



Westwood Regional Middle School

23 Third Avenue, Westwood, New Jersey, NJ 07675 • (201) 664-5560 • Fax (201) 722-0704 • www.wwrmsd.org/westwoodrms

Shelley LaForgia
Principal

Michael Attanasio
Assistant Principal

Kenneth Russo
Assistant Principal

August 2018

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students:

Welcome Back!

I am thrilled to be welcoming you to WRMS for the 2018-2019 school year! Middle School is an important time in every student's development, both academically and personally. Students will continue to hone their skills, explore their curricular interests, and establish their identities in more depth and with a greater sense of purpose. I am honored to be a part of these critical years.

Throughout my educational career, I have held the belief that all students can learn and meet with success. The definition of success is one that is ever changing and specific to each student. Our goal as educators is to tap each student's strengths and foster an environment where they can apply their curiosity to a variety of curriculum and opportunities and achieve their personal best.

This school year will be my third as principal of the Middle School, and I am greatly looking forward to the continued progress of our school and excited for the changes to come. We continue to hone our instructional skills and improve our collaboration among teams; strengthen our student support teams, comprised of teachers, assistant principals, and guidance counselors; and improve our use of instructional technology to better prepare our students for the future. We will have the additional challenge of construction, but I am encouraged by our planning and confident that our students' educational experience will be preserved.

On behalf of the faculty and staff at WRMS, we welcome you to what we anticipate to be a very exciting and rewarding year. Our staff has worked diligently to prepare for a fantastic school year with its new challenges, new faces, and unknown excitement.

Middle School Philosophy

The overall purpose of middle school is to meet the educational, developmental, and social needs that emerge in this transitional period. The middle school program provides a supportive and flexible environment so students will have opportunities to develop skills and explore a variety of learning experiences while making the transition from elementary to high school. Through a caring and secure environment, the middle school program ensures that all students experience challenge and success. The curriculum is based upon the developmental needs of the young adolescent, with the following goals:

- mastering basic skills within an interdisciplinary context;
- acquiring a fundamental body of knowledge and the critical thinking skills necessary for its interpretation and application;

- developing and maintaining a positive self-image;
- accepting increased social, personal and academic responsibilities;
- exploring a diversity of curricular and extracurricular activities;
- developing an increased awareness of individual differences and respect for others;
- and participating responsibly in the school community.

Westwood Regional Middle School included many best practices when creating our program, and kept the students at the forefront of our thinking when we reflect and modify our program. Best practices include:

- teams for core classes providing the teachers an opportunity to work collaboratively with planning, assessments, and student-centered issues;
- ongoing, comprehensive upstander training, as well as programming on appropriate decision making;
- positive behavioral support program, *HIGH FIVE!*;
- exploratory learning experiences provided through various selective courses, in addition to after school clubs and activities;
- and heterogeneous class groupings allowing students of various abilities and learning styles to benefit one another.

The success of our school resides within the opportunities provided to our students. We are fortunate enough to have an excellent staff to facilitate this experience for every student. I could not be more proud of this school, the staff, students, and the community that supports it!

To align with this philosophy, our administrative and student support structure leaders include:

Grade 6:

Jenny Sparno, Guidance Counselor

jenny.sparno@wwrsd.org

201-664-5560 x6006

Michael Attanasio, Assistant Principal

michael.attanasio@wwrsd.org

201-664-5560 x6012

Team A: Christine McGovern

christine.mcgovern@wwrsd.org

Team B: Jacob Ziegler

jacob.ziegler@wwrsd.org

Grade 7:

Christie Androulakis, Guidance Counselor

christie.adroulakis@wwrsd.org

201-664-5560 x6005

Kenneth Russo, Assistant Principal

kenneth.russo@wwrsd.org

201-664-5560 x6003

Team A: Barry Albert

barry.albert@wwrsd.org

Team B: Sean Hackbarth

sean.hackbarth@wwrsd.org

Assistant Principals are in throughout the summer, and the counselors will be in on August 28th. They are also available via email over the summer. The team lead teachers are an invaluable resource for academic concerns and conferences as well.

Westwood Regional Middle School Website

[Our website](#) will continue to serve our school as the main source of information for the community, and we are restructuring aspects of it to make it more user-friendly. We will continue to post important information on our website, including, but not limited to:

- Student/Parent/Guardian Handbook
- team and teacher webpages with homework and related links
- school counseling information
- PBSIS updates
- HIB programming (coming soon!)
- PSO information, fundraisers, and dates
- Genesis Parent Portal link

Additionally, helpful communications, like this information and my weekly updates, will be emailed.

Genesis Schedules and Forms

Schedules are available in Genesis. Please log-in to read and acknowledge the new school year forms. Once you do so, your student's full schedule will be available, as well as the other Genesis features.

Locker Set-up

With the expansion construction already underway, we held our incoming student orientation in May. The school will be open for students to set-up their lockers on Tuesday, August 28th from 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM. All students are welcome to come at any point during that window. We apologize for the limited access, but it is necessary in order to reduce the construction's impact on our school year.

Grade six teachers will spend much of the first day helping students to transition, and they are experienced professionals when it comes to helping to alleviate the excited nervousness that typically accompanies the first few days of school.

School Supplies

[Grade-level supply lists](#) are posted on our homepage for easy reference.

Back-to-School Night (Parents ONLY)

WRMS Back-to-School Night is **Thursday, September 13, 2018**. Seventh grade parents will attend from 7:00 – 8:15 PM and sixth grade parents from 8:30 – 9:45 PM. Stay tuned for more information!

