

The following item will be discussed at the meeting of the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues to be held Monday, June 1, 2015 at 12:00 p.m. in Room 410 at the Durkin Administration Building:

gb #5-113 - Administration (April 1, 2015)

To consider approval of the 2015-16 Policies Handbook of the Worcester Public Schools.

ITEM: gb #5-113

STANDING COMMITTEE: **GOVERNANCE AND EMPLOYEE ISSUES**

DATE OF MEETING: Monday, June 1, 2015

ITEM: Administration (April 1, 2015)

To consider approval of the 2015-16 Policies Handbook of the Worcester Public Schools.

PRIOR ACTION:

4-9-15 - Referred to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues.
Ms. Novick suggested that a camera policy be developed for inclusion in the 2015-16 Policies Handbook.

BACKUP:

Annex A (under separate cover) contains a copy of the 2014-15 Policies Handbook.
Annex B (22 pages) contains a copy of the proposed changes to the 2015-16 Policies Handbook.
Annex C (39 pages) contains a copy of gb #4-208.1 and gb #4-253 that were approved by the School Committee.

Policies Handbook
for the
Worcester Public Schools



2014-15

**Please Note: The form located on the back of this Handbook
must be signed and returned to school.**

www.worcesterschools.org

WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOL'S CALENDAR 2014-15

AUGUST						
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SEPTEMBER						
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Wednesday, August 27, 2014: First Day of School for Students
 Friday, June 12, 2015*: Last Day of School.

Last day of school for seniors: May 22, 2015

*This date may change in response to the number of snow days used during the school year.

End of marking quarters:

1. October 31, 2014
2. January 16, 2015
3. April 3, 2015
4. June 12, 2015 or last day*

= DAYS WHEN SCHOOL IS NOT IN SESSION FOR STUDENTS

2014	2015
August 25 – Teacher/Staff Reporting Day	January 1 – New Years Day
August 26 – Staff Development	January 2 – Holiday Vacation
August 27 – First Day of School	January 19 – Martin Luther King
September 1 – Labor Day	February 16 – Presidents' Day
October 10 – Staff Development	February 17-20 – Winter Vacation
October 13 – Columbus Day	April 3 – Non-School Day
November 11 – Veterans' Day	April 20 – Patriots' Day
November 26-28 – Thanksgiving	April 21-24 – Spring Vacation
December 24-31 – Holiday Vacation	May 25 – Memorial Day
	June 12 – Last Day of School

Please see reverse side for WPS Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Statement

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Mayor Joseph M. Petty - Chair

John F. Monfredo - Vice Chair

Dianna L. Biancheria

John L. Foley

Tracy A. O'Connell Novick

Brian A. O'Connell, Esquire

Hilda Ramirez

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

The Worcester Public Schools is pleased to present the 2014-15 Policies Handbook to inform students and parents/guardians of the important policies and procedures that are in effect in our school system.

Thank you for reviewing this handbook with your child and for keeping it for future reference. Please note there have been revisions made to some of the policies and procedures from the previous year. We ask that you pay particular attention to those revisions. Best wishes for a successful 2014-15 school year.

Melinda J. Boone, Ed.D.

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REGISTRATION

Dr. James L. Garvey Parent Information Center

Open All Year Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.

768 MAIN STREET
SHATTUCK BUILDING
JACOB HIATT COMPLEX

Phone: (508) 799-3299, (508) 799-3068,
(508) 799-3069, (508) 799-3194

In order to enroll a student in the Worcester Public Schools, the following documentation must be provided. Verification of:

1. Date of Birth
2. Legal Guardianship or a responsible adult party in the household who can serve as an emergency contact.
3. Worcester residence (utility bill, lease, etc.) or completed STUDENT ADDRESS VERIFICATION FORM
4. State mandated immunizations
5. If available, records from previous school

The requirement for school immunizations and records may be temporarily waived for students who qualify as homeless under the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

PRESCHOOL – GRADE 6

All students (preschool through grade 6) registering for, or transferring into or within the Worcester Public Schools must do so at the Dr. James L. Garvey Parent Information Center.

