



Westminster CCS News and Notes for Our Students' Families

From the Principal...

It is hard to imagine that we are now into the third month of school with the holiday season fast approaching. I hope that you have had an opportunity to ask your children about me, their new principal, and that they have had positive things to say about my presence in the building, dining hall, hallways and classrooms. I have also had three memorable experiences to date with students—the grade 7-8 Lazertron trip, Halloween (with me dressed as the Wizard of Westminster) and the Halloween Dance. Being with students again in my career has totally energized and excited me and I am always ready to return to work despite any challenges I have faced.

Safety and Security—Our top priority!

It is unfortunate in these times we live in that we have to guard against adults who do not have the best interest of students at heart, but that is our sad reality. I have had many parents and family members seek me out to tell me that they appreciated the note I sent home briefly describing what was happening in the area with a suspicious man on a bike approaching young children. Please continue to tell your children about being watchful and never going anywhere with any stranger, no matter what that person may say to them. We are in the process of scheduling a student assembly and a parent information session that deals with this subject and you will be hearing more about this in the next month.

From the desk of Mrs. LaMonica Harris Ass't Principal

Behavior Management Tips Behavior Management Helps Reduce Your Child's Behavior Problems

Behavior management is a great tool to help parents with behavior management. Is Your Child's Behavior a Problem at home or school? If so, you're not alone. A teacher or counselor can help with your child's specific behavior problems. With these tips, you can decrease behavior problems using redirection. The goal of redirection is to teach the student to monitor and correct his own behavior.

1. Ensure the Child Understands Why Her Behavior is a Problem

While it may seem a child should "know better," talking about behavior is an important first step in behavior management. Some students do not think about their behavior or anticipate consequences when they have impulse control problems and difficulty picking up on social expectations. Describe problem behavior in a firm but non confrontational

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- ☺ Student drop off in the morning—no earlier than 7:50AM, please.
 - ☺ Students, K-8, dismissed Monday-Friday at 3:30
 - ☺ Uniforms worn 5 days per week
 - ☺ Thanksgiving Break - November 24 & 25

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From the desk of Mrs. LaMonica Harris (Cont'd)

tone. Some students respond better to a whispered reminder than a loud voice. Explain the behavior in specific terms the student will understand, and state why it is a problem.

- **Do Say:** Throwing the baseball in the house can hurt someone.
- **Don't Say:** Stop rough-housing.

2. Explain Why Behavior is a Problem and What Will Be Done About It

Clearly state the problems caused by the student's behavior. The student may be getting on your last nerve, but avoid criticizing him in a personal way. Realize you may need to repeat this strategy over time until the child stops the problem behavior.

- **Do Say:** Your clothes are dirty because they were under your bed and not placed in the laundry basket. I'll show you how to wash them.
- **Don't Say:** If you're too lazy to put your clothes in the basket, I'm not washing them.

3. Model Appropriate Behavior for Your Child

Before responding to the behavior, it can be helpful to take three deep breaths to relax and think about what the best response would be. Calmly but firmly, explain the behavior you want the child to perform. Use specific language to describe what the child should or should not do. Strive to keep a firm but unemotional tone that is free from sarcasm.

- **Do Say:** Use a quiet voice inside the restaurant.
- **Don't Say:** Act right.

4. Show By Your Actions and Attitude that You Believe in Your Child

Encourage and [reinforce the child's positive behaviors](#) whenever possible. Although you may be frustrated by behavior, speak positively to the child and let her know you have confidence in her.

5. Recognize That Behavior Change Can Take Time

Give honest, specific praise for any progress the child makes toward meeting behavior goals, even if he does not meet the goal in its entirety.

6. Plan Ahead for Safe and Appropriate Options When Behavior is a Problem

Know what situations cause problems for her, and prepare safe alternatives for her. Young children may enjoy [role-playing ahead of time](#) to learn the rules and expectations of the setting you will be in. Rehearse with them what they can do if they become angry or need to release some energy. Breathing techniques, taking a quick walk with a parent, playing word games, practicing math facts, and guessing games are often helpful for kids of all ages.

<http://learningdisabilities.about.com/od/publicschoolprograms/tp/redrctnrspnse.htm>

The Word on Literacy

From the Reading Department:

As we move into the holiday season, reading can be connected to our time with family and friends. Just a few minutes a day will encourage children to read and play with language.

Here are a few tips:

- Try to establish a daily routine. During winter months choose a time to read together. For example, before bed or after dinner.
- Subscribe to a children's magazine. *Ranger Rick*, *Zoo-books*, *Sports Illustrated for Kids* are all examples of

- Include your child in your day to day reading experience. Allow your child to help you with recipes, reading the newspaper, reading cereal boxes, looking at catalogues. The world is full of things to read if we are aware of our surroundings.
- Help your child learn new words. Create a word of the day that the family will talk about, write and use in conversation.

