shall develop a program to assist students in obtaining clothes that comply with the uniform.

Generally, students should regard neatness and cleanliness in grooming and clothing as important. Dress or grooming which is in any way disruptive to the operation of the school will not be permitted.

#### **General:**

- Clothing worn to school shall not be torn, cut-up, or slit and must be appropriately sized.
- Students shall not wear bedtime attire, such as pajamas, and shall not wear undershirts or undergarments as outerwear.
- Students shall not wear clothing that reveals the chest such as net shirts, undershirts, see-through blouses, halter tops, or tube tops or clothing that exposes a bare midriff, bodice, abdomen, or buttocks, or undergarments.

- Students shall not wear any clothing (including outerwear), jewelry, accessories, or display tattoos that contain messages or images that are obscene, vulgar, or related to tobacco, drugs, alcohol, sex, and/or violence.
- Students may wear to school the uniforms designated by service/civic organizations including but not limited to Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Brownies, Girl Scouts, Camp Fire, or Blue Birds.

#### **Pants/Slacks/Skirts/Shorts/Skorts/Dresses:**

- **Jeans are permitted** as uniform pants, shorts, skirts, skorts, or dresses. **Acceptable solid colors for pants are as follows: Black, White, Gray, Navy, Khaki, and Blue Plaid.**
- Pants, slacks, skirts, shorts, and skorts shall be appropriately fastened at the waist. No sagging or “low-rise” clothing is allowed.
- Leggings may be worn only as an accessory under skirts, skorts, or dresses that meet uniform requirements.
- Hemlines must be of modest length (eg., not above the fingertip of the wearer with the arm).

#### **Shirts:**

- A shirt with the school logo will also be acceptable as a uniform shirt. **Acceptable solid colors for shirts are as follows: Black, White, Gray, Navy, Khaki, and Blue Plaid.**
- Shirts may be long or short-sleeved.
- Shirts/blouses must be appropriately buttoned, zipped, or fastened.
- Students may wear plain sweatshirts, sweaters, fleece, or vests without hoods in the same colors as shirts designated for the school uniform.

#### **Footwear:**

- Students shall wear shoes and/or footwear at all times while on school property, and shoes with laces must be tied for safety.
- Students shall not wear flip-flops, beach, pool wear shoes, or house shoes.

#### **Outerwear:**

- Coats may not be worn inside the building during the school day but shall be worn to school and placed in the designated location. The HOS may make an exception if the building and/or classroom are unusually cold.

#### **Hats/Jewelry/Accessories:**

- Students may not wear caps, hats, or head coverings of any kind, including but not limited to, scarves, bandanas, and sweatbands inside a school building except for students with religious beliefs requiring a head covering, for medical reasons, or as approved by the school’s administration for a special school activity.
- Jewelry and accessories which pose a safety concern for the student or others are prohibited.

Students who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action.

## **Visitors**

Our children's safety is important to us. While we welcome visitors, we must maintain a secure campus. All visitors must sign in through the School SafeID System located in the office foyer. All visitors must utilize their driver's license or other photo identification to obtain access and a visitor badge. Please do not walk your child to class as this can disrupt the class or monopolize the teacher's time. All outside building doors, playground gates, and classroom doors will remain secured during school hours.

### **Walking or Bus Field Trips**

The WGES Permissions and Authorization form includes a section in which parents initial and grant permission for their student(s) to participate in walking field trips as well as bus field trips under the supervision of WGES faculty. Parents will receive notification from their child's teacher in advance of any such trips. Parents are encouraged to volunteer as a chaperone or guest on field trips. Chaperones will be expected to assist in supervision of students.

### **Weather Policy / School Closings**

Should it become necessary to close school because of bad weather, we ask that you do the following to find out whether school will be in session

- Listen to one of the three major network channels on television.
- Do not call the school, school officials, or radio or TV stations. These lines must be kept open.
- When school is called off, the Head of School's goal is to notify the media by 6:00 a.m. or sooner.
- If a winter storm hits in the afternoon, the snow day announcement may be on the 10 p.m. news.
- When winter conditions develop during the school day, the school will send out notification if there is to be an early dismissal option.
- In order to avoid confusion, the television stations are not notified when school will be in session as usual.
- Parents may also be notified using ClassTag.

### **Weapons-Free School**

Western Gateway Elementary School recognizes its responsibility for the safety of the students and staff. Therefore, the Board prohibits the possession and/or the carrying of dangerous weapons by students, employees, or others either in a vehicle or about the person, whether concealed or open, while on School property, at a school-sponsored activity, or on a school bus. The policy includes all weapons listed in this policy, as well as any object that is considered dangerous or capable of inflicting serious bodily harm. Dangerous weapons also include all instruments that are used in a way that is dangerous or capable of inflicting serious bodily harm, even if not be considered dangerous weapons when used in the manner intended by the manufacturer.