The Dr. James L. Garvey Parent Information Center staff will:

- Provide information to parents/guardians regarding the student assignment policy.
- Assist parents/guardians in selecting an educational environment most appropriate for their child's needs.
- Assist parents/guardians in the initial stages of registration required by schools, i.e., documentation of birth and immunization, completion of Home Language Survey Forms, medicaid eligibility, etc.
- Answer questions regarding school policies.

State and federal regulations require that all schools determine the language(s) spoken in each student's home in order to identify their specific language needs. If a language other than English is spoken in the home, the District is required to do further assessment to determine whether the student is an English Language Learner and to place the student in the appropriate instructional program to support content area and language learning.

GRADES 7 – 12

New students in grades 7-12 register at the Dr. James L. Garvey Parent Information Center. Students in grades 7-12 who are transferring within the Worcester Public Schools will do so at the appropriate middle or high school based on their new address. Students in grades 9-12 have the option to register at their respective high school.

**Massachusetts School Immunization Requirements
for School Year 2014-15**

	Child Care/Preschool	Kindergarten
Hepatitis B	3 doses	3 doses
DTaP/DTP/Td/Tdap	≥4 doses DTaP/DTP	5 doses DTaP/DTP
Polio	≥3 doses	4 doses
Hib	1 to 4 doses	NA
MMR	1 dose	2 doses
Varicella	1 dose	2 doses
Meningococcal	NA	NA

	Grades 1-6	Grades 7-12
Hepatitis B	3 doses	3 doses
DTaP/DTP/Td/Tdap	≥4 doses DTaP/DTP or ≥3 doses TD	4 doses DTaP/DTP or ≥3 doses TD; plus
Polio	≥3 doses	1 dose Tdap ≥3 doses
Hib	NA	NA
MMR	Grades 1-2: 2 doses Grades 3-6: 2 doses measles, 1 mumps, 1 rubella	Grades 7-9: 2 doses Grades 10-12: 2 doses measles, 1 mumps, 1 rubella
Varicella	Grades 1-2: 2 doses Grades 3-6: 1 dose	Grades 7-9: 2 doses Grades 10-12: 1 dose
Meningococcal	NA	1 dose for new full-time residential students

Registration Policy

Elementary (K-6)

Students in the Worcester Public Schools shall attend schools based upon neighborhood district lines. They are also eligible to attend the six citywide magnet schools based on conditions of space availability and the magnet school being in compliance with the Worcester Public Schools' Deisolation Plan. The six citywide magnet schools are: (1) Chandler Magnet School, (2) City View Discovery School, (3) Goddard School of Science and Technology, (4) Jacob Hiatt Magnet School (5) Norrback Avenue School and (6) Worcester Arts Magnet School. Under the Voluntary Controlled Transfer Policy, transfers are permitted to any school within that school's quadrant provided the transfer has a positive effect on the minority percentage of the school and space is available.

Secondary (Grades 7-12)

Depending on the school district in which the student resides, he/she can attend his/her local high school. This is determined by the last grade the student completed and passed, unless special permission has been requested by the parent/guardian to attend a different school. Attendance at Worcester Technical High School is based upon an application and selection process approved by the State Department of Education.

Voluntary Controlled Transfer Policy

I. Conditions for Out-of-District Transfers

It is the policy of the Worcester Public Schools that students shall attend schools based upon neighborhood district lines. Exceptions to this policy are allowed under the “Voluntary Controlled Transfer Policy” which permits transfers to other elementary, middle and high schools or to citywide magnet schools under the following conditions:

- a. There must be space available in the receiving school.
- b. Elementary, middle and high schools having a minority percentage greater than the citywide average on October 1 of each year will adhere to the following restrictions:
 1. Minority students will not be allowed to transfer into a school which has a minority percentage greater than the citywide average on October 1 of each year.
 2. Majority students will not be allowed to transfer out of a school except in the case where the sending school is in compliance and the receiving school is out of compliance as a result of having a minority percentage greater than 15 percentage points above the citywide minority percentage.
 3. All students, both minority and majority, shall be eligible to attend citywide magnet schools and secondary magnet schools. In order to exercise this eligibility, the magnet school must be in compliance.
- c. Elementary, middle and high schools having a minority percentage less than the citywide average on October 1 of each year will adhere to the following restrictions:
 1. Majority students will not be allowed to transfer into a school which has a minority percentage less than the citywide average on October 1 of each year.
 2. Minority students will not be allowed to transfer out of a school except in the case where the sending school is in compliance and the receiving school is out of compliance as a result of having a minority percentage less than 15 percentage points below the citywide minority percentage.
 3. All students, both minority and majority, shall be eligible to attend citywide magnet schools and secondary magnet schools. In order to exercise this eligibility, the magnet school must be in compliance.
- d. Voluntary transfer requests will be considered for properly documented medical disabilities and other unique circumstances.
- e. Spanish Bilingual, Structured English and Special Education Programs are offered in certain schools. Any student requiring these services will be enrolled in the school that will meet his/her assessed needs.

- f. When a student changes residence and would enter grade 6, 8 or 12, he/she may finish the year in that school provided that he/she is a resident of Worcester and has received the out-of-district principal's permission to remain in that school.
- g. Students who enroll in an out of district magnet program or the Worcester Technical High School must complete the year in the out-of-district school.

II. Procedures for Applying for a "Voluntary Transfer"

- a. Applications and a policy statement are available at the Parent Information Center or the Quadrant Manager's Office:

Parent Information Center: (508) 799-3194
 Burncoat/South Quadrants (508) 799-3264
 Doherty/North Quadrants: (508) 799-3221
 * Technical Quadrant: (508) 799-3499

*Applications for Worcester Technical High School may be obtained in all secondary guidance offices or at the Technical School Admissions Office.

- b. The application must be filled out and returned to the appropriate office. Elementary (K-6) Parent Information Center
 Secondary (7-12) Communication and School Support Coordinator in the Quadrant Office and at the Parent Information Center.
- c. A written approval or denial will be sent to the home of the parent/guardian and copies will be forwarded to the principals of both the sending and receiving schools.
- d. A copy of the application and the approval or denial letter will be kept on file in the Quadrant Office.

III. Hardship Appeals Process

If the parent/guardian disagrees with the Quadrant Manager's decision, an appeal must be filed before the first day of the school year. A maximum of two weeks will be allowed to appeal the decision in writing to the Chairperson of the Hardship Appeals Board: Robert Vartanian, 768 Main Street, Worcester, MA 01610.

The Board will review each case referred to it and make timely decisions relative to the disposition of the appeal. A copy of the decision will be sent to the parent/guardian and the appropriate Quadrant Manager. Proceedings of the Hardship Appeals Board will be recorded and maintained by personnel in the Quadrant Manager's Office.

Policy for Non-resident Foreign Students holding J-1 Visas

J-1 Non-resident Foreign Student

Admission:

- By the first week in January each Worcester Public School high school principal will determine how many spaces are available (no fewer than three) in his/her school to accommodate the admission of non-resident foreign students whose host family resides in their district (or who otherwise obtain special permission from the Quadrant Manager on a space available basis) **for the following school year**. No high school principal will enroll more than three non-resident foreign students until this determination is made and forwarded to the Quadrant Manager.

Criteria for Attendance:

- Foreign exchange students must provide certified proof of prior academic performance from the high school(s) in his/her native country.
- Transcripts from intermediary or sponsoring agencies will not be accepted as appropriate documentation for determining past academic performance unless they bear the seal of the school and/or are presented in a sealed envelope from the school.
- Acceptance to the Worcester Public Schools will be on a one (1) year basis with the sponsoring organization or guardian required to reapply annually for continued study.
- Once admitted, the foreign student will be subject to all rules, policies, regulations and procedures as they relate to all students in the system.
- The system will provide an academic record of the foreign student's participation while a member of the system to the sponsoring organization or the parent/guardian, as required.
- Foreign students holding J-1 visas participating in this program are exempt from paying tuition.
- Award appropriate city (general) diplomas and/or school diplomas if students can demonstrate through appropriate documentation and verification that they have met the prerequisite requirements of the Worcester Public Schools.

