



LOWER SCHOOL
(Pre-K through 5th GRADE)
STUDENT HANDBOOK

2011-2012

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www.wsa.net

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PART 1: WESTMINSTER'S MISSION STATEMENT AND CORE VALUES

God is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us! (Ephesians 3:20)

MISSION STATEMENT

Westminster seeks to glorify God by providing an excellent education that equips students to live extraordinary lives for Jesus Christ.

CORE VALUES

1. Jesus Christ

We endeavor to place Jesus Christ at the center of everything we do.

Therefore:

- We strive to have love and grace permeate and influence all relationships.
- We seek to integrate Christian faith and practice into every Westminster experience.
- We prepare students to understand and lead lives from a biblical perspective.
- We desire that students know and enjoy Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior and grow in relationship with Him.

2. Made in God's Image

We believe that every person is created in God's image.

Therefore:

- We seek to know, love, and serve all students as individuals, recognizing and developing their unique gifts and abilities, that they may accomplish God's purpose for their lives.
- We acknowledge, appreciate, and adjust to the various ways that students learn.

3. Christ-like Character

We develop students of integrity and honor who embrace and emulate Christ-like character.

Therefore:

- We develop students with the knowledge, courage, and leadership to engage the challenges of today's world.
- We develop students who find joy in serving others before self.

4. Excellence

We strive towards excellence in all things, to the glory of God.

Therefore:

- We commit to prepare students for success in college and life.
- We strive to develop well-rounded students.
- We believe that excellence involves doing one's very best and includes pursuing and attaining high standards.

5. Education for Influence

We positively influence our community and the world around us.

Therefore:

- We challenge and encourage students to take action with their Christian faith.
- We steward our resources to serve Westminster, the greater Augusta community, and the world.

PART 2: HOURS OF OPERATION

LOWER SCHOOL

Supervision Begins	7:30
Classrooms Open	8:00
Tardy	8:10
PreK, TK and Kindergarten	8:00-12:00
Kinder Cubs (K Enrichment Class)	12:00- 2:00
Grades 1-5	8:00-3:00

AFTER SCHOOL CARE HOURS

PreK, TK, and Kindergarten	12:00-5:30
KinderCubs	2:00-5:30
Grades 1-5	3:00-5:30

BUILDING HOURS

Lower School Building	7:45-5:30
Lower School Media Center/Library	8:00-3:00

SCHOOL DELAYS AND CLOSING

In the event of inclement weather, the school administrators may either close or delay the opening of school. A decision will be made as early as possible and inform either WGAC 580 AM radio or WJBF TV Channel 6 by 6:30 a.m. Please be aware that our decision may not be the same as Richmond or Columbia Counties.

Please remember that inclement weather may be highly localized at times. As a result, some families may experience inclement weather, thus making driving problematic, while the majority of school families do not. Regardless of the school's decision about opening, **the ultimate decision as to whether or not to send children to school rests with parents**, and the school administration will support parent decisions on this subject. Secondly, the school may close or delay opening when other schools in the area have not made similar decisions.

PART 3: STUDENT ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

MORNING ARRIVAL

Supervision begins at 7:30 a.m. Students may not exit parent's vehicle until the supervising teacher is on duty outside the gym. Students will be supervised in the gym until they are dismissed at 8:00 a.m. to their respective classrooms. Students should not enter the school building before 8:00 a.m. **The double doors leading into the school from the gym will be locked shortly after 8:10 a.m.** If you arrive after the doors are locked, please park and walk your child through the front doors to receive a tardy slip.

AFTERNOON DISMISSAL

Please pick up students promptly at dismissal time: Noon for PK, TK & K; 2:00 for KinderCubs & 3:00 for grades 1-5. Students who are not picked up by 3:25 will be sent to ASC. Normal ASC charges will apply.

Please enroll your child in the After School Care program if you will be unable to pick him/her up at dismissal time. Forms for ASC are available online.

AFTERNOON CAR LINE

Car line procedures have been established to ensure safety for all students. Please follow them carefully. Teachers will be on duty each afternoon to assist in directing the safe flow of traffic. For safety reasons, younger siblings should stay in the car at all times. Please do not allow younger siblings to hang out of windows and sunroofs while cars are moving. Cell phone use is prohibited in moving car line.

