

**2019-2020**  
**Greenwood Lake Middle**  
**School**  
**Student Handbook**

## **INTRODUCTION**

*The Greenwood Lake Middle School Student Handbook is in alignment with the GWLUFSD Student Code of Conduct. Families are expected to review both documents in order to know expectations.*

## **ACCELERATED COURSES**

The Greenwood Lake Middle School honors program is rigorous and demanding. Many aspects of a student's life, in and out of school, should be considered before applying for admission to the program. The program is comprehensive in scope and faster in the pace of instruction. Students are expected to maintain high standards of performance at all times. The middle school math and science honors classes culminate in Regents exams at the end of Grade 8. Students who are successful in the math and science honors classes can earn high school credit. It should be noted, however, that all 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes are aligned with Common Core State Standards and are part of a challenging program that leads to the applicable Regents exams in high school. An application letter is sent home to all families of 6<sup>th</sup> graders in the spring and teachers discuss the process with students.

Math and science honors classes are designed to have students complete the equivalent of three years of math and science instruction within a two-year period. In June, Grade 8 students in honors math will take the Algebra I Regents Exam and Grade 8 students in honors science will take the Living Environment Regents Exam.

Students must maintain an 85 average to remain in an honors class.

## **ATHLETIC POLICY AND PRACTICES (GRADES 7 AND 8)**

The Modified (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade) Interscholastic Athletic Program provided by Greenwood Lake Middle School is a competitive extension of our Physical Education program. We hope that participation in this program will enable our athletes to value competition, exhibit self-discipline, and to exercise good sportsmanship and mature judgment. To encourage this development, each athlete is expected to accept responsibility for his or her behavior, both in and out of school. We expect that athletes will strive for excellence in this obligation to themselves, their teammates, and the school community.

### **A. SIGNATURE FORM:**

The Athletic Participation and Parental Approval Form, or the Athletic Participation and Parent Approval Update Form for students who participated in sports in a prior season within the current school year, must be completed and returned to the school nurse before athletes may participate in try-outs.

### **B. SPORTS PHYSICAL**

1. A current (within one calendar year) "sports participation" physical by the school physician or your own doctor is required for all athletes before they may attend tryouts.
2. If injury or illness occurs during the school year, another sports physical may be required for a return to athletic participation.

### **C. EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS**

1. All equipment and uniforms issued by the school are the property of the school. Uniforms are to be used by the athlete for GWLMS games only.
2. The athlete/parent is responsible for the replacement costs of all lost/abused equipment or uniforms.
3. All uniforms and equipment must be returned to the P.E./Athletic Department within five school days of the final contest. If the uniform or equipment is not returned or replacement cost is not satisfied, the athlete would not be allowed to participate in another sport.

### **D. TRAVEL**

1. All team members will travel to and return from contests with their team and coach on the transportation provided by the School District. Prior to dismissal from a sporting event away from school, the parent must sign-out the child with the coach.
2. If extenuating circumstances arise, the athlete must have written permission from his/her parent/guardian to go home by other means and turned in to the coach prior to being released.
3. All school bus regulations must be followed.

### **E. COMMITMENT CLAUSE**

Students who make a commitment to a team are expected to complete their season. Any student who quits a team for reasons other than academic or medical, may not participate on another team for the remainder of that season.

### **F. TRAINING AND PRACTICE RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Athletes shall not use tobacco products, vaping products, electronic cigarettes, alcohol, intoxicants, or any illegal drugs. Any violation of this rule will result in immediate dismissal from the team.
2. Excessive unexcused absences from practices or games will result in dismissal from the team.
3. Proper athletic attire and footwear are to be worn during all practices and games.
4. Athletes are expected to be neat and clean and show pride in their appearance on game days.
5. Coaches may require additional responsibilities for their team(s).

