

# Westmont Hilltop Cyber Academy



## 2014 – 2015 Student Handbook

Westmont Hilltop High School  
200 Fair Oaks Drive  
Johnstown, Pennsylvania 15905  
Phone: 814.255.8726

### **WESTMONT HILLTOP CYBER ACADEMY STAFF**

Superintendent of Schools: Mr. Donald B. Irwin (Phone: 255-8710; email: [dbi@whsd.org](mailto:dbi@whsd.org))  
Secretary: Mary E. Hartnett (Phone: 255-6751; email: [meh@whsd.org](mailto:meh@whsd.org))

#### **Cyber Academy Coordinator:**

Director of Education: Mr. Steven D. McGee (Phone: 255-8711; email: [sdm@whsd.org](mailto:sdm@whsd.org))  
Secretary: Mary E. Hartnett (Phone: 255-6751; email: [meh@whsd.org](mailto:meh@whsd.org))

High School Principal: Mr. Thomas R. Mitchell (Phone: 255-8733; email: [trm@whsd.org](mailto:trm@whsd.org))  
Main Secretary: Michelle St. Clair (Phone: 255-8726; email: [mxs@whsd.org](mailto:mxs@whsd.org))  
Attendance Secretary: Susie A. Davis (Phone: 255-8726; email: [sad@whsd.org](mailto:sad@whsd.org))

School Counselor: Mr. Keith E. Jones (Phone: 255-8738; email: [kej@whsd.org](mailto:kej@whsd.org))  
School Counselor: Mrs. M. Beth Stem (Phone: 255-8737; email: [mbs@whsd.org](mailto:mbs@whsd.org))  
Secretary: Julie E. Held (Phone: 255-8736; email: [jeh@whsd.org](mailto:jeh@whsd.org))

Athletic Director: Mr. Thomas L. Callihan (Phone: 255-8764; [tlc@whsd.org](mailto:tlc@whsd.org))  
Nurse: Mrs. Peggy R. Antolik (Phone: 255-8751; email: [pra@whsd.org](mailto:pra@whsd.org))

# WESTMONT HILLTOP SCHOOL DISTRICT

## 2014 – 2015 CALENDAR

<b>WESTMONT HILLTOP SCHOOL DISTRICT</b>				
2014-2015				
School Calendar				
First Day of School - August 25, 2014			Last Day of School - June 4, 2015	

July 2014					January 2015				
M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F
	1	2	3	4				1	2
7	8	9	10	11	5	6	7	8	9
14	15	16	17	18	12	13	14	15	16
21	22	23	24	25	19*	20	21	22	23
28	29	30	31		26	27	28	29	30
S=	0	T=	0	S=	19	T=	20		

August 2014					February 2015				
M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F
				1	2	3	4	5	6
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
25	26	27	28	29					
S=	5	T=	7	S=	19	T=	19		

September 2014					March 2015				
M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F
1	2	3	4	5	2	3	4	5	6
8	9	10	11	12	9	10	11	12	13
15	16	17	18	19	16	17	18	19	20
22	23	24	25	26	23	24	25	26	27
29	30				30	31			
S=	20	T=	21	S=	21	T=	21		

October 2014					April 2015				
M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F
		1	2	3			1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10	6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17	13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24	20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31	27	28	29	30	
S=	22	T=	23	S=	19	T=	19		

November 2014					May 2015				
M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F
3	4	5	6	7					1
10	11	12	13	14	4	5	6	7	8
17	18	19	20	21	11	12	13	14	15
24	25	26	27	28	18	19	20	21	22
					25	26	27	28	29
S=	16	T=	17	S=	19	T=	19		

December 2014					June 2015				
M	T	W	Th	F	M	T	W	Th	F
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12	8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19	15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26	22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31			29	30			
S=	16	T=	16	S=	4	T=	4		