1. Each family will be issued a car line number. Car line numbers were mailed with class lists. Please keep your number in your car.
2. The first car entering the area will pull up to cone number one. Each succeeding car will move to the next available number. For safety, **students will board only on the right side of the car.**
3. Please hold your number out of the car and up high to enable your number to be seen.
4. Please do not leave your car. Your child will walk to his/her assigned cone. Fifth grade students will assist in the loading of students.
5. Please do not begin the double lanes until you are **inside** the Lower School gate. We must stay in a single lane of traffic from Wheeler Road to the Lower School entrance to ensure an open lane to the Upper School.
6. Please exit slowly and carefully through the back gate when your car is loaded and the car in front of you begins to move. **DO NOT** pull out of line and around the car in front of you.
7. The exit driveway is designed as "EXIT ONLY". Cars exit from this driveway from both lanes. Do **NOT** enter the school property through the "EXIT ONLY" driveway.

CARPOOL CHANGES

Please email the teacher early in the day with any carpool changes. If a change occurs after 2:30, please email Christal Duggan at cduggan@wsa.net. She will ensure that the teacher receives the message. Failure to notify the office will result in the child being sent home in his/her regular carpool if a parent cannot be reached.

CUSTODY ISSUES

The school expects parents who are separated and/or divorced to resolve any disputes regarding the departure of students from school either voluntarily, through their counsel, or by valid and binding court order. If such agreements or orders regarding custody and/or visitation rights are in place, parents must provide the school with pertinent portions of any such agreement or order and to keep the appropriate school director advised as to pending issues. **In the event parents dispute which parent has the right to pick up a minor child/student at the end of a school day or after a school-sponsored event on campus, the school reserves the right to request that the Richmond County Sheriff's Department or the Richmond County Department of Social Services take custody of the student.**

EARLY DISMISSAL DAYS

PK/TK & Kindergarten will dismiss at 11:15 on most early dismissal days. Grades 1-5 will dismiss at noon. However, please check your child's class newsletter for confirmation as there will be occasional variations.

PART 4: ATTENDANCE POLICIES

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

Students are required to attend school on a regular basis. No student will be promoted to the succeeding grade if that student has been absent more than twenty times in a given school year. Exceptions may be granted by the principal, in case of extenuating circumstances.

Additionally, students must be present for at least half of the school day to receive attendance credit for that day. For PreK, TK and kindergarten, the required time is two hours. For first through fifth grade, three and one-half hours are required for the day to count toward attendance.

Requirements for making up any missed work are determined by the teacher and will be reviewed at Parent Night.

APPOINTMENTS

A spirit of respect and cooperation should exist between school families and administration in regard to appointments away from campus. When at all possible, parents should schedule appointments after school or during vacation. If you must schedule an appointment during the school day, please email the teacher or send in a written note on the morning of the appointment so teachers may prepare missed lessons and homework for your child. Parents should come to the foyer and sign their child out; the receptionist will call for the student.

TARDIES

Students arriving after **8:10 a.m.** will be marked tardy. **All** tardy students must obtain a tardy slip from the front desk.

PART 5: SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Westminster believes each child is gifted in unique ways. We recognize that children have different learning abilities and learning styles that may require various levels of support. Early intervention is stressed and is a part of student's tuition in grades K-2. Support services for grades 3-5 are not a part of tuition, but rather fee-based. Additional information about Academic Support can be found on our website.

Susan Kious is the director of Academic Support in the Lower School. Mrs. Kious is a certified reading specialist and will evaluate students in Kindergarten through fifth grade at their teacher's request. Priority is given to students whose school records include documentation of needed accommodations for learning. She can be contacted at skious@wsa.net.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE

The After School Care program is a service available to any Westminster Day school student in grade PreK-5 and provides quality care for each child enrolled in our program.

The ASC program is licensed annually by the Bright from the Start (formerly known as the Georgia Department of Human Resources). It is also inspected at the start of every school year.

PreK, TK and Kindergarten students that stay for ASC are provided with lunch. The schedule consists of age-appropriate planned programs that include outside activities, art projects, and study time. Nutritious snacks are provided in a warm, relaxing environment. This program is an opportunity for children to develop social skills, try new ideas and friendships, and gain independence and self-confidence.