LEGAL POLICIES

DUE PROCESS

All students have the constitutional right (*Goss v. Lopez*) to receive due process procedures including notice and the right to a hearing where required in matters of suspension, transfer and expulsion.

Section I

Due process for a student who is subject to suspension for ten days or less includes:

- a. oral or written notice of the charges against him/her;
- b. an explanation of the basis of the accusation; and
- c. the opportunity to present his/her side of the story to an impartial decision-maker (who may be a school administrator).

Notice of the suspension and hearing will occur before a student is asked to leave school, except when a student presents an immediate threat to school officials, other students, or him/herself, or clearly endangers the school environment. In this case, the hearing may be delayed, but will be held within a reasonable period of time.

Section II

Where a student has been charged with a violation of either Rule 3, 7, 8 (except Rule 8c) or 18 and expulsion or a long-term suspension by a school principal is a possibility, then the student shall be notified, in writing, of an opportunity for a hearing before the school principal.

- a. The student shall be given written notice of the charges.

- b. At the hearing before the school principal, the student has the right to be represented by counsel or an advocate. The student also has the right to present witnesses and to cross-examine witnesses. In advance of the hearing, the student and his/her parent/guardian has the right to obtain copies of any and all witness statements, including statements by the student him/herself as well as copies of any statements given by witnesses (unless withheld for the witnesses' own protection from reprisal), along with access to any and all physical evidence which the school intends to present at the hearing.
- c. Any student who has been expelled or issued a long-term suspension by the school principal for a violation of either Rule 3, 7 or 8 (except 8c) may appeal to the Superintendent. The appeal must be filed within ten (10) days of the expulsion or a long-term suspension. The student has a right to be represented by counsel or an advocate at a hearing before the Superintendent.

Section III

Where the injury to another person or property or the effect of the student's conduct on the school community is so severe as to warrant more than a ten-day suspension, or where expulsion or a long-term suspension by the School Committee is a possible penalty, the matter shall be referred to the Superintendent or his designee within two (2) school days of the initial suspension. The student shall be informed of the discipline referral by the school administrator.

- a. No later than the expiration of the period of initial suspension, the Superintendent or his designee shall schedule a full evidentiary hearing to determine whether:
 - 1. The student's conduct warrants an extension of the suspension for a period not to exceed 10 days;
 - 2. The student should return to school pending a referral to the School Committee for further disciplinary action; or
 - 3. If the Superintendent or his designee finds that the student's presence in school presents a danger to himself or others, the student's suspension should be extended for a period not to exceed 10 days pending an exclusion or a long-term suspension hearing before the School Committee.

The student will be given written notice of the charges. At the hearing before the Superintendent or his designee (all witnesses will be sworn), the student shall have the right to be represented by counsel or an advocate of his choice. The student shall have the right to present witnesses on his/her own behalf and to cross-examine witnesses. In advance of the hearing and upon request, the student shall have the right to obtain any documentary evidence which is to be presented before the Superintendent or his designee. Following the hearing, the student or his designee shall be issued a copy of the decision containing the specific findings of fact.

- b. If the Superintendent or his designee refers the matter to the School Committee, the student will be notified in writing of the date, time and place of the hearing. The School Committee hearing shall be limited to a review of the findings and conclusions of the Superintendent's or his designee's written decision and a consideration of the Superintendent's recommendations regarding:

- 1. adoption of the decision; and
- 2. imposing the proposed disciplinary action.

The student and/or his/her advocate shall be entitled to appear before the School Committee and speak on the student's behalf. No evidence shall be presented at this hearing unless the evidence was unknown or unavailable at the time of the evidentiary hearing before the Superintendent or his designee.

The School Committee shall have the option to accept the findings and conclusions of the Superintendent or his designee or it shall remand the matter back to the Superintendent for further consideration. The School Committee shall have the option to affirm, modify, or reject the Superintendent's recommendation regarding disciplinary action.

The School Committee shall provide its written decision within a reasonable period after the hearing.

