



# Middle School Student Handbook

## Mission Statement

West Hills STEM Academy is dedicated to working with our community to serve the *whole child*, fostering the lifelong learner skills of *persistence, confidence and readiness to thrive* and contribute to society.

*Life, Career and College Ready!*

# General Rules and Expectations

## **Respect, Responsibility and Safety**

All students are expected to follow the three school and classroom rules: Be safe, be responsible and be respectful.

Behavior that meets or exceeds expectations may be rewarded with AVID cash. AVID cash is given when students are “caught” being safe, respectful, and responsible. Students will be able to use their AVID cash at the AVID Auction held twice a year.

At lunch, students are expected to maintain a respectful, safe and responsible behavior. We encourage socializing amongst peers and the inclusion of all students. Finally, students must treat the lunchroom and recess monitors with respect. They are also teachers, and should be treated as such.

In addition to following classroom and school rules, students have daily expectations for each class. Students must make quiet and efficient transitions between classes and activities. Also, they must enter the classroom quietly, get their needed supplies and begin the entry task. Students are expected to complete any homework as it is assigned in each course, keep track of their supplies, and keep a planner of daily class topics and homework.

## **Classroom Management, Discipline & Corrective Action**

Rules of student conduct are essential to maintain a school environment conducive to learning. A student’s refusal to comply with written rules and regulations established for the governing of the school will constitute sufficient cause for discipline or corrective action.

Staff are responsible for supervising student behavior, employing effective classroom management methods and enforcing the rules of student conduct in a fair, consistent and nondiscriminatory manner. Corrective action must be reasonable and necessary under the circumstances and reflect the district’s priority to maintain a safe and positive learning environment for all students and staff.

The District will distribute its discipline policy and procedures to students, their parents/guardians, and the community on an annual basis. Students and/or their parents/guardians will be provided all required substantive and procedural due process in regard to grievances, hearings and/or appeals of corrective action. The District will also strive to provide training regarding policies and procedures related to student discipline for

appropriate school and district staff whose duties require them to interact with students and enforce or implement components of student discipline.

The District will assist long-term suspended and expelled students in returning to school as soon as possible by providing them with a re-engagement plan tailored to the student's individual circumstances, including consideration of the incident that led to the student's long-term suspension or expulsion.

The District will annually collect and review data on disciplinary actions taken against students within each school. The data will be disaggregated into subgroups as required by RCW 28A.300.042 and will include students protected by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The review must include short-term suspensions, long-term suspensions and expulsions. In reviewing the data, the district will determine whether it has disciplined a substantially disproportionate number of students within any of the disaggregated categories. If disproportionality is found, the district will take action to ensure that it is not the result of discrimination.

### **Discipline Action Tiers**

Bremerton School District strives to prepare all students for successful, life, career, and college opportunities. **This requires schools to create a safe, nurturing and positive school environment where each student grows as a learner.** We will ensure fairness and equity for all students by implementing restorative practices as our standard approach to student behavior. This approach will enable our students to remain connected to learning and limit exclusionary practices to unsafe and dangerous behaviors.

The following behavior menu guide outlines tiers of maximum corrective action school administrators may consider when applying developmentally appropriate consequences.

**This guide is intended to foster relationship building as well as a safe and positive school environment.** Tier I interventions should always be considered as the initial intervention to promote positive student behavior.