End of Q1: 10/29/14

End of Q2: 01/16/15

End of Q3: 03/26/15

End of Q4: 06/04/15

Total Student Days: 180

Total Teacher Days: 186

**Additional Snow Days Added to End of Year**

**Board Approved: April 14, 2014**

Month	Days	Notes
August	20,21	Professional Development Day for Teachers
	25	First Day of School
September	1	Labor Day (Schools Closed)
	22	Professional Development Day for Teachers
October	13	Professional Development Day for Teachers
November	10	Professional Development Day for Teachers
	11	Veteran's Day (Schools Closed)
	27,28	Thanksgiving Vacation
December	1	Thanksgiving Vacation
	24-31	Winter Break
January	1,2	Winter Break
	7-14	Keystone Exams (HS Only)
	15,16	S1 Final Exams (HS Only)
	19	Professional Development Day *OR Make-up Day #1
February	16	President's Day (Make-up Day #2)
March	16	No School (Make-up Day #3)
April	2	Spring Break (Make-up Day #4)
	3	Spring Break
	6	Spring Break (Make-up Day #5)
	13-17	PSSA English/Language Arts (ES & MS)
	20-24	PSSA Mathematics (ES & MS)
	27-30	PSSA Science (ES & MS)
May	1	PSSA Science (ES & MS)
	4-8	PSSA Make-Ups
	18-27	Keystone Exams (MS & HS)
	22	No School (Make-up Day #6)
	25	Memorial Day (Schools Closed)
June	3,4	S2 Final Exams (HS Only)
	4	Last Day of School/Commencement

  

Legend	Description
	Holidays - Schools Closed
	Professional Development or Clerical Day (No Students)
	Snow Make-Up Day (No School Unless Announced)
	Friday Dismissal Schedule
	Keystone Exam Testing
	PSSA English/Language Arts (ES & MS)
	PSSA Mathematics (ES & MS)
	PSSA Science (ES & MS)
	PSSA Make-Ups
	Final Exams

The mission of the Westmont Hilltop School District, in partnership with our community, is to prepare each student to be an informed, ethical, responsible adult in a changing and competitive global society through high expectations and a challenging educational program offering knowledge and skills within a safe, nurturing environment.

## OVERVIEW

The Westmont Hilltop School District Cyber Academy is an educational learning environment designed to meet the needs of students who desire to pursue their education in a non-traditional format. The Westmont Hilltop School District recognizes the value of distance learning; yet, continues to carry the belief that the interaction with professional educators truly extends learning to a higher level. The educational program offers a distance learning program that includes a variety of interactions with highly qualified professional educators and guidance counselors.

Like the educational program of the Westmont Hilltop School District's traditional "brick and mortar" system, the learning environment of the Cyber Academy is based on the National Common Core Standards and Pennsylvania Academic Standards. This standards-aligned curriculum emphasizes the students' demonstration of mastering specific skills by engaging in an academic program that emphasizes proficiency in all curricular activities through distance learning. Students participating in the Westmont Hilltop Cyber Academy demonstrate their proficiency in a variety of ways. These students will range academically from those who have a sound skill base in all areas to those who have been identified as having learning deficits.

The Westmont Hilltop Cyber Academy strives to engage students in a highly motivational, student-centered educational program that relies on basic educational principles while utilizing the latest information and communications technology to promote student achievement in fostering higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills. Students have a chance to master essential content skills and a chance to build a strong foundation to compete in the workforce of today and tomorrow.

## ADMISSION

Students who apply to attend the Westmont Hilltop Cyber Academy will have their application reviewed by the Cyber Academy Coordinators in consultation with the building-level guidance counselor.

It will be the responsibility of the coordinators to determine student eligibility in conjunction with building-level guidance counselors and will determine admittance and/or removal from the program. Students who are admitted to the Westmont Hilltop Cyber Academy must enroll for at least one nine week period of time unless otherwise determined by the coordinators. Other related student or parent educational requests will also be reviewed by the coordinators and guidance counselors.

## REGISTRATION/ORIENTATION

When registering with the Westmont Hilltop Cyber Academy, students and families will meet with the Cyber Academy coordinators and building-level guidance counselors and related staff who will work to determine what courses each student will take. It will be at this time that courses will be determined, passwords and other directions will be given, and guidance on how to "trouble shoot" for technical issues will be shown. [This information will also be shared during the Westmont Hilltop Cyber Academy Student / Parent Orientation Meeting held each August.]

## STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Your participation in the Cyber Academy requires you to be organized, motivated and willing to assume responsibility for your education. Failure to adhere to any of the following requirements may contribute to your removal from the Cyber Academy.