Lower School students not picked up from carline will be sent to ASC and parents will be billed accordingly. ASC ends at 5:30 each day unless prior arrangements have been made.

The After School Care program is open every day that Westminster is in session.

Additionally, the program will open at 7:30 a.m. on the parent-teacher conference day (October 28). ASC will also be open on the two teacher workdays (October 17 & March 12).

The Hours and Fee information is listed on the website under the Academics tab.

If you have any questions about ASC, please contact ASC Director, Peggy Dixon, at 706- 731-5260, ext. 2212.

FOOD SERVICE

Lunch is provided to all students by Southern Foodservice Management. The students have a choice of a hot lunch or food from the sandwich and salad bar. The lunch menu is listed on the website. Parents are welcome to eat with their child. There is a \$5 charge which should be paid at the front desk.

PART 6: COMMUNICATION INFORMATION

Effective communication is critical to our success as a school. As the home and school work together toward the development and growth of each student, we recognize that it is not an easy process. Please follow the following guidelines to ensure clear communication.

CALENDAR

A school calendar is available on the school website at www.wsa.net.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please notify the office and teacher promptly of any change of address or telephone number (home, cell, work or physician), place of employment, or family status.

CLASSROOM COMMUNICATION

All teachers send home a weekly newsletter with current school and classroom information.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Effective communication is critical to our success as a school. As the home and school work together toward the development and growth of each student, we recognize that it is not an easy process. It comes with many challenges. There are times when expectations, actions or words can be misunderstood. An appropriate understanding or solution can never be accomplished without open and direct communication. For this reason, Westminster encourages the model given to us in Matthew 18. Please talk directly to the teacher if you have a specific concern. Please do not discuss your concerns with other parents or teachers.

CONTACTING TEACHERS

The best way to send messages to teachers is through email. Teachers' e-mail addresses are listed in the on-line school directory but are generally in the form of firstinitiallastname@wsa.net. (jdoe@wsa.net). Teachers check their e-mail throughout the day.

DIRECTORY (On-line)

The school will publish an online directory of class lists and current students with parents, addresses, and phone numbers.

DROP OFF/PICK UP TABLE

The table in the Day School foyer has been designated the "drop-off/pick-up table." Parents may leave lunches or books for their students or items intended for teachers. Teachers may leave homework assignments for students who are absent. If you are leaving an item for pick-up, please ask the receptionist to e-mail the teacher to inform them that there is an item to be picked up from the table.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Individual parent-teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall for grades PK through 5. Parents are notified of appointment times. If parents of students at any grade level desire a conference during the school year, they may arrange a time by sending a note to school or by emailing the teacher. Conferences are by appointment.

STUDENTS USE OF TELEPHONE

Students may use the phone in the foyer only with permission from a teacher. Students should sign the phone log before placing a call. Cell phone use during the school day is not permitted.

WEBSITE

Please check the school's website for current information.

PART 7: HEALTH POLICIES

ACCIDENTS

In the event of an accident or injury requiring immediate medical attention, an ambulance will be called. Parents will be notified immediately. If parents cannot be reached immediately, the school will attempt to reach the physician listed on the child's health form. Other minor injuries or accidents will be treated appropriately by the nurse.

HEAD LICE

Head lice are being found in epidemic proportions throughout the United States, especially among children 3-12 years of age. Head lice are not a health hazard or a sign of uncleanliness and are not responsible for the spread of any disease. The most common symptom is itching. Rarely, a secondary infection may be caused by a child's scratching the scalp to alleviate the itching.

Parents are asked to notify the school if their child becomes infected with lice. The school will take appropriate measures to prevent transmission to other students.

Any students found to have lice at school will be sent home, but may return after successful treatment. A lice treatment sheet is available in the nurses' office. Since no lice treatment is 100% effective, **we require the removal of all nits** (lice eggs) which can be attached to the hair shaft. We do have a "No-Nit" policy." Nit removal and proper treatment of the home environment is the only way to be sure you have eliminated possible reinfestation. Lice do not jump or fly-most often they are passed from head-to-head contact as a result of the sharing of personal items (combs, brushes, hats, pillows, sports helmets).

Upon return to school, the student must be checked and cleared by the nurse before being allowed to return to class. An occasional persistent case of lice may require additional treatments to resolve the problem. All students in the affected class will be screened for lice over the course of several weeks. In addition, parents should check their children at home for several weeks.

