



# WELCOME TO WESTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL!

*A parent's introduction to the transition from 8th-grade to 9th-grade.*

*A new journey begins ...*

Starting high school is one of the biggest milestones in your child's life... and yours! It is a time to celebrate, but also a time that understandably may come with some uneasy feelings and fear of the unknown. This guide includes information we hope will ease the transition including what you can expect at meetings and from your student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, what special education services for your student may look like at WHS, as well as tips for supporting your student's transition.

**INSIDE**

- What can I expect from my child's IEP team?
- Transition Timeline
- What will special education services look like?
- How can I plan for my child's transition?



# WHAT CAN I EXPECT FROM MY CHILD'S IEP TEAM?

## *Middle to High School Transition Meeting:*

Before the end of your child's 8th-grade year, you may be asked to attend a transition meeting.

→ Purpose of Meeting:

- Sharing basic information about your child's strengths, needs and success strategies
- Learning general information about high school, including modular scheduling, special education program structure, etc.
- Discussing possible services and supports based on your child's needs and IEP goals
- Providing an opportunity for you and the WHS team to ask questions and schedule future visits

This meeting will typically include staff from your child's current IEP team as well as staff from the high school team.

**Prior to starting 9th-grade, students and families will have multiple opportunities to engage in transition-related activities. At any time, parents are encouraged to ask questions or request information from your child's IEP manager or Special Education Coordinator about the upcoming transition.**

## *Individualized Education Program (IEP) Meeting:*

IEP meetings for your child will continue to occur on an annual basis. In preparation for high school, your child's IEP may need to be adjusted. These adjustments can be made during a high school transition meeting, during a separate IEP meeting, and/or via an IEP addendum (no meeting required).

→ Possible Adjustments:

- Attending school
- IEP manager
- Duration of school day
- Service providers
- Service times
- Transportation

**REMEMBER: You have the right to call an IEP meeting at any time. Your child's team may choose to hold an IEP meeting prior to the start of 9th-grade, shortly after the school year begins, or in accordance with the IEP due date.**

# TRANSITION TIMELINE

## FALL of 8th-Gr. Year

- 8th-grade IEP Managers receive training to become familiar with WHS services & transition procedures
- October - Transition resources (Part 1) provided to parents

## WINTER of 8th-Gr. Year

- District begins plans for next year's projections (i.e., caseload sizes, staffing, etc.)
- Staff begin preparing for incoming students

## SPRING of 8th-Gr. Year

- March - Transition resources (Part 2) provided to parents
- April & May - 9th-grade tours begin
- April & May - Staff observe incoming students in current setting & use transition checklist to collaborate with current team
- April & May - transition meetings are held as necessary
- May - IEP Manager is identified & schedules finalized

## SUMMER Before 9th-Gr.

- Individual tour/transition opportunities at parent request
- Transition-related questions should be directed to Coordinator or Special Services Director
- Pre-Opening - Special Education Student & Family Bootcamp

## FALL of 9th-Gr. Year

- IEP implemented by new team
- September - Family Check-In Night

# WHAT WILL SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES LOOK LIKE?

## *My Child's School Day*

In Westside Community Schools, students with IEPs are served in their neighborhood school within the district, regardless of disability. IEPs are designed to meet the unique needs of each student. Your child's IEP team will design an IEP that will enable your child to participate in the general education setting to the greatest extent appropriate. Supports provided vary depending on your child's specific academic, social, behavioral, health, physical, and adaptive needs. Your child's IEP is a working document with the flexibility to be modified and adjusted as the needs of your child change.

## *... Continuum of Support ...*

### IN-CLASS SUPPORT:

- Students in need of in-class support may receive their IEP services through a collaborative teaching model, where a special educator, specialist, or educational assistant partners with the English/Language Arts, Math, other core content or elective teacher(s) to deliver instruction, intervention and accommodations.

### INTERVENTION COURSES:

- Students requiring academic intervention in the areas of reading or math will be enrolled in specific intervention classes, taught by either a general or special education teacher. This course may take the place of an elective &/or be offered for elective credit.

### ASSISTED LEARNING (AL):

- Students may be assigned one or more periods of assisted learning support each day. This period, staffed by the special education department, will be used to work on IEP goals: (reading, writing, math, social, behavioral, organizational, post-secondary transition) skills in an individualized or small group setting.

### ALTERNATIVE CURRICULUM INSTRUCTION:

- Students who require extensive support in the areas of academics and functional/daily living skills often participate in the alternate curriculum classes. These courses, which may be offered in addition to, or in place of core general education classes, target both the state extended indicators and students' individual IEP goals in a hands-on, highly structured setting.