Section IV

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71 (§37 H ½), principals have the authority to suspend students charged with a felony and expel or issue a long-term suspension to students convicted or adjudicated of committing a felony if the principal has determined that the student's continued presence would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Due process for a student who is subject to suspension as a result of a felony charge includes:

- a. The student shall receive written notice before the suspension takes effect.
- b. The student shall be given an opportunity to respond to the charges before the suspension takes effect.
- c. The student may appeal the suspension to the Superintendent, provided the appeal is requested in writing within five (5) calendar days following the suspension.
- d. The Superintendent must hold the appeal hearing within three (3) calendar days of the request.
- e. At the appeal hearing the student may be represented by an attorney. The student has the right to present oral or written testimony on his/her behalf.
- f. The Superintendent must render a decision within five (5) calendar days.

Due process for a student who is subject to an expulsion or a long-term suspension as a result of a felony conviction includes:

- a. A student shall receive written notice before the expulsion or a long-term suspension takes place.
- b. The student shall be given an opportunity to respond to the charges.
- c. The student may appeal the expulsion or long-term suspension to the Superintendent provided the appeal is requested in writing, within five (5) calendar days following the expulsion.
- d. The Superintendent must hold the appeal hearing within three (3) calendar days of the request.
- e. At the appeal hearing the student may be represented by an attorney.
- f. The Superintendent must render a decision within five (5) calendar days.

Nondiscrimination

Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action/Title IX

ADA Title I Section 504/Chapter 622 Grievance Procedure

The Worcester Public Schools is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer/Educational Institution and does not discriminate regardless of race, color, gender, age, religion, gender identity, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or homelessness. The Worcester Public Schools provides equal access to employment and the full range of general, occupational and vocational education programs. For more information related to Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action, contact Stacey DeBoise Luster, Human Resource Manager, 20 Irving Street, Worcester, MA 01609 (508) 799-3020.

The Worcester Public Schools pledges to encourage the equitable and prompt settlement of complaints which may be raised by any employee or applicant on a claim of discrimination based on race, color, gender, age, religion, gender identity, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or homelessness, if the claim is justifiable.

The proceedings shall be kept confidential at each level of this procedure. No document relating to a grievance will be included in the employee's personnel file unless the employee requests this in writing. The grievance procedures are available to remedy unlawful discrimination regarding the hiring, employment, training, promotion, transfer or discipline of any person.

Your attention is called to the fact that the Worcester Public Schools, in accordance with federal and state laws, prohibits discrimination in its operations. This policy, providing equal employment and educational opportunities to all persons regardless of their race, color, gender, age, religion, gender identity, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or homelessness, will apply to all persons affiliated with the Worcester Public Schools including students, prospective and existing personnel, contractors and suppliers of goods and services.

Stacey DeBoise Luster, the Human Resource Manager, 20 Irving Street, Worcester, Massachusetts 01609, telephone number (508) 799-3020, is responsible for the coordination of Title IX, Section 504 ADA Title I and Chapter 622 in the Worcester Public Schools and will be responsible for coordinating the following grievance procedures:

A grievance shall be a complaint by a student, parent/guardian, prospective employee or staff member alleging discrimination on account of race, color, gender, age, religion, gender identity, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or homelessness, which is filed no more than 30 business days after the alleged act and/or statement.

An aggrieved party must institute proceedings hereunder within **thirty (30) business days** of the event or events giving rise to the grievance or within **thirty (30) business days** from the date the aggrieved party had knowledge or reasonably should have had knowledge of the event or events giving rise to the grievance. The four levels of the grievance process for complaints include:

Level I

- a. A staff member, student or prospective employee with a grievance shall present his/her complaint to his/her immediate superior or principal, whoever is appropriate.
- b. The immediate superior shall make a determination, which shall be final unless the aggrieved party elects to appeal to the next level or the Quadrant Manager, as stated in "c" below. The determination shall be within five (5) business days after the receipt of the formal complaint by the immediate superior.
- c. In the event that no decision has been reached within five (5) business days after presentation of the grievance, the aggrieved party may reduce the grievance to writing and submit it within ten (10) business days to the Quadrant Manager.
- d. This level is an alternate level and a grievant is permitted at his/her discretion to initiate his/her action at Level II.