Remember that **you** are your child's first teacher. Just a few minutes a day is enough to show that reading a priority. Routines and consistency will encourage children to want to read and play with language.

From the desk of Mrs. Felecia Hanesworth

Special Education: means specially designed individualized or group instruction or special services or programs to meet

It has been a true pleasure meeting many parents and almost all of the students of Westminster. I must say, that this is a welcoming community and I am thrilled to be working with all you. One of the many things that I do at Westminster is to ensure that all students are progressing academically, socially and emotionally. Many parents have stopped by my office or stopped me in the hall to check on the status of their children or just to "check in" to introduce themselves. Thank you all! I welcome you too!

Although I work with all of the teachers at Westminster, I do have a core team of teachers with whom I work with. They are the force of the special education team at Westminster and they are all fabulous. The department welcomes you to be a part of your child's educational journey by **ensuring that reading, writing and math are completed at home. Consistency is a key to Success.** Each member of the team is assigned to grades in which individualized services are provided to children.

They all work with the general education teacher in the classroom, to enhance and support learning.

We are off to a great start in special education through our coordinated efforts.

Thank you,
Mrs. Hanesworth

"In order to succeed, your desire for success should be greater than your fear of failure."

~Bill Cosby

Summing Up Math!

Math News

We are excited to present our first Family Math Night. It will be held on Tuesday, November 29th from 5-6:30pm in the Dining Hall. The first in the series will be targeted for families with children in kindergarten, first and second grade. Families will leave with ideas and games to incorporate math

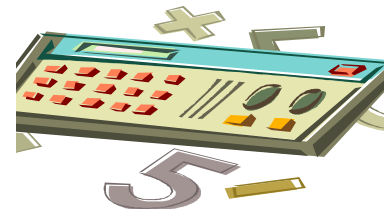
learning at home, along with some tools to help make it happen. Please return the RSVP slips as soon as possible to help gauge an accurate count.

In the meantime, please continue to check in with your children about homework assignments. We are trying to push our students further in their work by having them show and explain their thinking. The

Consistency is the Key to



Mrs. Baxter (8th grade),
Ms. Horton (7th grade),
Ms. Sullivan (5th & 6th grade),
Mr. Hufnagel (3rd & 4th grade)
Ms. Gallegher (K- 2nd grade)



ability to process and reason through the math problems will ensure that they understand the concepts and will help them apply the math to real world problems. Thank you for your continued support. Please contact me at rmmarko@buffaloschools.org if you have any questions regarding your child's math program. Thank you!

**SOME IMPORTANT
NOVEMBER DATES:**

NOVEMBER 18: Make UP Day for Fall Pictures-

NOVEMBER 28—DEC 2: Scholastic Book Fair in WCCS Library

NOVEMBER 24 & 25 Thanksgiving Break

NOVEMBER 29—Family Math Nights 5:00 p.m.—6:00 p.m.

NOVEMBER 30— Early Dismissal Students dismissed

Uniforms at WCCS

Our school is a "**uniform school**". We expect all of our students to be in full uniform every day. The tops for boys and girls are to be white collared shirts (No Polos). The bottoms are to be all black--pants for all (no denim), skirts or jumpers for girls. All wear ties and black shoes. The socks need to be black or white and girls can, especially in winter, wear black or white tights (no leggings). If boys do have earrings, they need to be covered or removed for school. Girls can wear earrings, but hoops need to be a quarter in size or smaller. Many parents have registered concerns about students' dress and we need to have everyone's cooperation in ensuring that students leave the home in uniform.

Thank you!

It is the mission of the Westminster Community Charter School that all students will graduate with the necessary foundation to be successful in high school and/or higher educational institutions and to become productive and contributing citizens in our society and community.

Westminster-Buffalo's Best 

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News from the Dining Hall chef

As you know, I am working very hard in providing the students at Westminster only homemade, healthy and delicious food. So far, we have had great success. One area that needs to be addressed is the amount of sugar that children are consuming. I am asking for your help and cooperation. Instead, of bringing in cupcakes or other baked goods into the school to celebrate your child's birthday, the chefs at Westminster will make homemade cupcakes **once a month** for each classroom to celebrate birthday's.

Students will be able to let their teacher know what flavor of cupcake and frosting they'd like and they will be delivered right to them

in their classroom. In this way, students won't be eating cupcakes more than once a month and then they do, they will be homemade, delicious and made exactly to their specifications. I promise that your child will still be recognized on their special day and they will also get a delicious and sweet treat during the month they were born. Thank you so much for understanding my position on this and for your cooperation in making sure it happens.

Chef Mary Ruth Rera