ILLNESS/FEVER/VOMITING

A child must stay home with an illness that is communicable. **Students must be fever and symptom free for 24 hours (without the aid of fever or symptom reducing medication) before returning to school.**

Students who become ill during the day will be taken to the school nurse who will determine if the child should go home. If the student has vomiting or diarrhea, a temperature of 100° or higher, or an injury requiring medical attention, parents will be contacted to pick up the child. Students must be picked up immediately. If we are unable to reach a parent, we will begin calling persons listed on your emergency contact form.

Students returning after an illness may not return to school until his or her temperature has been normal for 24 hours without the aid of medication or until 24 hours after any vomiting or diarrhea has stopped. If the student is being given antibiotics, please do not send him to school until at least 24 hours after the first dose.

Please do not bring your child to school if there is evidence of any of the following symptoms: fever, upset stomach, rash, watery or teary eyes with white or yellow discharge, bad cough, severe headache, vomiting or a general unwell feeling. Parents are requested to cooperate with the school in minimizing the spread of communicable disease among the children.

We consider vomiting an illness that requires the student to be sent home.

Sick children are not permitted in ASC.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS AND HEALTH FORMS

Under Georgia law, two documents are required for entrance into school: Georgia Eye, Ear, Dental form (Georgia form 3300) and a Georgia Certificate of Immunization (Georgia form 3231). These forms are available from your pediatrician or local health department. State law requires **GEORGIA** forms and **NO** others can be accepted. **Students cannot be admitted to class until BOTH of these forms are on file in the school office.** Once your child's Certificate of Immunization is on file, you do not need to resubmit a new one unless your child receives an additional immunization.

MEDICATION DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Any medications-prescription or "over-the-counter"- will be dispensed only by the nurse with written permission from the parent. On the health form, we ask for your permission to administer Tylenol, Motrin, and an anti-histamine. Therefore, if a student is to receive any type of medication at school, the medicine is to be brought to the nurse and the following are required:

- The "Permission to Administer Medication" form completed by a parent (available on the website).
- If a medication is to be administered for longer than two weeks, written authorization from the prescribing physician must also be provided.
- Medication must be provided in the original prescription bottle with the following information on the bottle:

Name of Student
Name of Medication
Dosage
Expiration Date

SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS

If your child has a physician-documented medical condition requiring a special diet, please contact the nurse, Kelly Hitchcock, at 706-731-5260 extension 2223. The cafeteria staff, with aid from the nurse, and the parents, will make every reasonable effort to provide appropriate meals for your child.

SMOKE FREE CAMPUS

Westminster Lower School is a smoke-free environment.

PART 8: CONDUCT POLICIES

In keeping with its dual mission of strong academics and sound Christian character, Westminster sets high standards for both academics and behavior. We do this because we believe that *both* are in the best interest of our students and *both* are necessary for true success in life.

The faculty understands that true Christian education includes instruction and correction in behavior. Classroom teachers, including co-curricular teachers will handle inappropriate behavior biblically in their own classrooms. This information varies by teacher and will be distributed and reviewed on Parent Night. Most disciplinary problems can be resolved at this level between the teacher and the student.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

- Students are expected to show genuine respect at all times for faculty, staff, and each other.
- Students are expected to be truthful and honorable in all their dealings with the school community.
- Students are expected to respect the feelings, rights, and property of others.
- Students are expected to use appropriate actions and language at all times.
- Students are expected to treat school property with care and respect.
- Students are expected to walk quietly and orderly when traveling throughout the school.
- Students are not allowed to chew gum on campus.

BEHAVIORAL PROBATION

A student may be placed on behavioral probation. Such an action is recognition of a student's need for special concentration on behaviors or attitudes that must be improved. The length of probation will be set by the administration, during which time certain privileges may be withheld until it is deemed that sufficient progress is evident. The length and terms of the probation will be stated in a written contract. A student who does not successfully remove himself or herself from behavioral probation by the end of the probation period may be dismissed from Westminster; otherwise, reenrollment will be evaluated at the end of the school year.

CONSEQUENCES FOR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

If a student is involved in severe (uncooperative, uncontrollable or dangerous) behavior, the parents will be called to discuss an appropriate course of action. This plan may involve suspension or expulsion, which are explained below.