It is the policy of this School to comply fully with the Gun-Free Schools Act.

Any student in this School who uses or possesses a firearm at school, at any school-sponsored event, or in or upon any school property including school transportation or school-sponsored transportation may be removed from School for not less than one full calendar year, and if attending the School on a transfer, may have their transfer immediately revoked. The Head of School or designee has the authority to modify the term of a suspension on a case-by-case basis. However, any substantial modification must be reported to the Board.

Firearms are defined in Title 18 of the United States Code, Section 921, as (A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (C) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (D) any destructive device including any explosive, incendiary or poison gas, bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, mine or any device similar to the above. Such firearms or weapons will be confiscated and released only to proper legal authorities.

Oklahoma Statutes, Title 21, Section 1280.1 prohibits any person to have in such person's possession on any public or private school property or while in any school bus or vehicle used by any school for transportation of students or teachers any firearm or weapon as defined in Title 21, Section 1272, below:

"...any pistol, revolver, shotgun or rifle whether loaded or unloaded, or any dagger, bowie knife, dirk knife, switchblade knife, spring-type knife, sword cane, knife having a blade which opens automatically by hand pressure applied to a button, spring, or other device in the handle of the knife, blackjack, loaded cane, billy, hand chain, metal knuckles, or any other offensive weapon, whether such weapon is concealed or unconcealed."

Other dangerous weapons include: manually operated pocket knives, box knives, knife replicas, utility or scouting type knives, ammunition clips for automatic weapons, pipes, gun replicas, or any objects considered dangerous or capable of inflicting serious bodily injury; or any object, which through ordinary use is not considered a dangerous weapon, but which is used in a way that is dangerous or capable of inflicting serious bodily harm.

Police will be allowed to carry weapons in the performance of their duties.

### **Students**

If a teacher or other school employee should find a student in possession of a dangerous weapon, the teacher or employee shall immediately secure the safety of the other students and notify the Head of School or the appropriate supervisor. If safety permits, the weapon should be confiscated. The Head of School or designee shall notify the police.

### **Employees**

Employees who use, possess, or bring a weapon onto school property (including school transportation) in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, including termination. All disciplinary action will be in accordance with Board policy. Disciplinary action will be independent of any resultant criminal proceeding. If any employee finds another employee in violation of this policy, he/she shall immediately notify the police and the Head of the School. This policy does not prohibit the reasonable and appropriate use of a box knife, kitchen knife or other reasonable and appropriate tool in the course of his/her employment.

### **Disposition of Confiscated Weapons**

All confiscated weapons will be turned over to police authorities.

### **Use of Firearms by City Police Officers**

The Board recognizes that the use of firearms by law enforcement officers is specifically authorized and limited by Oklahoma state law. Personnel in the city police department shall not deviate from the state law in the use of firearms and in all circumstances, bearing in mind the value of human life, exercise the utmost discretion in the use of a weapon.

The Head of School or designee shall forward reports of any incident involving the use of firearms to the Board and any recommendations as to action to be taken by the Board. Personnel in the city police department will adhere to state laws and the Oklahoma City police department's firearm policy.

LEGAL REFERENCE: 18 U.S.C. § 921; 21 O.S. § 1271.1, 21 O.S. § 1280.1.

NOTE 1: The School is required to include, in each application to the State Department of Education for assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, a description of the circumstances surrounding any expulsions imposed under this policy, including the name of the school; the number of students expelled from the school, and the type of weapons concerned.

NOTE 2: Firearms and weapons are allowed on school property and deemed not in violation as follows: A gun or knife designed for hunting or fishing purposes kept in a privately owned vehicle and properly displayed or stored as required by law, or a handgun carried in a vehicle pursuant to a valid handgun license authorized by the Oklahoma Self- Defense Act provided such vehicle containing said gun or knife is driven onto school property only to transport a student to and from school and such vehicle does not remain unattended on school property; a gun or knife used for the purposes of participating in the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation certified hunter training education course or any other hunting, fishing, safety, or firearms training courses, or a recognized firearms sports event, team shooting program or competition, or living history reenactment, provided the course or event is approved by the Head of School or chief administrator of the school where the course or event is offered, and provided the weapon is properly displayed or stored as required by law pending participation in the course, event, program, or competition; and weapons in the possession of any peace officer or other person authorized by law to possess a weapon in the performance of his/her duties and responsibilities. Although state law allows weapons on school premises, federal law dictates that students in possession of a firearm on school premises are to be suspended for one calendar year.

## **Withdrawal from School**

Please notify the school one week in advance if you will be withdrawing your child from school to allow sufficient time to process the withdrawal and prepare the student's records for transfer to the new school. All textbooks and library books must be returned and school debts (cafeteria charges, lost books, etc.) paid before a student is cleared and records released.