<p>Tier 1</p> <p>Non-exclusionary measures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Administrative conference</li> <li>· Alternate nutritional setting</li> <li>· Behavior agreement (no longer than the length of an academic term)</li> <li>· Brief time out/reset</li> <li>· Conference with counselor</li> <li>· Conference with teacher</li> <li>· Confiscation of inappropriate items</li> <li>· Detention</li> <li>· Formal warning</li> <li>· Intervention groups</li> <li>· Loss of a privilege</li> <li>· Personal reflections</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Mediation</li> <li>· Mentoring</li> <li>· Other actions consistent with above interventions and restorative practices continuum</li> <li>· Parent notification</li> <li>· Reassignment to different class/program</li> <li>· Referral to outside agency</li> <li>· Restitution</li> <li>· Restorative conference</li> <li>· Student verbal apology</li> <li>· Students' written apology</li> </ul> <p>*loss of recess, denial or delay of a nutritionally adequate meal is not a permitted Tier 1 practice</p>
<p>Tier 2</p>	<p>Any Action from the prior tier(s) may also be imposed.</p> <p>Classroom Exclusion</p>
<p>Tier 3</p>	<p>Any Action from the prior tier(s) may also be imposed.</p> <p>Short-Term Suspension (In-school or/out of school)</p>
<p>Tier 4</p>	<p>Any Action from the prior tier(s) may also be imposed.</p> <p>Long-Term Suspension</p>
<p>Tier 5</p>	<p>Any Action from the prior tier(s) may also be imposed.</p> <p>Expulsion</p>
<p>*</p>	<p>Emergency Expulsion - Emergency removal from school for up to, but not exceeding, ten (10) consecutive school days from the student's current school placement by the superintendent or designee. Emergency Expulsion is not disciplinary.</p>
<p>**</p>	<p>Behavior agreements - agreements developed in collaboration with students and parents in response to behavioral violations. Behavior agreements may be used to reduce the length of a suspension, agreements in lieu of suspension or expulsion, or agreements holding a suspension or expulsion in abeyance.</p>
<p>***</p>	<p>Classroom exclusion - exclusion of a student from a classroom or instructional/activity area for behavioral violations.</p>

Violation	Definition	SRO May Be Called	Max. Tier
Academic Dishonesty/ Plagiarism	Knowingly submitting the work of others represented as the student's own or assisting another student in doing so, or using unauthorized sources.		3
Alcohol	Manufacturing, sale, purchase, transportation, possession or consumption of intoxicating alcoholic beverages or substances represented as alcohol or the violation of district alcohol policy. Suspicion of being under the influence of alcohol may be included if it results in disciplinary action.		4
Arson	Knowingly and/or maliciously participating in or causing a fire or explosion.	*	4
Bullying	Intentional, unwanted, aggressive behavior that (1) involves a real or perceived power imbalance, and (2) is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Extortion, blackmail and coercion may also constitute bullying.		4
Closed Campus Violation	Leaving school grounds without official authorization.		1
Dangerous Behavior	Engaging in behavior, which a reasonable person would know, creates a risk of injury to self or another individual.		3
Defiance/ Disrespect	Repeated failure to comply with or follow reasonable, lawful directions or requests of teachers or staff. This includes, but is not limited to non-compliance, defiance and disrespect.		3
Destruction of Property	Defacing, injuring, or damaging school property or property belonging to a school employee, contractor, or student in any way. Pursuant to RCW 29A.635.060, students and their parents/ guardians may be required to pay for all damages to school district property or property belonging to a school employee, contractor, or students.	*	3
Discriminatory Harassment	Conduct or communication that (1) is intended to be harmful, humiliating, or physically threatening, and (2) shows hostility toward a person or persons based on their real or perceived sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran or military status, disability, or use of a trained dog guide or service animal.		4
Disruptive Behavior	Behavior which materially and substantially interferes with the educational process is prohibited.		3
Disruptive Dress and Appearance	Dress and appearance, which present health or safety problems, intimidate others, cause disruption or violates dress code.		1
False Alarms/ Fire Apparatus	Setting off false alarms, discharging or stealing fire extinguishers or damaging alarm systems.		3
Fraud/ Forgery	The act of fraudulently misrepresenting information given to the school personnel.		1