SUSPENSION

In School

The administrator will assign the in-school suspension for between **one** and **three** days. Students so disciplined are considered present in school but will not be permitted in the classroom. On the day of the suspension, the student will report to the office by 8:10 a.m. and will be provided with the day's assignments. The student will remain confined in the designated area under the supervision of the designated school official. He/she will not be permitted to talk or take breaks with the other students. The student will eat lunch alone and will be permitted restroom breaks as necessary. He/she must complete the full regularly scheduled day, being dismissed with the other students at 3:10 p.m. There will be no interaction with any person other

than the school official in charge. If the student is absent on the scheduled day of the suspension, he/she will complete the assigned day(s) beginning with the first day of return to school. Assignments completed during in-school suspension receive full credit.

Out of School

Suspension refers to the temporary exclusion of a student from school life. The administrator may impose suspension from school life and premises for a period of **one** to **five** days. The days a student is suspended will be considered “unexcused absences.” The assignments for the day must be done, but no credit will be given.

EXPULSION

Expulsion refers to long-term exclusion from the school, including but not limited to permanent and irrevocable exclusion. No academic credit will be given for periods of expulsion.

CONSEQUENCES FOR UNLAWFUL BEHAVIOR

Immediate suspension, possible expulsion and/or referral to local law enforcement are imminent in the following, but not limited to, situations:

- On-campus possession and/or use of illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages, or tobacco products.
- Making verbal threats or bringing weapons (e.g. firearms, knives, incendiary devices, explosives) to campus or to school activities.

BOOK CARE

Textbooks are the property of the school and must be handled appropriately. School textbooks should be covered at the beginning of the school year and recovered at any time it becomes necessary. Hardback books must be covered but not with self-adhesive materials. The students will be responsible for any damage to the textbooks. Fines will be assessed at the end of the year according to the following fee schedule:

Damaged cover	\$10.00 for hardback
Lost book	replacement cost
Missing pages	replacement cost
Pen markings or torn pages	\$1.00 each occurrence

DRESS CODE

The goal for the Lower School is for students to dress in a manner that is appropriate for optimal classroom learning. The student’s attire should not cause distractions and/or disruptions and must be supportive of a positive learning environment. Student attire must reflect modesty and good taste. Students must abide by the dress code on field trip days unless otherwise specified.

Shirts: Students may wear shirts with or without collars. The shirts must be neat and free of pictures and writing (with the exception of a small logo). Shirts must be long enough to cover the torso at all times. Athletic shirts or jerseys are not allowed. Boys in grades 3-5 must wear their shirts tucked in. Boys in PreK-2 must tuck in shirts that are made to be worn tucked in or may wear shirts out if they are made to be worn out. Girls must wear tops that are modest. Tank tops, halters, camisoles or shirts with spaghetti straps are not allowed for girls in grades 3-5 unless worn over a t-shirt.

Shorts/Skirts: All shorts and skirts must be modest and of appropriate length. For girls, shorts and skirts must fall BELOW mid-thigh. No athletic shorts are allowed.

Pants: Jeans are allowed. They must be neat and without holes and/or fraying. No athletic or sweat pants are allowed. Writing is not allowed on the back of pants.

Shoes: Students must wear shoes with backs, including sandal-type shoes. No flip-flops or open back shoes are allowed. Girls may not wear heels over 1" tall.

Hair: Haircuts and styles should not be a distraction in the classroom. Boy's hair must be neatly trimmed, not touching his collar and above the eye.

Hats: Students may not wear hats except on special occasions (Field Day, Hat Day). Students may not wear hats on field trips.

Jewelry: Any jewelry that creates a distraction should not be worn to school and may be placed in the student's book bag. Girls may wear earrings in the ear only. Boys may not wear earrings during school or at school events.

Parents should monitor student dress before leaving the home.

DRESS CODE REQUIREMENT FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- Proper athletic shoes are required for P.E. Class
- Girls must wear shorts under skirts or dresses.
- No jewelry is allowed in P.E. class
- A doctor's note or a note from a parent must be written for a student to be excused from a P.E. class.

DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS

In the event of violations of the dress code, the following steps will be taken.