### **G. GENERAL BEHAVIOR (ATHLETIC CODE OF CONDUCT)**

A student athlete is a representative of their school during all competitions, classes, school functions, and out in public. Therefore, recurring discipline problems or disruptive behavioral problems will not be tolerated.

1. After School Detention (ASD) - The athlete will not practice on these days. Continuous ASDs will result in dismissal from the team.
2. In School Suspension (ISS) - The athlete will not practice on these days or play in the next game. Continuous ISSs will result in dismissal from the team.
3. Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) - The athlete will not practice on these days or play in the next two (2) games. A second OSS will result in dismissal from the team.
4. Coaches have the authority to suspend players from game participation for disciplinary reasons and disruptive/disrespectful behavior. Coaches may also recommend athletes

to the Principal and Athletic Director for dismissal from the team, following Due Process Rights.

#### H. **NON-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

All school team practices and games take precedence over any other non-school athletic event, unless agreed upon ahead of time by the coach. In the best interest of the team, the athlete's commitment should be made to one team to avoid conflicts.

#### **ATTENDANCE**

Good scholarship and success in school are dependent upon regular attendance. The Main Office should be called by 9 AM to report a child's absence. It is our intent to call parents/guardians each day their child is absent, except in an instance of extended absence where the school has been notified in advance. After an absence from school, students are required by law to present an excuse in writing from the parent/guardian. This note should contain the student's full name, date(s) of absence(s), reason for absence(s), and must be signed by a parent/guardian. All students who are absent from school must submit a written excuse upon returning even if an absence call was placed. If a child is absent due to sickness for three or more days, a doctor's note is required to return to school. Written excuses can be turned into the child's classroom teacher.

Absences and tardiness will be recorded on the child's report card. If absences and/or tardies exceed 10% of the total days of school at any given time, a notification letter will be sent home to parents/guardians and students may be subject to the terms of the eligibility policy herein.

New York State law states that legal reasons for absence/lateness for a minor include **ONLY** the following:

- Sickness
- Death in the Family
- Religious Observance
- Required Court Appearance
- Medical Appointments
- Inclement Weather/Impassable Roads due to weather

Any student wishing to participate in any after school activity, such as dances, athletic events, meetings, club activities, and extracurricular trips, must be academically eligible and in regular school attendance on the day of an activity. Any student who misses more than 50% of the school day, unless he/she has a valid, written medical/legal excuse, is not eligible to participate in that activity as noted herein.

#### **ABSENCE FOR FAMILY VACATION**

We understand that some parents may have no choice but to take vacation time that includes some school days. We are, however, REQUIRED by state regulations to record such absences as "Unexcused".

The student is responsible for all work missed. Teachers will inform students about the general area of instruction during their anticipated absence, but cannot provide detailed instructional plans. Upon return, it is the student's responsibility to make-up any missed assignments or tests. Teachers will assist students and provide reasonable time to meet requirements.

## **TARDINESS**

Coming to school on-time develops positive school habits and routines for children. It also allows the teacher to maximize on-task learning time for students without significant interruption. Students arriving after the start of the school day must report to the Main Office to be signed in and the student will be issued a “pass” to enter class. Repeated instances of tardiness will result in a notification letter sent home to parents, and a referral to the school Guidance Counselor, and/or principal.

## **HOMEWORK DURING ABSENCES**

Assignments missed during short-term absences can be made-up upon returning to classes.

Homework is not sent home for one-day absences. However, for excused absences of **two days or more**, the parent/guardian should call the office before **9:30 a.m.** to request written homework from the school. **Homework assignments may be picked-up from the Main Office on the day of the request.**

## **CELLPHONE & PERSONAL ELECTRONICS USE**

### **STUDENT USE OF CELL PHONES**

- Students are not allowed to display or use their personal cell phones/electronic devices during the school day, including all class time, advisory periods, specials and lunch/recess.
- Students may use the office phones if they need to contact a parent or guardian.
- As per the district Code of Conduct, the use of cell phones/digital cameras/personal imaging equipment/radios/personal audio mp3 players or electronic games is a level one infraction and should be handled within the framework of class or school rules by effective action.