Level II

- a. If the grievance is not resolved at Level I after five (5) business days, or if a grievant exercises his/her discretion to initiate the complaint at Level II, it shall be reduced to writing by the grievant and forwarded to the Human Resource Manager.
- b. The Human Resource Manager shall meet with appropriate parties to attempt to settle the complaint. The determination shall be within five (5) business days after the receipt of the formal complaint by the Human Resource Manager.
- c. In the event that no decision has been reached within five (5) business days after presentation of the grievance, the aggrieved party may reduce the grievance to writing and submit it within ten (10) business days to the Superintendent.

Level III

- a. The Superintendent, or his/her designee, shall meet within five (5) business days thereafter with the aggrieved person and attempt to settle the grievance.
- b. The grievance shall be answered in writing. In the event that the grievance shall not have been disposed of to the satisfaction of the aggrieved party at Level III, or in the event that no written answer has been received within ten (10) business days after the meeting on the grievance, the aggrieved person may forward the grievance with a copy of the answer, if any, to the Clerk of the School Committee within ten (10) business days.

Level IV

- a. The School Committee will hold a hearing on said grievance within fifteen (15) business days. Said hearing is to be open only at the mutual consent of both parties.
- b. The School Committee will render to the grievant a written decision and the reasons therefore within fifteen (15) business days of said hearing.

Waiver

Failure of the grievant to comply with any provision of the aforesaid grievance procedure shall be deemed to be a waiver of the complaint under the terms of this policy. Failure of the Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Officer, Director, Principal, Supervisor, etc. to comply with the time limits set forth in this procedure shall cause the complaint to be automatically appealed to the next Level in the grievance procedure. The time limits specified in the grievance procedure may, however, be extended in any specific instance by mutual written agreement of the parties.

NOTE: Individuals with grievances are not required to use and/or exhaust the Worcester Public Schools grievance procedures. Written complaints, signed by grievant or an authorized representative, may be filed as follows:

Equal Employment Opportunity
Commission (E.E.O.C.)
Boston Area Office
John F. Kennedy Federal Building
475 Government Center
Boston, MA 02203
1-800-669-4000

Massachusetts Commission
Against Discrimination (M.C.A.D.)
One Ashburton Place - Room 601
Boston, MA 02108
617-994-6000
Worcester Office
455 Main Street, Room 101
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 799-8010

Additional Agencies include:

Massachusetts Department
of Elementary and
Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148-4906
781-388-3300

United States Department of Education
POCH Building, 5 Post Office Square
9th Floor, Room 24
Boston, MA 02109-3921
617-289-0100

Retaliatory Action

The School Committee, through its Superintendent, assures that no retaliatory action will be taken against those persons who file complaints of discrimination on the basis of race, gender, age, color, religion, gender identity, marital status, sexual orientation national origin and/or disabilities.

Findings of Discrimination

If discrimination should be found to exist in any employment decisions, actions or practices within the Worcester Public Schools, all appropriate measures will be undertaken to terminate such discrimination. Furthermore, should findings be made of intentional discrimination on the part of any employee, appropriate disciplinary action shall be taken under the direction of the Superintendent and/or the School Committee.

Record Keeping

All records involving any complaint filed in accordance with the Worcester Public Schools' Grievance Procedure shall be kept by the Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Officer; such records and information will be considered confidential and shall be used only in accordance with the grievance procedure, unless otherwise required by law.

Sexual Harassment Policy

It is the policy of the Worcester Public Schools, as well as state and federal law, that sexual harassment of a student, present or prospective employee, or visitor shall not be tolerated.

Definition

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct is either made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's study, work or employment, in the Worcester Public Schools.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for educational or employment decisions affecting such individual.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the educational performance or work of an individual with reasonable sensitivity.