Fighting	The act of quarreling involving mutual bodily contact.		3
Illicit/ Controlled Drug (other than marijuana)	Students shall not use, possess, sell, distribute or be under the influence of any controlled (over-the-counter medication e.g., aspirin, cough syrups, caffeine pills, nasal sprays) or illicit drugs, (e.g.: hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate), mind-altering substances, medication not prescribed by a physician and approved in writing by the parent/guardian, drug paraphernalia, or intoxicant of any kind or any item which purports (look-alikes) to be such. Students shall not be in possession of anabolic steroids on school premises or at school-sponsored events. No student may give, dispense, or administer any medication or remedy to another student. Drug paraphernalia includes, but is not limited to, e-cigarettes, vaping devices and e-juice products. Law enforcement may be notified. Offenses are accumulated throughout the school year.	*	5
Marijuana	Unlawful use, cultivation, distribution, sale, solicitation, purchase, possession, transportation of cannabis or cannabis related paraphernalia is in violation of the district drug policy.		4
Multiple Minor Accumulated Incidents	Discipline for culmination of multiple minor infractions that both occurred throughout the school year and individually would not rise to the severity of meriting a short-term.		3
Nuisance Items	Items that cause a disruption by its use or possession (e.g.: cell phones, toys, trading cards, etc.).		1
Profanity/ Language	Swearing or other use of language in an inappropriate way.		1
Serious Bodily Injury	An incident, specific to students eligible for special education services, that results in serious bodily injury of another as defined in Section (1365(h)(3) of Title 18, U.S. Code, to mean a bodily injury that involves a substantial risk of death, extreme physical pain, protracted and obvious disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty.		3
Sexual Harassment	Conduct or communication intended to be sexual in nature, is unwelcome by the targeted person(s) and has the potential to deny or limit another student(s) ability to participate in or benefit from a school's education program		4
Sexually Inappropriate Conduct	Obscene acts or expressions, whether verbal or non-verbal.		3
Theft or Possession of Stolen Property	Taking or knowingly being in possession of district property or property of others without permission.	*	3
Threatening	Any person, singly or in concert with others, is prohibited to intimidate by threat of force or violence any administrator, teacher, classified employee, or student of any common school who is in the peaceful discharge or conduct of his or her duties or studies. RCW 28A.635.100	*	4
Tobacco	Possession, use, distribution or sale of tobacco products or the violation of		2

	school district tobacco policy.		
Trespassing	Being present in an unauthorized place.		1
Violence w/ Major Injury	Any incident defined by school district policy as a violent offense that includes a major injury, but at least the following: Severe fighting that results in a major injury: • Assault (RCW 9A.36) • Malicious Harassment (RCW 9A.46) • Robbery (RCW 9A.56)	*	5
Violence w/no major injury	Any incident defined by school district policy as a violent offense that is without major injury, but at least the following: • Assault (RCW 9A.36) • Malicious Harassment (RCW 9A.46)	*	5
Weapon: Handgun Weapon: Multi Firearms Weapon: Other Firearms Weapon: Rifle/Shotgun Weapon: Other Weapon: Knife/Dagger	Possessed or brought to school a weapon as defined by school district policy, but at least the following: • Handgun • Shotgun/Rifle • Multiple firearms • Other firearm/weapon as defined below Other firearm is defined by the Gun Free Schools Act as: • Any weapon (including zip guns, starter guns, airsoft guns and flare guns) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of any explosive; • The frame or receiver of any handgun, shotgun, or rifle; • Any firearm muffler or firearm silencers; • Any destructive device, which includes: a) any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas (such as: 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 similar device. b) any weapon which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has a barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter. c) any combination or parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described in the two immediately preceding examples, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled. • Knife/dagger Knife/dagger Other weapon is defined as: Anything used as a weapon that is not classified as a handgun, rifle/shotgun, knife/dagger, or other firearm. Examples include chains, pipes, razor blades or similar instruments with sharp cutting edges; ice picks, pointed instruments (pencils, pens); nun-cha-ka sticks; brass knuckles; stars; billy clubs; tear gas guns; electrical weapons (stun guns); BB or pellet guns; and explosives.	*	5

## **West Hills STEM is a CLOSED Campus**

Students are expected to remain on each assigned campus from the time they arrive in the morning until they depart at the end of the regular school day unless official permission to leave the school grounds has been obtained from the school's administration office.

[Policy 3242 – Closed Campus](#)

## **Procedure for Leaving Classroom**

- Request permission from teacher.
- Fill out pass and ask the teacher to sign it.
- Sign out on sign out sheet.
- Sign back in when you return and give pass to teacher.

Teacher may limit the number of times that a student can leave class. Students should not need to leave class more than once or twice a day.

# **Class Expectations**

## **Dress**

West Hills STEM Academy wishes to promote an environment of professionalism and learning. Thus, students are expected to dress appropriately and in compliance with Bremerton School District guidelines.

## **Snack Policy**

Students are allowed a snack time in their homeroom class at their teacher's discretion. Snacks should be healthy, and drinks must be clear and in a resealable container. If the teacher deems a student's snack to be unhealthy, he or she will be asked to put the snack away until lunchtime. If a student chooses to eat their snack outside of the designated snack time, the snack will be confiscated and returned for consumption at an appropriate time.