- On the first violation, the teacher will speak privately to the student about the infraction.
- On the second violation, the teacher will speak to the student and call the parent.
- The third time, the parent will be called to pick up the child or to bring in clothes that meet the dress code.

MEDIA CENTER RULES

During School Hours students are expected to abide by the following rules:

- Do not bring food or drinks in the Media Center.
- Do not run or play in the Media Center.
- Speak quietly so you do not disturb others who are reading or studying.
- Be respectful and considerate of everyone by having a positive attitude and showing self control.
- Respect others by cooperating and sharing.
- Respect library materials and treat the books and other material with care.
- Reference books may be used in the Media Center only.
- Ask for help if needed.
- Be a responsible learner by listening and following directions.
- Books may be check out for one week and renewed as often as needed.

- Kindergarten students may only check out one book at a time. Students in first through fifth grades may be able to check out two books at a time as determined by the Media specialist.
- Books are to be returned on or before the due date.
- Students must pay full price for any book lost or damaged. A student may not check out additional books until reimbursement has been made for lost or damaged items.
- Computers are to be used for school projects and research only.
- Students are to clean up after themselves by returning all research material(s) to its/their proper location, pushing in their chair, and throwing all garbage in the trashcan.

After School Hours all persons using the Media Center are expected to abide by the following rules:

- Do not bring food or drinks in the Media Center.
- Do not run or play in the Media Center.
- Speak quietly so you do not disturb others.
- Be respectful and considerate of everyone by having a positive attitude and showing self control.
- Respect others by cooperating and sharing.
- Respect library materials and treat all material with care.
- Books cannot be checked out unless approved in advance by the Media Specialist.
- Computers may only be used after school hours when approved in advance by the Media Specialist.
- Please clean up after yourself by throwing all garbage in the trashcan.

PARENTAL COOPERATION

Westminster expects that parents will uphold the values of the school with their children and communicate effectively with school personnel. A positive and constructive working relationship between the school and the student's parents/guardian is essential to the accomplishment of the school's mission. Accordingly, the school reserves the right not to renew or to terminate a student's enrollment contract if the school reasonably concludes that the actions of a parent or guardian make such a positive and constructive relationship improbable. The school considers as grounds for dismissal any action by a student and/or his her parents or guardian which seriously interferes with the school's ability to accomplish its mission.

Parents and students should expect the from Westminster faculty exemplary conduct, sincere care for each student, professional conduct, and an attitude of partnership with the home.

PART 9: ACADEMIC INFORMATION

GRADING SCALE

PK/TK/K	GRADES 1-5	
WORK HABITS	ACHIEVEMENT	WORK HABITS/CONDUCT
S= Satisfactory	A = 90 - 100	E= Excellent
P= Progress Observed	B = 80 - 89	S= Satisfactory
N= Needs Improvement	C = 70 - 79	N= Making progress but improvement needed
	D = 67 - 69	U= Unsatisfactory
	F = Below 67	

HOMEWORK

Homework is an integral part of the academic program. However, it is important for reasons other than just improving academic performance. It is also a valuable tool which can help children become responsible, resourceful, and equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary for the calling that God has for them in adulthood.

Homework at Westminster is meaningful, purposeful, and age appropriate. It is designed to be done by the children, unassisted, with only occasional consultation with the parents. Parents can greatly encourage the children in this process by providing a quiet place for study and by establishing a regular homework routine.

While the total amount of time spent on homework will vary from child to child, depending on the work speed and learning style of the individual, parents should generally expect the amount of homework to increase each year as the children progress through school. It should also be understood that at various times during the year, special projects might require time in addition to the regular workload. These will be communicated well in advance.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION INFORMATION

Promotion of students to the next grade level is dependent upon successful completion of the year's academic work and a demonstrated readiness for the challenges of the next grade level. Each case is handled individually and involves the principal and classroom teacher.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued to students four times a year at nine week intervals, assuming all financial obligations are current. Parents should check the report card to see the progress their child is making, sign it and return it to the classroom teacher the next day.

Students receive conduct grades on report cards. In the early grades, teachers make conduct a part of daily and weekly communication with parents. In this way, parents are immediately apprised of any correction that was made in the classroom. This allows parents and teachers to cooperate in optimizing the development of good citizenship and Christ-like behavior from an early age.

Progress reports will be available on-line for students in grades 3-5 at mid-quarter. Information on how to access these grades will be sent home with the student.