Considerations

Sexual harassment is not limited to prohibited conduct by a male toward a female, by a supervisory employee toward a non-supervisory employee or by a teacher toward a student, by a student toward a teacher, or by a student toward a student. The Worcester Public Schools' view of sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following considerations:

- a. A male, as well as a female, may be the victim of sexual harassment and a female, as well as a male, may be the harasser.
- b. The harasser does not have to be the victim's superior.
- c. The victim may be the same or opposite sex as the harasser.
- d. The victim does not have to be the person to whom the unwelcome sexual conduct is directed. The victim may also be someone who is affected by such conduct when it is directed toward another person. For example, inappropriate attempts at humor or sexual harassment of one female/male may create an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment for another female/male or may unreasonably interfere with an individual's educational or work performance.
- e. Sexual harassment does not depend on the victim's having suffered an educational or economic consequence as a result of the harasser's conduct.

Violations

Violations of this policy and of the law, if proven, will result in disciplinary action. Any person who believes that he/she has been the victim of sexual harassment may seek redress through the Worcester Public Schools' Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures.

Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures

Preface

A formal grievance may be filed at any time by a student, employee, administrator, and/or applicant who believes that his/her rights as outlined in the sexual harassment policy have been violated. Each student, faculty member, administrator, or

staff member has an obligation to make every effort to resolve problems informally as they arise. All members of the Worcester Public Schools community are urged to resolve problems fairly and informally so that they do not become sources of grievances to be pursued formally through the grievance procedure. If a suitable solution cannot be reached informally through independent means, which may include consultation with the Human Resource Manager, a formal grievance may be initiated.

Definitions

A "grievance" shall be a complaint by an individual alleging that there has been a violation of the sexual harassment policy.

Step I (Informal)

- a. Any and all grievances must be presented in writing within thirty (30) working days of the date when the grievant became aware, or should have been aware, of the event or events giving rise to the grievance. The person(s) opting to exercise the informal grievance procedure should so notify the concerned staff or faculty member, or administrator, present him/her with a written summary of the grievance and set up a time to meet and discuss the problem.
- b. However, due to the private and sensitive nature of sexual harassment, the grievant may choose a third party mediation to help resolve the grievance on an informal basis. Such mediation activities shall continue for a period of no more than twenty (20) days, or until resolution is achieved, if that is less. Should such resolution efforts fail in addressing these issues, the grievant may initiate the formal grievance procedure at Step II.
- c. This level is an alternative level, and a grievant is permitted at his/her discretion to initiate his/her action at Step II.

Step II

- a. If the grievant believes a further review of the grievance is warranted, he/she shall, within five (5) school/working days of receiving the Step I decision, notify the appropriate parties if he/she wishes to pursue the next step. In cases where this is the first formal step in an alleged sexual harassment charge, the grievant should forward the written grievance to the Human Resource Manager.
- b. Once the Human Resource Manager receives the grievance, he/she shall forward the grievance to the individual involved in the grievance, and to his/her supervisor.

The following individuals will be notified pursuant to Paragraph b:

1. If the person charged with sexual harassment is a teacher, notify the teacher and the principal of the school.
2. If the person charged with sexual harassment is a non-instructional staff member, notify the person and his/her immediate supervisor.
3. If the person charged with sexual harassment is a principal or administrator, notify the person and his/her immediate supervisor.
4. If the person charged with sexual harassment is the Superintendent, notify the person and the Chairperson of the School Committee.
5. If the person charged with sexual harassment is a student, notify the principal of the student's school.

6. If the person charged with sexual harassment is a non-school personnel, notify the person and the principal of the school and/or the immediate supervisor of the school.
- c. Within ten (10) working days of receipt of the grievance, the aggrieved party, (as well as the accused) and the appropriate supervisor, as noted above, shall meet with the Human Resource Manager to discuss the grievance.
- d. The Human Resource Manager shall respond in writing within five (5) working/school days following the discussion.