### **The consequences for cell phone use are as follows:**

- **1st offense:** The cell phone/electronic device will be confiscated and the students will not have the item returned until the end of the school day.
- **2nd offense:** The cell phone/electronic device will be confiscated. The student will not have the item returned until his/her parent/guardian comes to the office to claim it.

## **DRESS CODE**

Students are expected to dress and groom themselves in an appropriate manner. In addition, students must be dressed in appropriate clothing and protective equipment as required for Physical Education classes, participation in athletics, and science laboratories. ***Any student found in violation of the Student Dress Code will be required to report to the school nurse to change clothes and/or contact a parent/guardian.***

The following are considered to be inappropriate dress, grooming, and appearance, and are prohibited in school or at school functions:

- Any dress or appearance which constitutes a threat or danger to the health and safety of students (e.g., heavy jewelry or jewelry with spikes which can injure the student or others);
- Any dress or appearance which is vulgar, lewd, profane or which exposes to sight the private parts of the body (e.g., t-shirts with a phallic symbol and message consisting of sexual metaphors; see-through garments, extremely plunging necklines or waistlines, shirts that expose the midriff or tank tops with straps less than one inch wide);

- Any dress or appearance which encourages or advocates the use of illegal drugs, alcohol and/or tobacco/nicotine/vaping products/electronic cigarettes;
- Any dress or appearance which advocates or encourages any illegal or violent activities;
- Any dress or appearance which advocates discrimination or denigrates others based upon race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation or disability;
- The wearing of hats, hoodies, or other non-religious head coverings (e.g. durags) while in the school building (unless worn for religious, medical reasons, or during designated school spirit days);
- Any shoes that impede safe navigation of hallways and stairs (e.g. stilettos, shoes with heels greater than two inches) and physical activities (e.g., wearing flip flops on the playground or during physical education); other shoes at the discretion of administration; students should be wearing footwear at all times;
- Any dress or appearance that constitutes a disruption to the educational process.

### **GRADING**

Teachers in grades 6-8 have posted their grading policies on their websites, including policy on late work, homework, projects, etc.

Parents are encouraged to use the eSchool Parent Portal to review grades and report cards.

### **GRADE POINT AVERAGES (GPAs)**

The Greenwood Lake Union Free School District does not disclose students' GPA to students or families. If a GPA is needed for a specialized program, families can email the guidance counselor with the respective information and the GPA will be shared directly with the receiving institution.

### **GRADUATION INFORMATION**

The following special honors are granted to 8th graders at the annual district graduation ceremony:

- **Valedictorian:** The valedictorian is the student who has achieved the highest cumulative (6th, 7th, and 8th grade) GPA in the 8th grade class through the end of the third marking period.
- **Salutatorian:** The salutatorian is the student who has achieved the second highest cumulative (6th, 7th, and 8th grade) GPA in the 8th grade class GPA through the end of the third marking period.
- **Honors Graduates:** Honors graduates have at least a 95 cumulative (6th, 7th, and 8th grade) GPA through the end of the third marking period.

### **HIGH SCHOOL SELECTION PROCESS**

High School Options: Warwick Valley High School and Chester Academy.

In order to assist students and families to make an informed decision on choosing their high school, Greenwood Lake Middle School will collaborate with both high schools to arrange on-site tours and question and answer sessions. Parents are encouraged to go to all orientations to become well-informed. Please see our guidance counselor for specific high school questions.