### **Cyber Academy students must:**

- Complete 4 hours of online work for 5 days per week
- Complete a prescribed amount of work for each subject area
- Access their individual email account daily
- Make contact with the appropriate district staff when support is needed
- Complete activities by established deadlines
- Complete & submit their own work
- Work in the order in which the assignments are posted. (Students may accelerate course completion with the approval of their Cyber Academy teacher and/or review by the Coordinators.)

## GOALS

The goals of the Westmont Hilltop Cyber Academy are to:

- Offer a non-traditional learning environment to the students of the Westmont Hilltop School District that is in line with the district's mission and vision statements.
- Provide students who desire a non-traditional learning environment with opportunities to acquire the education necessary to earn a diploma from the Westmont Hilltop School District.
- Provide students who select the Cyber Academy with balanced educational experiences, academic programs, and interactions with highly qualified professional educators.
- Establish individualized learning plans for participating students that are consistent with the Pennsylvania Academic Standards and graduation requirements of the Westmont Hilltop School District.
- Provide students with a sense of ownership and responsibility for their academics.

## ATTENDANCE

We understand that students work at different paces based on their academic ability. It *recommended* that students spend a minimum of one hour on each subject per day, depending on their course load. With flexible scheduling, this may be stretched over 7 days. The Westmont Hilltop Cyber Academy Attendance Secretary and the Westmont Hilltop School District will review student login time on a regular basis. Self-reflection is an integral component of the monitoring process. Students will be challenged to consider the following:

1. Pacing: Are you at pace, behind or ahead? Adjust your online time accordingly.
2. Attendance: Are you working every day? Adjust your schedule to meet this goal.
3. Performance: Are you passing or performing at the expected level? If need be, adjust to improve performance.

Students who fail to meet the requirements set forth in the Cyber Academy can be dismissed from the program. Attendance is taken to ensure that students are working online. Students must attend school every day (see school calendar). Due to the nature of the cyber school model, instructional time and progress can be entered on any day (eg. weekends, holidays, etc.) and at any time, 24 hours a day - seven days a week. Students are expected to log into the online system each scheduled school calendar day. If attendance is not recorded on a school day as listed on the school calendar, the student is marked as absent. If, during our monitoring of student progress and attendance, a student fails to log into his/her account for ten consecutive days, the student's account with the online program(s) will be suspended and the password and ID locked, pending student/parent communication regarding online access. The district will treat the ten consecutive absence rule in the same way for the cyber academy student as is done for students in the schools – a citation will be filed with the District Magistrate or Cambria County Juvenile Probation (for those students under seventeen years of age – compulsory attendance age in Pennsylvania) or removal of the student as a district student (for students seventeen years of age or older).

Daily progress reports are generated using the instructional software and district monitoring tools to ensure that the student is "present" and working for the minimum amount of time. Students who are absent from online school work must submit a written excuse (can be emailed or delivered) by the parent/guardian to Susie Davis, Attendance Secretary within three (3) days of the absence. In the case of extended illness, the student should communicate with Cyber Academy Coordinators to complete all work missed in a reasonable length of time. Failure to follow this policy may result in dismissal from the Cyber Program.

### Parental Responsibility

After five (5) cumulative days of absence at any point in the school year, a letter of concern will be mailed to parents regarding the excessive absence. At ten (10) cumulative days of absence at any point in the school year, a second letter of concern will be mailed to parents. At thirteen (13) days of cumulative absence, the school may require that subsequent absences be accompanied with written verification from a licensed physician.

Children whose names are on the active membership roll, who are at any time in the school term absent from school for ten consecutive school days, may thereafter be removed from the active roll unless the district has been provided with evidence that the absence may be legally excused or compulsory attendance prosecution has been or is being pursued. Parents are expected to direct students to report to school even when it appears that the students may be tardy.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT, RESPONSIBILITY AND EXPECTATIONS**

Student success is greatly impacted by parental involvement. During orientation, parents will be shown how to monitor their child's progress. Parents are requested to make contact with the guidance counselors at least once a month. You can contact your guidance counselor via e-mail, telephone or in person.