### RELATED SUPPORTS & SERVICES:

- As defined by the IEP, students may receive physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech/language therapy, vision &/or hearing services, medical support, assistive technology, social skills instruction, behavioral intervention, etc. These supports and services may be provided in the general education classroom, a small group setting, or one-on-one with a provider, during the school day.

# HOW CAN I PLAN FOR MY CHILD'S TRANSITION?

## *Transition Meeting Planning*

### QUESTIONS YOU MAY WANT TO ASK:

- What will my child's school day look like?
- What kind of communication can I expect?
- Who will be working with my child?
- What types of clubs or activities are available to students at WHS?

### QUESTIONS YOU CAN EXPECT TO BE ASKED:

- What are your child's strengths?
- What are your greatest concerns?
- How can we help make this a smoother transition for you and your child/family?
- How and how often do you prefer we communicate with you?

## *Easing the Transition*

### TAKE ADVANTAGE OF BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES:

- **WHS All Student Virtual Open House** - Spring Facebook Live Event
  - **Special Education Information Session** - April 8
- **9th Grade Spring Tours** - Students on IEPs have the opportunity to tour the High School with their IEP manager during school hours. These typically occur in April or May.
- **Special Education Transition Bootcamp** - Pre-Opening - Students and their parents will meet key special education staff, engage in Q&A, and become familiar with their child's schedule.
- **Visit the School** - The High School is open all summer long for students to tour, either by teacher request or parent volunteer

### KEEP TEACHERS INFORMED:

- Stay in contact with your child's teachers, especially if:
  - A change in your child's life is causing significant new stress
  - Your child starts taking medication that may affect his or her behavior or learning
  - You have any concerns about your child's performance in school

## *Parent Survival Tips for High School Transition*

- 1. Show confidence, not anxiety** - Your child takes cues from you. So even if you have some worries about how he or she will fare in middle school, do your best not to make your child feel worried too. Instead, help him or her feel confident by being optimistic and positive in what you say.
- 2. Encourage more independence** - Your child is growing up, maybe faster than you would like. He or she may show interest in new styles and express new opinions. Accept these harmless changes. While making sure your child is safe, look for ways he or she can handle more responsibility.
- 3. Teach self-advocacy** - By the time your child enters high school, if able, he or she should feel empowered to speak up for him/herself in all types of situations. Make sure your child knows that expressing his or her wishes is an important responsibility.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## WHAT SUPPORTS ARE AVAILABLE TO MY CHILD DURING OR OUTSIDE OF THE SCHOOL DAY?

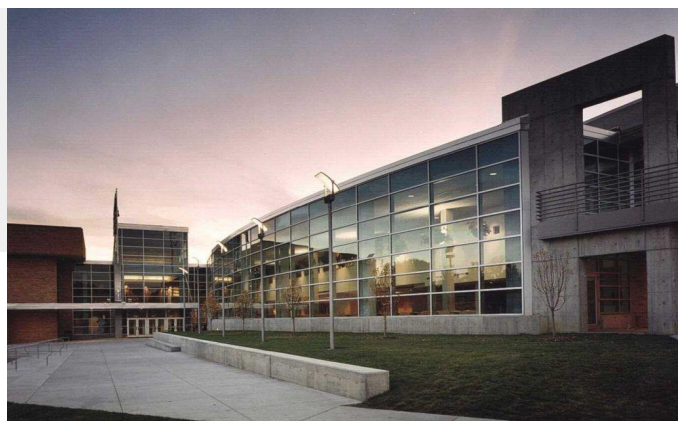
- **IMCs** - Instructional Media Centers, or IMCs are available each day for students to work independently or with an Assisted Learning (special education teacher) on homework.
- **Independent Study Mods** - Some students may have independent study (students refer to them as "open" mods) on their schedule. This is a great time for students and their teachers to work together.
- **Call Backs** - At the request of teachers, IEP managers, administrators, parents or students, students are invited or required to visit their general education teacher to work on academic-related tasks.

## HOW WILL MY CHILD'S ACCOMMODATIONS BE PROVIDED AT WHS?

- Accommodations will be provided to your child as outlined in their IEP. These accommodations may be provided in multiple environments across the school setting as necessary to meet your child's needs.
- Prior to the start of school, your child's IEP team will communicate with general education teachers, administrators, and other key personnel to inform them of your child's individual needs and required supports.