## **Backpacks and Personal Supplies**

Organization is a key skill learned in middle school. Thus, students are expected to bring all their supplies and computers to school each day and to have a backpack to store supplies in that will travel with them from class to class. There is no place in the classroom to store personal supplies. Backpacks must be hung off the back of the chairs to keep them off the floor.



## **“Student Time” vs. “Teacher Time”**

In order to accomplish the goals of each class as well as respect the developing autonomy of our middle school students, the middle school teachers will have two types of “time” throughout the class period – “Student Time” and “Teacher Time.” Each type of time has specific expectations

On Student Time you

- Complete independent work as assigned
- May exchange tickets
- Prepare supplies, get pencils sharpened
- May use the bathroom or get a drink following classroom rules

On Teacher Time you

- Stay in your seat.
- Actively listen and/or participate in the assigned activity.
- May not use the restroom, sharpen pencils, etc.

## **Use of Technology**

As a STEM school, we emphasize responsible use of technology, both personal and school owned. In order to promote this 21st Century Skill, students must sign and return the school Technology Agreement before they will be allowed to use any classroom or personal technology of any kind. The agreement and technology policy are both in the handbook addendum. The classroom teacher has the right to suspend the use of personal and school technology for violation of expectations or repeated class disruption.

## **Grading**

At West Hills STEM Academy, we use a standards-based grading system using a traditional point system. Students will be assessed on a 4-point scale with regard to their ability to meet grade-level standards. Academic grades are calculated through student performance on grade level and course standards. On the report, the following scales correspond to the standards-based grading language used.

Exceeding Standard: A-, A (3.50 – 4.00)

Meeting Standard: C-, C, C+, B-, B, B+ (2.00 – 3.49)

Approaching Standard: D, D+ (1.72 – 1.99)

Below Standard: F (0.00 – 1.71)

All courses at West Hills STEM Academy have a 10% Competency /Skills for Success grade which indicates a student’s proficiency in academic habits such as homework completion and participation in functions.

## **Progress Reporting**

It is important for middle school students and their parents to be informed about their progress in school. The teacher will keep grades up to date through Skyward and send home a paper report at least once per month. It is the parent and student's responsibility to check progress online. Formal Progress reports will be sent home at the end of the first and third quarter of the school year. A Formal Report Card will be sent home at the end of the fall and spring semesters.

## **Family Access and Grades**

All students and their families will have access to an online gradebook in which they can check their grades throughout the year. This is in addition to a monthly report that will be sent home.

It is the student's responsibility to view their grades, request the opportunity to redo assignments, and complete missing work. Students are held to a 10 day make-up policy due to their opportunity to access their work and grades on their own time.

## **Assignment Redos**

With standards-based grading, we are interested in whether students have met standards. Therefore, students are allowed to redo assignments and retake tests that received an unsatisfactory grade, according the following redo policy:

- Students must complete any work their teacher recommends to be prepared to redo the assignment.
- Tests must be made up before or after school by appointment only.
- In most cases, lunchtime will not be allowed to retake tests or redo assignments.

There is simply not enough time to get any meaningful work done during that time.

## **Absences and Make Up Work**

After being absent, students are expected to collect and complete all make-up work, including notes in their interactive notebooks, and any other assignments or tests. They will be allowed 10 days from the date of return to school to complete all make-up work, except in cases where previous arrangements have been made with the teacher(s). If a student needs time with the teacher in order to complete the assignments, the time must be scheduled for before or after school.

## **Communication with Teachers**

As middle school teachers, we wish to keep the lines of communication as open as possible. Newsletters for your student's grade level will be sent home at the beginning of each month, along with permission slips and information about the monthly career exploration. Permission slips and dues for the career exploration will need to be returned with your student.

You can also find important information about each class and goings-on at West Hills on the grade-level website.

## **Career Excursions**

Once a month, students will take a career exploration trip. These are **NOT** optional, and they are an essential part of the curriculum. The career explorations will connect learning that we have done inside the classroom with real- world experiences, and will give students an opportunity to learn about different careers. Dues for career explorations will be a consistent \$10 per month. Scholarships are available and allocated based on need.

Participation in Career Excursions is a graded activity.

Student behavior expectations on career excursions is the same as every day at school. Students must be dressed appropriately for their comfort and safety.