- Establish parameters for completing assignments (Time, Environment, Goals, Pacing)
- Take interest in student's education and progress
- Monitor progress

## **PROGRESS MONITORING**

Prior to the end of each 9 week grading period, the guidance counselor, building principal, and assigned cyber coordinators will review the academic performance of the student. Upon completion of this review, it will be determined whether the student will continue in the Cyber Program. Parents may be requested to come to the school to participate in this process. All policies and procedures contained in this document will be reviewed. Please note that if a student is not meeting expectations, he/she may be removed prior to the end of the marking period.

## **NETWORK ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

- Information available through the Internet may be protected by copyrights or trademarks. Transmission of copyrighted or pornographic material in violation of any federal or state regulation is prohibited.
- Computer users should be aware that the Internet contains offensive material. The school district may choose to filter offensive content, limiting access to sites which are outside the realm of classroom research.
- The Internet is a vast worldwide network with very few limitations or restrictions. Not all sources on the Internet provide accurate, complete, or current information. The Westmont Hilltop School District is not responsible for any information obtained on the Internet.
- Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data is prohibited. This includes the uploading or creating of computer viruses. Hardware or software may not be modified or destroyed. Users may not change settings or load personal programs onto any of the District's computers without authorization from a sponsoring teacher or the technology support staff.
- Students may not use the Internet for any commercial or for-profit purposes related to the online educational materials provided by the school district.
- Students may not include pictures, descriptions, or any other such references to school employees or other students on student-created web sites without signed permission from employee or student. Violation of this provision will result in immediate termination of Cyber Academy privileges, administration of appropriate school penalties, and possible referral to local police authorities.
- It is a felony offense in the state of Pennsylvania "to display or cause to display any explicit sexual material ... on any ... viewing screen in such manner that the display is visible ... in any establishment where minors, as part of the general public, may be exposed to view all or any part of such materials." (Title 18 PA Crime Code-Sect. 5903) The WHSD Acceptable Use Policy in its entirety is available on the district's website.

## **NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO DESTROY IRRELEVANT EDUCATIONAL RECORDS**

The Westmont Hilltop School District maintains educational records for students enrolled in the District. The records are reviewed at transition times: when the student moves from elementary to middle school, when the student moves from middle school to high school, at high school graduation, and five years after the student graduates from high school. Information that is no longer relevant or required by Law to be maintained will be purged from the student's file. Only transcript information is retained after graduation. The educational records of your child will be held for 45 days following the transition times identified above. During that time, you have the right to inspect, review or copy any of the information. In order for the parent or eligible student to inspect, review or copy the education records, a written request must be made to Westmont Hilltop School District, 827 Diamond Blvd. Johnstown, PA 15905.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Westmont Hilltop School District provides a Special Education Program in accordance with federal and state regulations and guidelines to ensure the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to all school-age children in need of such services. Special Education services are available to students who have been identified by an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, based on recommendations in a multi-disciplinary evaluation, to need Special Education. Special Education services are provided according to the primary educational needs of the child. Support is provided for students who need primary assistance with the acquisition of academic skills. However, other related services are available to the child to enhance participation in or access to his or her program of special education. Examples of related services are speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, etc. Special Education services will be provided to students who qualify under the Chapter 14 Regulations. Steven McGee (sdm@whsd.org), Westmont Hilltop School District's Assistant Superintendent, can offer further assistance in this area.

## GRADING POLICY

The following notations have been adopted and will be implemented for evaluating scholastic achievement:

A 92 - 100% Excellent

B 83 - 91% Good

C 74 - 82% Fair

D 65 - 73% Poor

F 0 - 64% Failing (no credit)

\*P 0 – 64% Failing (credit awarded)

WF - Withdraw/Fail (no credit)

S - Satisfactory (credit awarded)

U - Unsatisfactory (no credit awarded)

\*May be used as a nine week grade and a final grade for a student who exerted a conscientious effort, but who did not possess the ability to achieve a passing grade.

## CHEATING/PLAGIARISM

Cheating is defined as copying, falsifying or assisting in copying another's work; specifically, a student giving another student their work to copy; and submitting the same as your own without teacher authorization or author citation. This policy refers to tests, homework, reports, projects, library work, etc. Depending on the weight of the assignment where the cheating occurred, the student may fail the marking period or even the entire course. You are required to complete and submit work done by you and only you. Participation in a cyber program requires honesty and integrity. Failure to follow this policy may result in dismissal from the Cyber Program.