## HOW DOES TECHNOLOGY WORK AT THE HIGH SCHOOL?

- Every WHS student is issued their own device at the beginning of the school year. If you feel that your child cannot handle the responsibility of having a device, alternative options are available:
  - check-in/check-out device at beginning and ending of every school day
  - computer curfews - turning the device access on/off at a certain time every day
  - accessing adaptive equipment, aligned to the IEP



## HAVE OTHER QUESTIONS?

As questions arise this year, **please don't hesitate to reach out** to your child's current IEP manager and/or Jenni Allen, Coordinator of Middle School Special Services (contact info. below).

For high school-specific questions, you can contact Jenny Brockman (contact info. below). Closer to the end of the school year, more specific information regarding IEP manager, general education teachers, and related service providers will be provided.

## ... DISTRICT CONTACTS ...

### Jenni Allen

Coordinator of Middle School Special Services  
402-408-8589  
allen.jennifer@westside66.net

### Jenny Brockman

Coordinator of High School Special Services  
402-390-2272  
brockman.jennifer@westside66.net

### Kami Jessop

Director of Special Services  
402-390-2110  
jessop.kami@westside66.net

# NOTES

# NOTES



Part 2 - Spring



# WHS TRANSITION PLANNING GUIDE

*A parent's guide for the transition from middle to high school.*

*A new journey begins ...*

As you enter your child's final months of middle school, you may have questions about what to expect next. You may also have concerns. This guide is intended to ease the transition and support you in knowing what to expect and how to prepare.

For additional information, please refer to *Part 1* of the transition resources you received earlier in the year.

INSIDE

- Transition Timeline
- How can I plan for my child's transition?



# TRANSITION TIMELINE

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# HOW CAN I PLAN FOR MY CHILD'S TRANSITION?

## *Middle to High School Transition Meeting:*

In **Part 1** of the transition planning guide we shared information about the purpose of a possible transition meeting. You also received information regarding your child's annual IEP meetings and possible IEP adjustments in preparation for high school. In this **Part 2** resource, we hope to further help you prepare for this potential upcoming transition meeting.

PLANNING FOR QUESTIONS YOU CAN EXPECT TO BE ASKED	
POTENTIAL QUESTIONS	YOUR RESPONSE
What are your child's strengths?	
What are your greatest concerns?	
How can we help make this a smoother transition for you and your child/family?	
How and when do you prefer to receive communication from your child's IEP manager?	

**REMEMBER:** You have the right to call an IEP meeting at any time. Your child's team may choose to hold an IEP meeting prior to the start of 9th-grade, shortly after the school year begins, or in accordance with the IEP due date.

*Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, working together is success.*

# HOW CAN I PLAN FOR MY CHILD'S TRANSITION?

## *Middle to High School Transition Meeting Continued:*

Your child's transition meeting will not only be a good time to provide input to members of the next team, but also a great time for you to ask any questions you may have.

### PLANNING FOR QUESTIONS YOU MAY WANT TO ASK

#### **POTENTIAL QUESTIONS**

What will my child's school day and schedule look like?

What if my child needs help at lunch, taking medications, navigating the building?

What kind of communication can I expect, and from whom?

Who will be working with my student? When and for what purpose?

#### **OTHER QUESTIONS YOU PLAN TO ASK**



# MY CHILD'S IEP TEAM

The following team information can be added once staffing decisions have been finalized.

As questions arise, please reach out to your student's current IEP manager and/or Jenni Allen, Coordinator of Middle School Special Services (contact info. below).

## WHAT TO EXPECT NEXT

- **INFORMATION NIGHT:** A WHS Information Night is typically scheduled for all incoming students and their parents in the spring. An additional information session for parents with Special Education-specific questions and concerns is offered at a later date. These may be available virtually or in-person.
- **IEP MANAGER ASSIGNMENTS:** Next year's IEP Manager, also called Assisted Learning Teacher, will typically be assigned before the end of this school year. You will also be informed of any other Service Providers involved with your student at this time. You can expect to hear from the new IEP Manager prior to the end of the school year. You will be notified of changes, if any, as soon as possible.
- **WHS TOURS:** In the spring, opportunities will be available for students to be brought to WHS by WMS Staff for tours during the school day. Summer tours are available by appointment.
- **STUDENT SCHEDULES:** WHS courses are selected based on your child's needs, high school graduation requirements and their individual course of study. Scheduling meetings are conducted between your child, their special education staff, and school counselors during the spring. Parents are consulted throughout this process. Student schedules are drafted and made available before your child leaves for the summer.

**IEP Manager:**

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**Homeroom Teacher:**

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**Dean:**

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**Counselor(s):**

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**Related Service Providers:**

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