



WESTMOUNT

CHARTER SCHOOL

2010-2011

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2519 Richmond Road SW
Calgary, AB T3E 4M2
403.217.0426 phone • 403.217.0252 fax
403.217.0559 attendance line
www.westmountcharter.com
admin@westmountcharter.com

Our School Colours are Purple and Gold.

Our School Teams are the "Westmount Wild."

Our School Logo was adopted in June 2007.
The Westmount Charter School logo is a Trademark held by the Westmount Charter School Society.

ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is essential to success in school. It is the responsibility of parents and students to ensure that students attend school regularly and punctually. Elementary grades' morning classes begin at 8:30 a.m. and afternoon classes begin at 12:20 p.m. Staff are available to supervise students from 8:15 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., with the expectation that parents will make every effort to pick up students by 3:30 p.m.

The school is obligated to ensure that students complete the required curricular hours in each subject area. This means that:

- Daily absences need to be communicated to the office by the parent/guardian via the student attendance line, 403-217-0559. A brief description of illness is helpful.
- We request that illnesses that extend beyond a five-day period be reported to the school office with a medical note.
- If an absence is not communicated to the school, every reasonable attempt is made by the teacher to determine the whereabouts of the child.
- Extended absences (family vacations, religious holidays, etc.) should be communicated ahead of time to the administration and the teaching team.
- Students are responsible for maintaining all class work while absent and should communicate with teachers upon return to the school.
- School administration may place a student on an attendance contract for habitual lateness or when their absenteeism is deemed excessive.

EXTENDED ABSENCES due to Family Vacation Plans

It happens from time to time that parents take students out of school for a matter of days or weeks to vacation as a family. Learning will, in every case, be impacted to some extent by the student absence. The degree of impact will be different depending upon the subject, the grade level of the student, and the amount of advance preparation by the student. The teaching that will take place in your child's absence cannot be accomplished through a paper package created by staff members. Apart from lengthy major assignments such as essays, which your child will need to complete in order to receive a grade, students and their families should agree on daily activities that will support learning in a general sense, and help the student to get the most out of the time spent in an interesting place. Please do not request that teachers prepare lessons, assignments or activities for your student's extended absence.

2010-2011 DAY ONE/DAY TWO CALENDAR

Kindergarten classes and the Mid-High timetable utilize a two-day calendar. Occasionally, elementary events or classes will be held on a "day one Friday" or a "day two Friday." The number of day one Fridays is not equal to the number of day two Fridays, to compensate for the number of day ones that get missed due to long weekends, etc.

DAY ONE

Mondays, Wednesdays and the following Fridays:

2010
Sept 3, 10
Oct 15, 29
Nov 5, 26
Dec 17
2011
Jan 7, 21
Feb 4, 25
Mar 11, 25
Apr 15
May 27
June 17

DAY TWO

Tuesdays, Thursdays and the following Fridays:

2010
Sept 17
Oct 1, 22
Nov 19
Dec 10
2011
Jan 14
Feb 11
Mar 18
Apr 29
May 13
June 3, 24

2010-2011 Westmount Charter School Key Dates:

September 2010

- 1 First day of classes; "Welcome to Westmount"
- 6 Labour Day; school closed
- 10 Photo Retake Day
- 16 "Meet the Teacher" night
- 24 Professional Development Day, no classes

October 2010

- 8-11 Thanksgiving weekend, school closed
- 22 no school for gr 6-8 but all other grades attend
- 23 *Pillars of Gifted Education* Conference (Saturday)

November 2010

- 1 Professional Development Day, no classes
- 5 Report cards, grades 9-12
- 10 Parent-Teacher interviews, 4-7 pm, grades 9-12
- 11-12 Remembrance Day, school closed
- 29 Report cards, Kindergarten – grade 8

December 2010

- 2 Parent-Teacher interviews, 4-7 pm, K-grade 8
- 3 Professional Development Day, no classes
- 17 Last day of classes prior to Winter break

January 2011

- 3 Classes resume
- 11 Last day of High School classes prior to exams
- 12-27 High School exam period, regular classes for K-grade 8
- 17 School closed
- 27 No school for gr 6-8 but K-gr. 5 attend; gr 9-12 exams
- 28 Organizational Day, no classes
- 31 First term report cards for gr.9-12; Second term begins

February 2011

- 17-18 Professional Development Days, no classes
- 21 Family Day, school closed

March 2011

- 4 Intake day for new applicants, no classes
- 4 "Spring Fling" – family event & silent auction
- 14 No school for gr 6-8 but all other grades attend
- 21 Report Cards for all grades K-12
- 24 Parent-Teacher conferences, 4-7 pm, all grades K-12
- 25 Last day of classes prior to Spring break