### **HONOR ROLL (GRADES 6-8)**

Beginning in Grade 6, students may attain Honor Roll status each marking period. Students must attain a GPA of 90 or above with no failing grades to be on Honor Roll. For High Honor Roll status, students must attain a GPA of 95 or above with no failing grades. Each quarter will be calculated on



False Alarm/Explosives/ Fireworks	3-5	3-5	3-5	3-5	3-5
Endangerment/Reckless	1-5	3-5	3-5	4-5	4-5
Truancy	1-3	2-3	3	3	5
Tardiness (unexcused)	1-3	2-3	2-4	2-4	2-5
Late to Class	1-2	2-3	2-3	3-4	3-4
Cutting Class	1-2	2-3	3-4	3-5	3-5
Leaving Building/Campus	1-5	2-5	3-5	3-5	4-5
Unauthorized/unsupervised area	1-5	2-5	3-5	4-5	5
Theft	3-5	3-5	4-5	4-5	4-5
Possession or Distribution of Obscene Material	1-3	1-3	3-4	3-4	4-5
Gambling	2-5	3-5	3-5	3-5	3-5
Academic Misconduct	Student receives a grade of zero for work or exam.				
Computer Misconduct	Loss of privilege for a period of time to be determined/Code of Conduct violation				

*\*See following page for breakdown of infractions/discipline for Middle School*

The repeating of an infraction may lead to the imposition of the next measure of discipline. Chronic repeating of infractions may lead to long-term suspension or permanent suspension (expulsion). The above listing is not intended to be all-inclusive. The administration reserves the right to implement disciplinary action for incidents not specifically identified above.

### **DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The Student Code of Conduct provides students with disabilities the rights expressly detailed by federal and state laws and regulations. A manifestation determination IEP meeting must be held prior to the imposition of consequences because of a code of conduct violation. If the violation is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability, then the IEP Team must conduct and/or review a functional behavior assessment and behavioral intervention plan. If, on the other hand, the IEP Team determines that the violation is not a manifestation of the disability, the student is subject to the same disciplinary procedures applicable to students without disabilities. In the latter case the student must continue to receive educational services during any suspension that may be ordered.

Regardless of the manifestation determination, school officials, may remove a disabled student for 45 school days if the student:

- Carries or possesses a weapon
- Possesses, uses, or sells illegal drugs
- Has inflicted serious bodily injury to another person, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

## **STUDENT SEARCHES AND INTERVIEWS**

The Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee to conduct searches of students and their possessions for illegal matter or matter which may constitute a threat to the health, safety, welfare or morals of other students attending school, if there is reasonable suspicion. Students have no expectation of privacy with respect to their lockers, storage spaces or desks, which means they may be searched at any time by school officials without prior notice and without students' consent.

Any school official authorized to impose discipline may question a student about an alleged violation of the Code of Conduct, without first providing any sort of warning or contacting the student's parents beforehand.

## **REPORTING CODE VIOLATIONS**

### **1. To School District Personnel**

Students, teachers and other District personnel are encouraged to report any violations of the Code of Conduct to the Building Principal or, in his/her absence, the Acting Building Principal. Such individuals are required to report any threat of violence, including but not limited to bomb threats, threats to persons or property, whether by oral, written or electronic means, possession of a weapon, alcohol or illegal substance on school property or at a school function to a teacher, the Building Principal or, in his/her absence, the Acting Building Principal. Teachers and other District personnel shall immediately report violent students the Building Principal or Superintendent of Schools.

Any weapon, alcohol, illegal substance or similar item (such as synthetic drugs) found shall be confiscated immediately, if possible, maintained in a secure location, followed by notification to the student's parent and law enforcement as appropriate.

### **2. To Local Law Enforcement Agencies**

The District will report any acts of violence against persons that constitute a crime, threaten acts of violence, and other violations of the Code of Conduct which constitute a crime and affect the order and security of the school (e.g., theft, destruction of school property, assault, false fire reports; arson, bomb threats, use, possession, distribution or sale of drugs (including synthetic drugs) or alcohol, use, possession, distribution or sale of a dangerous or deadly object or a potentially dangerous or deadly object) to the appropriate local law enforcement agency when the actor is over the age of 16, or is 14 or 15 years old and qualifies for juvenile offender status. This report shall be made as soon as practical, but in no event later than the close of business the day the Principal or Acting Principal learns of the violation. When necessary, the District will file a complaint in Criminal Court against the actor.