The penalties for cheating are as follows:

- **First offense:** A score of zero for the graded activity; parent and office notified by cyber teacher, meeting may occur with student, parent, teacher, guidance counselor, and principal present. Other related discipline will be determined based upon district policy and student handbook.
- **Second Offense:** Failure for the marking period, parent and office notified by the cyber teacher, meeting will occur with student, parent, teacher, guidance counselor, and principal present. Student may be removed from the Westmont Hilltop Cyber Academy.

The Curriculum Committee may be used to hear any student or parent appeals with any alleged cheating incidents. Parents/students may request in writing, a meeting to discuss the cheating allegation. Upon review, the decision of the Committee will then be final.

# GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Seniors who wish to participate in the formal high school commencement exercises must have earned a minimum of 26 credits by the close of the second semester senior year, or must have earned at least 24 credits and verified arrangements with the guidance office for satisfying this academic obligation. Students must arrange to earn the additional credits needed to meet this obligation during the summer of their commencement year. Seniors with a deficiency of greater than 2 credits at the end of the second semester may not participate in their class's commencement ceremonies.

## **Graduation Requirements by Curriculum Area**

<u>Courses</u>	<u>Credits</u>
English	4.0
Social Studies	4.0
Mathematics	3.0
Science	3.0
Arts/Humanities	2.0
Health/Phys. Ed.	1.5
Additional Credits	<u>8.5</u>
<i>Totals</i>	26.0

## **CHANGE OF NAME, ADDRESS AND/OR TELEPHONE NUMBER**

Please report any change of name, address, or telephone number to the Westmont Hilltop Cyber Academy Secretary as soon as possible.

## **CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

### ***CLUBS / ACTIVITIES / ORGANIZATIONS / CO-CURRICULARS***

As a member of the Westmont Hilltop Cyber Academy students are eligible and are strongly encouraged to join in and participate with all clubs, organizations and co-curricular activities offered by the District. Students will need to meet eligibility requirements.

### ***ATTENDANCE AT DANCES/PROM/ASSEMBLIES***

Students enrolled in the Westmont Hilltop Cyber Academy are permitted and encouraged to attend all school activities and functions. Please refer to the Westmont Hilltop High School Red and Gray for eligibility requirements and guidelines.

### ***SCHOLASTIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENT FOR EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES***

Westmont Hilltop Cyber Academy students participating in extra-curricular activities before public audiences or inter-scholastically (i.e. - sports, plays, competition band, extra choral presentations, musicals, forensics and academic competitions) will lose their eligibility if they are failing 51% of attempted credits on a weekly basis. Eligibility shall be cumulative from the beginning of a grading period, shall be reported on a weekly basis and shall be filed in the Principal's office. In cases where a student's cumulative work from the beginning of the grading period does not as of any Friday meet the standards provided for in this section, he/she shall be ineligible from the immediately following Sunday through the Saturday of the following week. If a student fails any *two* classes during the previous grading period the student will be ineligible for the first *fifteen days* of the next grading period. The student may practice during this fifteen-day period but the student cannot participate in any competition.

## HEALTH RECORDS

Students enrolled in the Westmont Hilltop Cyber Academy are required to acquire health screenings and maintain a school health record, just like the students in each grade level within the “brick and mortar,” in accordance with regulations set forth by the Pennsylvania Departments of Health and Education. This means that every student, in all grades, must receive a height, weight, Body Mass Index (BMI), and vision screening each year of school. These screenings will take place in the Nurse’s Suite at the high school and can be arranged through the nurse’s office (Margaret Antolik 255-8758, pra@whsd.org). The school nurse will then maintain these records.

In addition, other health services are required in the following grade levels:

6th grade: Medical Examination and Scoliosis Test

7th grade: Hearing Test, Scoliosis Test, and Dental Examination

11th grade: Medical Examination and Hearing Test

Each of these examinations can be conducted by school health officials when offered to traditional students in those grade levels for no cost, or parents can elect to have their own private family physician/dentist perform these examinations at a cost to the families. If the latter is the case, parents must provide proof to the school district of these exams. Forms for this purpose can be obtained from the school nurse. The school district is also obligated to ensure that students have the proper immunizations and can request these records from parents at any time. If you have any questions about required immunizations, please contact your family physician or the school nurse.