April 2011

- 11 Classes resume
- 22 School closed

May 2011

- 2-6 AP Exams (High School)
- 6 Professional Development Day, no classes except for AP Exam
- 13-19 Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs), grades 3, 6 and 9
- 20-23 Victoria Day weekend, school closed
- 26 Grade 12 Grad

June 2011

- 9 Last day of High School classes prior to exams
- 10 Professional Development Day, no classes
- 13-27 PATs and High School exams, regular school days for K-grade 8
- 28 Last day of gr. 1-8 classes, attend AM only and receive report cards
- 29-30 Organizational Days, no classes; gr.9-12 report cards available

ENTRANCES and Parking

Students are expected to use the front entrance (large stairway on Richmond Road). Additional entrances are opened for use of students arriving via School Buses. Parents are not permitted to use the south or west parking lots for parking or drop-off/pick-up, but may use street parking in the community and walk their child to a designated Westmount entrance. The front (north side) of the building is a no-parking zone, intended for student drop-off and pick-up only. Please refer to the "contact us" page of the school website for a detailed map of parking zones in the school's vicinity.

In an effort to maintain a clean and safe school, Westmount students **must not** use those entrances that are designated for Chinook Learning Services. Parents are urged to consider student safety when dropping students off at the front entrances.

VISITORS

Parent/Adult Visitors – All parents without Westmount photo identification, visitors and classroom guests must sign in at the security desk at the school entrance to receive a "visitor pass" (to be returned when you leave). Anyone picking up a student MUST report to the office. Office staff will contact the classroom teacher to have the student sent to the office. **Under no circumstances should a parent go directly to a classroom and attempt to drop off, pick up or speak to a student.** This disrupts the entire class and does not promote a safe and secure learning environment. After school, please do not wait outside the classrooms – there is a clearly identified waiting area near the front security desk. All unidentified adults in the building will be questioned by security personnel and escorted to the office or out of the building.

Student Visitors – Students are not to invite or bring friends who are not students at Westmount Charter School, including students who used to attend the school, without prior approval by Administration.

SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS

The school offices are open from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. on all instructional days. The school offices are closed on all Professional Development days.

LUNCH BREAK

Elementary students eat their lunch in classrooms. Check the "Health and Wellness" page of the Westmount website for the details of occasional lunch options available on a fee-for-service basis at the school.

VENDING MACHINES

Vending machines are not available for use by elementary students. Students who have forgotten lunch may come to the elementary office for a simple "emergency" lunch.

RECESS

Elementary students have a "Body Break" in the morning, and outdoor recesses at lunchtime and mid-afternoon. All Kindergarten to Grade 9 students participate in at least one-half hour of Daily Physical Activity.

INFIRMARY

Typically, if a student is feeling too ill to be in class, parents will be phoned to come and pick up their child. If, however, the child just needs to rest for a while in order to continue with his/her day, there is a small infirmary in the Elementary Office. We do ask that parents be considerate of other students and staff by not sending ill students to school.

See www.westmountcharter.com for official school policies and procedures, and the most up-to-date information

STUDENT DRESS

Students and parents are advised to be aware of Calgary's changeable weather condition, so that students are always "dressed for the elements". Please note that only non-marking soled shoes are allowed and shoes must be worn in school at all times. More specific guidelines regarding appropriate student dress are listed on the "FAQ" page of the school's website.

HALLWAY BEHAVIOUR

Noise levels in the hallways should not be excessive and there should not be any running, jumping, pushing or roughhousing of any kind. Students are expected to be respectful of others sharing the hallways and the classes that may be in session.

TELEPHONE USE

Unless special arrangements are made with school administration, all cell phones must be turned off and stored in backpacks during instructional time. There is a complimentary phone in the elementary office. Abuse of the complimentary student phone will result in loss of privileges.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES/VALUABLE PERSONAL PROPERTY

Personal property such as jewelry, "iPods", cell phones and electronic games are not recommended at school. The use of electronic devices is at the teacher's discretion. These items may be confiscated because of misuse and returned to the student at the discretion of school Administration. **The school will NOT accept responsibility for the loss of any personal property.**

INTERNET USE

All students are required to sign a "Student Internet Use Agreement" in order to have access to the Internet while at school. Violations to this agreement will result in restricted Internet access, loss of Internet access and/or loss of all computer privileges.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

For the full text of the Student Code of Conduct, see Administrative Procedure AP-340, which may be accessed on the "Charter Board" area of the school website.