### **3. To Human Services Agencies**

The District will report any violations of the Code of Conduct, which constitute a crime when the actor is under the age of 16, to the appropriate human services agencies. When necessary, the District will file a juvenile delinquency petition or a person in need of supervision (PINS) petition in Family Court.

## **PUBLIC CONDUCT ON SCHOOL PROPERTY**

The primary purpose of the School District is to provide a superior atmosphere for learning. Any action by an individual or group(s) aimed at disrupting or delaying the learning process is prohibited. The Board of Education has the responsibility to protect school property and will take any and all legal action to prevent its damage or destruction. The Board will also seek restitution from, and prosecution of, any person or persons who willfully damage school property.

These rules govern the conduct of students, parents, faculty and other staff, other visitors, licensees, and all other persons, whether or not their presence is authorized, upon District property, and also upon or with respect to any other premises or property (including school buses) under the control of the District and used in its instructional programs, administrative, cultural, recreational, athletic, and other programs and activities, whether or not conducted on school premises.

All persons named above are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the law, the District's Civility Policy, and the District Code of Conduct (for additional details refer to the complete Code of Conduct).

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

Students have the responsibility to:

- Know and abide by all school policies, rules and regulations pertaining to student behavior.
- Be in regular attendance at school and in class and to be on time for all assignments.
- Maintain behavior that is conducive to learning and show respect to other persons and for both school and personal property.
- Accept responsibility for his/her actions.
- Work to the best of his or her ability in both academics and activities and strive toward the highest level of achievement possible.
- Conduct himself/herself, when participating in or attending school sponsored activities, events and trips, as a representative of Greenwood Lake Union Free School District, and as such hold himself or herself to the highest standards of behavior and sportsmanship as defined in the Code of Conduct.

## **STUDENT RIGHTS**

The Greenwood Lake Union Free School District is committed to protecting the rights given to all students under State and Federal Law. Students have the right to:

- Take part in all school activities on an equal basis.
- Be informed of all school rules.
- Have a safe, healthy, orderly, and civil school environment.
- Present their version of relevant events to school personnel who are authorized to impose discipline.
- Receive a challenging, relevant, and comprehensive education.

## **TIER OF INAPPROPRIATE PEER-TO-PEER BEHAVIOR**

1. Rude Behavior: Rude behavior is saying or doing something that hurts someone's feelings:
  - a. These incidents are spontaneous and unplanned but are not meant to actually hurt someone.
  - b. This may appear as bullying but it's an act based on thoughtlessness.

2. Mean-Spirited Behavior: Mean-spirited behavior includes behavior that is:
  - a. Impulsive or cruel
  - b. Mean in nature and aims to hurt or depreciate someone
  - c. Intentional
  - d. Motivated by angry feelings
3. Bullying Behavior: Bullying behavior is intentionally aggressive behavior, repeated over time, that involves an imbalance of power. Bullying may be physical, verbal, relational, or carried out via technology. The following are the different types of bullying:
  - a. **Cyberbullying** is a specific form of bullying that involves technology. This willful and repeated act is inflicted through electronic devices (e.g., computers; cell phones; social media).
  - b. **Physical aggression** includes repeated hitting, punching, kicking, spitting, tripping, and a range of other behaviors that involves physical contact which may occur once or repeated over time.
  - c. **Relational aggression** is a form of bullying in which kids use their friendship to manipulate other students. Examples include social exclusion, shunning, hazing, and rumor spreading. This type of bullying is pervasive and can result in school refusal/anxiety.
  - d. **Verbal aggression** includes words and threats that can hurt and can even cause profound, lasting harm when repeated on a daily basis.