Families with delinquent financial accounts will not receive report cards, nor will any records be sent to another school until all financial obligations to Westminster School are paid in full.

Westminster is required to provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the student, in the absence of a court order to the contrary. If there is a court order specifying that no information is to be given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order. Report cards will be mailed to the non-custodial parent.

SUMMER READING

All returning and new students entering second through fifth grades are required to participate in the Summer Reading program. This information is available on our website.

PART 10: GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are special days for our students. A special treat may be sent in for the class if you make arrangements with the teacher ahead of time. A child with a summer birthday may celebrate their birthday with a special treat at a time mutually decided upon.

Flowers, balloon bouquets, and other gifts for children cannot be delivered to school.

Please be sensitive of the other students if you are planning and hosting a birthday party but not able to invite all the students in the class. In this instance, invitations must be mailed or delivered outside of school. This will help to avoid hurt feelings and to encourage unity. Birthday party invitations may be passed out at school only when all students or all students of the same sex in the classroom are included. Thank you notes should be mailed from home. Also, if your child is attending a private party after school, please do not send the gift to school.

CLASS LIST AND PLACEMENT

Many factors enter into the classroom placement decision of students. Grade level teachers, academic support personnel and the principal consider many variables, including learning styles of students and teachers, self confidence, and personal issues. For this reason, we do not accept teacher requests but accept relevant information about individual student needs. (This information should be sent to the principal by May 1.) We appreciate your understanding and support of this policy. Class lists will be sent home in advance of the first day of school.

DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE

The school does not distribute non-school related literature.

FIRE, TORNADO, and LOCKDOWN DRILLS

Fire drills are conducted once a month. Tornado drills will be held twice a year, in November and February. Lockdown drills will take place periodically throughout the year. At the beginning of school, each teacher will give students detailed instructions regarding all drills.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICY

We believe that internet access and the use of technology will help the students develop skills that are an essential part of learning. The school's information technology resources, including email and Internet access, are provided for educational purposes. These new opportunities also pose challenges to ensure that precautions are taken to limit access to inaccurate, potentially offensive or controversial material. The school takes precautions to restrict access to material through the use of filters/safeguards/blocks; however, it is impossible to control all such material. The most important way to safeguard children while using technology is to monitor their use at school and at home. This is a joint responsibility shared by all members of the Westminster community: faculty/staff, parents, and students.

The Acceptable Use of Computer and Information Technology Resources Policy will be presented and discussed during the student's regularly scheduled computer class with a copy of the policy being posted in the Media Center. Further, the policy will be outlined in the Student Handbook. Adherence to this policy is necessary for continued access to the school's technological resources.

Students using school computers are expected to exhibit appropriate behavior and will be held responsible for their behavior. The school's computers are to be used only for school-related purposes. General school rules for behavior and communications apply.

Guidelines and Expectations:

- ◇ Inappropriate Material: In cases where a student inadvertently accesses or discovers inappropriate, offensive, threatening, or controversial material, the student should notify the attending teacher immediately.
- ◇ Private Information: Students are not to distribute private information about others or themselves. Some websites request that forms be completed before accessing their page. Students should never fill out an Internet form with personal information unless the teacher instructs them to do so.
- ◇ Usernames and Passwords: Each class has a private classroom/teacher folder on the network to store student projects. Students are to use only their assigned accounts and not view, use, or copy passwords or data to which they are not authorized. Fifth grade students having email accounts should share their username and password with their parents.
- ◇ Plagiarism: Students are not to violate copyright laws and copy information directly from a website or other source without proper citation.
- ◇ Code of Conduct: Students are not to intentionally access, transmit, copy, or create material that violates the school's code of conduct (such as messages that are offensive, threatening, rude, discriminatory, or meant to harass).
- ◇ Email Accounts: Students with email accounts are not to send spam, chain letters, or other mass unsolicited mailings to other students.
- ◇ Destruction of Property: Students are not to destroy physical property like computer equipment or electronic property like student work, projects, or files.
- ◇ Communication: Students should only communicate in ways that are kind and respectful.
- ◇ Logging Out: When students are finished using a computer, they are to log out.

Consequences for Violation: Violations of these rules may result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, the loss of a student's privileges to use the school's computers and information technology resources. The use of the computers is a privilege.