STUDENT SERVICES

Our Student Services personnel provide learning support to our school community. The Student Services office is located in room 126, not far from the elementary gym. Services provided for elementary students include assistance to students and teachers in identifying and meeting individual student learning needs.

HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

At times, family plans change during the day and parents need to convey this information to their children. In this case, please phone the school office, extension 200 and leave a message. In order to minimize interruption to student instruction, these messages will be relayed to classrooms at set times each morning and afternoon. Please note that messages left at 3:00 PM or later are not likely to reach the student – there is too much going on in the classrooms and hallways at the end of day!

The staff at Westmount Charter School will make every effort to inform parents of upcoming events, student progress and any concerns regarding students. The school's website and calendar (www.westmountcharter.com), regular e-mail updates, teacher blogs and a parent blog (<http://westmountcharter.blogspot.com/>) will keep you informed.

See www.westmountcharter.com for official school policies and procedures, and the most up-to-date information

In addition to the formally scheduled Parent-Teacher interview times, parents and staff are encouraged, when the need arises, to request a meeting to develop strategies that will enable the student to improve. Teacher e-mail addresses are available by logging in to the school website. In general, addresses follow a standard format:
firstname.lastname@westmountcharter.com

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

To assure that the school is able to contact you in case of emergency, parents are to ensure that their address, phone number, e-mail address, and names of emergency contacts, are kept up-to-date via the log-in area of the school's website. Student medical information is to be kept up-to-date via the Physical Activity and Medical/Prescription Medication forms, available on-line or from the elementary office.

SCHOOL CLOSURES

In the event of inclement weather, school closures will be reported:

- by email;
- by text message to those who have subscribed to this feature via the login area of the school website;
- by posting on the "Urgent-Emergency" page of the school's website;
- through announcements on local TV (Global, City, CFCN) and AM Radio (660 News, CHQR 770, CBC 1010).

WESTMOUNT'S WEBSITE

In addition to the public information available on www.westmountcharter.com, students and parents are able to log in to a password-protected area containing links to staff e-mail addresses, teacher blogs and homework pages, school newsletters, and other in-school information. For the 2010-2011 school year, the common student username is available at the office.

Parents will generally access the site using the same username/password that they used for student registration, which allows access to the full password-protected area including the ability to update contact information; the student username/password may be used by students, parents and staff to access general information.

TRANSPORTATION

Westmount Charter School's bus transportation system was established to provide parents with an alternative for transporting their child to and from the school. As schools of choice, charter schools are not obliged to provide transportation under the School Act. This notwithstanding, Westmount recognizes that busing is an essential service for our families and is committed to the operation of a cost-effective, efficient and safe bus service for its students. Please refer to the Transportation Handbook, available on-line at www.westmountcharter.com, for further information. As well, Westmount is well-served on Crowchild Trail and 26th Ave SW by Calgary Transit bus routes 6, 18, 20, 108, 112.

We foster a school community culture that promotes a safe and caring learning environment. We expect that all members of the school community will be treated with respect. We will not tolerate abusive behaviour.

High School at Westmount ...

**WESTMOUNT CHARTER SCHOOL
DIPLOMAS IN GIFTED EDUCATION**

Graduates from Westmount Charter School are eligible for the Alberta Education High School Diploma *and* the **Westmount Charter School Gifted Education Diploma**

Graduates have the opportunity to choose which type of diploma(s) they wish to strive for.

There are 5 choices of diplomas for Westmount students.

Gifted Education Diploma in Academic Excellence

To qualify for this diploma, a student must have an academic average of 80% or higher in five level 30 courses (following the criteria for the Rutherford Scholarships) and have completed a minimum of 120 high school credits.

Gifted Education Diploma in Academic Excellence with Honours

To qualify for this diploma, a student must have maintained an 80% average overall in each of their four years in high school (grades 9 – 12) and have completed a minimum of 120 high school credits.

Gifted Education Diploma in Leadership

To qualify for this diploma, a student must demonstrate volunteer leadership within our school community totaling a minimum of 60 hours.

Gifted Education Diploma in Community Volunteerism

To qualify for this diploma, a student must demonstrate volunteer service to groups or individuals outside our school community totaling a minimum of 60 hours.

Gifted Education Diploma with Distinction

Any student who qualifies for all of the above mentioned diplomas will be awarded this highly regarded diploma.

*See www.westmountcharter.com for official school policies and procedures,
and the most up-to-date information*