Procedures

The following is an itemized list of some daily procedures that **MUST** be observed to ensure efficiency and safety:

- **Drop-off**: Students can enter the building at **7:45 AM** from the main entrance and/or the back door closest to the cul-de-sac on Second Avenue. It is important for students not to arrive before this time, as appropriate building supervision is not available. For security purposes, there will be a staff member stationed at both entry points in the morning. All students will report to either the cafeteria or gym each morning. The Media Center and chromebook lab in room 11 will be open for all students from 7:45 AM – 8:05 AM. When arranged with a teacher, students can also attend morning extra help sessions. Students should report directly to homeroom with the warning bell ringing at 8:10 AM. After the 8:15 AM bell, students are considered late for the school day. In order to alleviate potential congestion in the front of the school and in the parking lot, it is recommended that

families living east of WRMS drop-off their children in the cul-de-sac on Second Avenue and all other families drop-off in the parking lot or other surrounding streets with the aid of a crossing guard. Regardless of drop-off point, students most safely exit vehicles from the passenger side, and it is extremely important to **“drop and go”** so traffic keeps moving.

- **Pick Up:** Please discuss a pick up plan with your child that is safe and efficient as this is a very congested time in our parking lot. If you choose to pick up in the parking lot, it is requested that **parents park in spots to await dismissal** as opposed to parking in the thoroughfare. Furthermore, all drivers must **observe and follow the one way patterns** of the parking lot. Parents are encouraged to explore pick up locations other than the WRMS parking lot such as the Second Ave cul-de-sac or other surrounding streets that may be a block or two away from the school. Crossing guards are available to assist students after school as well.
- **Bus Loop:** Cars and vehicles are **NOT** permitted in the bus loop between the hours of 7:30 – 8:30 AM and 2:30 – 3:15 PM. The bus loop is a no parking zone as indicated by the yellow curb; vehicles violating this regulation will be subject to a municipal fine.
- **Change of Class:** Students will dismiss and change classes on their own after each period. Students should utilize lockers as to not carry everything around with them. Given the compact size of our halls, **students will only be permitted to carry a string bag** during the school day. At the beginning of the year, teachers will help students with recommendations on how to organize their materials for their morning and afternoon classes. Guidance counselors are also available to help if your student is struggling and carrying too much during the day. All sixth grade lockers are in or near the hallway with sixth grade core classes, and all seventh grade lockers are in or near the hallway with seventh grade core classes.
- **Cell Phone and Electronic Devices:** Students are **NOT** permitted to have or use cell phones or electronic devices (iPods, gaming devices) at all during the school day. WRMS has a policy on its website permitting students to bring devices for reading, but this permission is not an acceptance of responsibility. As the potential for the loss of such items is great, it is recommended that they not be brought to school. WRMS will not accept responsibility for the loss of or damage to such items. Students may always ask to use the phone in the Main Office to call home.
- **Sixth Grade Immunizations:** Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 8:57-4, all students entering sixth grade in September are required to have all appropriate immunizations (DPT Booster and meningitis) prior to attending school. Students **will not be permitted to attend school** until the immunizations have been completed. For more information, please visit the [District Health Portal](#) or the website of [Mrs. Penn](#), our school nurse.
- **Clubs and Activities:** Clubs and activities will run before and after school starting in October, and announcements will be made for a club fair in September. Any student interested in participating in Sports or Morning Fitness Club must have a physical and permit form completed before participating. The club advisor will distribute the appropriate forms.
- **Drop-off Table:** Forgetting items is inevitable. In the event something is forgotten (e.g.: notebook, instrument, lunch, etc.), a table will be set up in the main foyer for these items to be dropped off and signed in by a parent/guardian. In order to increase student accountability, students will be

responsible for picking up the item from the table during the day and initialing that it was picked up. However, money for students should be brought to the Main Office.

- Attendance: Please visit [Attendance Policy 5200](#) for the list of reasons for an excused absence. Should your child be absent for a reason not listed, parents are allotted eight (8) parent excusals. Any student who accumulates ten (10) unexcused absences may be referred for truancy. Please see the regulation for more information.
- Late Arrivals to School: Students who arrive to school after 8:15 AM are to sign in at the main office and then report directly to class. Please refer to the Code of Discipline for more information related to recurrences of tardiness to school.
- Lockers: Students are permitted to decorate the **inside** of their lockers with pictures, a schedule, etc., but nothing is to be permanent. Any damage done to a locker will incur a minimum fine of \$20.00.
- I.D. cards: All members of the WRMS community will be issued a school I.D. card, case, and lanyard. The cards must be used to access the cafeteria sales and for prepayment of meals. Replacement of a lost card will incur a cost of \$5.00. Students can also pay cash for lunch.
- Lunch: Please click [here](#) for information on our prepayment option for school lunches.
- Academic Support Lab (ASL): The ASL is available for students to meet with their core teachers (Math, LA, Science, Social Studies) during half of the student's lunch. Students on Team A will have access to their teachers in the ASL on A days and students on Team B on B days. However, students can attend on either day.
- Extra Help: Students seeking extra help need to arrange it with their teachers. Our teachers are extremely flexible with meeting students before and after school. All you need to do is ask!
- Homework: Middle School students are busy people and will be expected to complete more homework than elementary school. They will also start to see long-range assignments that require more organization and planning skills that will be crucial in high school.

I am extremely proud to be a part of the Westwood Regional Middle School Community. By working collaboratively with staff, parents, and the entire Middle School Community we can truly strive for "Excellence in Education" and providing each student with a memorable 6th and 7th grade experience.

If at any time you have questions or concerns, please contact me at 201-664-5560 x6002 or shelley.laforgia@wwrsd.org.

Respectfully,



Shelley LaForgia
Principal