Supervision and Monitoring: Teachers and network administrators monitor the use of information technology resources to help ensure that uses are secure and in conformity with this policy. Administrators reserve the right to examine, use, and disclose any data found on the school's information networks in order to further the health, safety, discipline, or security of any student or other person, or to protect property.

LOST AND FOUND

Please label your child's coats, jackets, sweaters, hats, etc. so that they can be identified. Clothes and other items that are left on the playground and around the school will be placed in the lost and found. The lost and found barrel is on the landing leading to the basement, in the stairwell closest to the gym. Lost items will be displayed in December and May. Those not claimed will be donated to charity.

OPEN HOUSE

The Open House scheduled in January is for prospective families not current ones.

PETS ON CAMPUS

No pets, such as dogs or cats, are permitted in buildings or outside during car line. If pets are brought on campus, they must remain in the car.

RECESS

Outdoor recess provides students with a much needed break from learning activities, free time to socialize with peers, and an opportunity to recharge their energy for the remainder of the academic day. We are fortunate to live in an area that allows outside recess the majority of the year. Only on rainy and/or extremely hot or cold days will indoor recess be held.

Recess during August and September can be very hot and humid. The school will follow the Richmond County guidelines and make recess decisions throughout the day based on the heat index. Additionally, the students will receive extra water breaks.

In winter months, temperature and wind chill will be evaluated. The school will make decisions daily, and sometimes hourly, on outside recess. Children should come to school prepared for outside recess during the winter months. Generally, if a student is healthy enough to attend school, he or she is healthy enough to go outside for recess.

SPIRIT DAYS

Spirit Days are celebrated monthly and are marked on the calendar. The students should wear their Westminster t-shirts to school.

VISITORS

All visitors on campus must sign in with the receptionist and wear a visitor's badge, including visitors at lunch.

Parents are welcome at the school and may schedule a visit to observe the classroom in operation at any time by emailing the teacher or calling the school office. (It is understood that these visits are subject to approval by the classroom teacher and the principal. You may be asked to schedule a different day for your visit if it conflicts with the teacher's plans for the class.) While we enjoy the support we receive from parents, dropping into the classroom unannounced and/or excessive visits to the classroom or lunchroom are not conducive to your child's academic and social success.

Students must obtain permission from the principal to bring visitors into the classroom. Classroom guests or special speakers must also sign in at the office before going to the classroom.

PART 11: PARENT INVOLVEMENT

FIELD TRIPS

We depend upon and appreciate the help of parent drivers for field trips. It is important to remember, however, that the number of parents who go and the assignment of students and supervisory responsibilities will be at the discretion of the classroom teacher planning the trip. Every effort will be made to have willing parents go on at least one field trip during the year. Every parent, however, will not be able to go on every trip. Only parents may be field trip drivers. Aunts, uncles, and/or grandparents may not drive in the parents place.

Since supervision of Westminster students is the primary duty of parent drivers, we ask that other siblings **not** be brought on the trip. The safety of our students requires attention and care that is difficult to give if the parent is also supervising other siblings.

Any parent who will drive students on field trips must submit a copy of their current driver's license and insurance card to the teacher. Westminster requires all students to wear seat belts while riding in cars.

PARENT NIGHT

Parent Night is scheduled for all grade levels during August. Important classroom information is reviewed, including AR (Accelerated Reader), curriculum, discipline, student and parent responsibilities, school rules and requirements, and special activities. Parent Night provides an opportunity to ask questions and discover effective ways to make the school year a successful and happy one. Parents should make every effort to attend. Parent Night is for parents only; please make other arrangements for your children.

PARTIES

The Lower School classrooms schedule two parties during the year: Christmas & Valentine's Day. The parties will be held on campus. The teachers will plan the parties, and the parent coordinators will provide the support. Additionally, the Lower School as a whole enjoys an end-of-the year party on campus planned by administration.

WESTMINSTER PARENTS' CLUB

The Westminster Parents' Club (WPC) exists to promote and improve Westminster School through activities that meet with administrative and board approval. The WPC is a service organization, comprised of parent volunteers. All parents of enrolled students as well as faculty and staff, are members of the WPC. If you would like to become more involved, please contact Ashley Fehrman, WPC President, at (706) 860-9808.