Step III

- a. If the grievant believes a further review of the grievance is justified, he/she may submit the grievance to the Superintendent within five (5) working/school days of receipt of the decision rendered under Step II. The grievance should be accompanied by a statement of the resolution sought and copies of all documents.
- b. Within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the grievance, the Superintendent shall review all previously written statements and resolutions and hold a hearing. The persons to be present at said hearing will consist of the Superintendent, the Human Resource Manager, the grievant, the charged individual and the appropriate supervisor. The Superintendent may include other persons in the hearing process.
- c. In the event that the charged individual is the Superintendent, the persons to be present at said hearing will consist of the School Committee, the Human Resource Manager, and the grievant. The School Committee, at its discretion, may include other persons in the hearing upon request of the grievant, the Superintendent, or other participants at this level.
- d. Within fifteen (15) working days after the hearing, the Superintendent and/or the Chairperson of the School Committee will render a determination in writing and take any appropriate action.

Step IV

- a. If the grievant still believes a further review of the grievance is justified at Step III, or in the event that no written response has been received within fifteen (15) working days of the hearing or the grievance, he/she may present a petition to the School Committee within five working days.
- b. Within fifteen (15) working days after hearing the petition, the School Committee will render a determination in writing and take any appropriate action.

Step V

- a. The School Committee will, within fifteen (15) working days, hold a hearing. The persons to be present at said hearing will consist of the Superintendent, the Human Resource Manager, the grievant, the charged individual, and the appropriate supervisor. The School Committee, at its discretion, may include other persons in the hearing upon request of the grievant, the charged individual or other participants at this level.
- b. Within fifteen (15) working days after the hearing, the School Committee will render a determination in writing and take any appropriate action.

Miscellaneous Provisions

1. Grievance procedures for all employees and students regarding any matter follow a standard process, but can vary to accommodate the sensitivity of the charges, as well as the grievant or the individual, against whom the grievance is made.
2. Grievants are not limited to a formal grievance procedure, but may seek relief from other agencies, including the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, or the Office of Civil Rights of the Department of Education.
3. Any retaliatory action of any kind taken by an employee or student of the Worcester Public Schools against any other employee or student of the Worcester Public Schools as a result of that person's seeking redress under these procedures, cooperating in an investigation, or otherwise participating in any proceeding under these procedures, is prohibited, and shall be regarded as a separate and distinct grievable matter.
4. Whenever a grievance involves issues of sexual harassment of any kind, the Human Resource Manager shall be notified in writing by the grievant, or by the administrators or agents of the Worcester Public Schools to whom the grievance is brought.
5. All grievance proceedings, informal and formal, **will to the greatest feasible extent, be held in confidence by all persons directly or indirectly involved in them.**
6. Failure of the grievant to meet the time specifications acknowledges the grievant's acceptance of the decision of the previous step. He/she forfeits the right to pursue the grievance further.
7. The Human Resource Manager shall act as a resource for students and for the School Committee.

Penalties in Cases of Sexual Harassment

Remedial actions will depend on the severity of the incident. Due to the private nature of incidents involving sexual harassment and the emotional and moral complexities surrounding such issues, every effort will be made to resolve problems on an informal basis. When a grievance is resolved informally only a short summary of the incident will be maintained on file.

Any admission of guilt, an acknowledgment of the verbal warning, a promise not to commit such abuse again, and action taken to provide appropriate relief may be a sufficient resolution. At the informal stage, it is hoped to sensitize the person at fault to the effects of such behavior, to be constructive and not unduly punitive in the disciplinary action. If informal resolutions are not adhered to, or if no resolution can be agreed to at the formal stage, the Superintendent and/or the School Committee may deem it necessary to take appropriate action that can include formal letters of reprimand, suspension, or a recommendation of dismissal.

Tolerance

One of the many strengths of the Worcester Public Schools is its diversity. We celebrate this diversity with many multi-cultural events during the school year.

The Administration is concerned about unfortunate incidents of discrimination based on age, race, gender, color, religion, gender identity, national origin, marital status, disability and sexual orientation. We cannot and will not tolerate any such behavior in the Worcester Public Schools.

Anti-hazing Law (G.L. c. 269)

Section 17. Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$3,000.00 or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in Sections 18 and 19, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

Section 18. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in Section 17 and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$1,000.00.

Section 19. Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and Sections 17 and 18; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and Sections 17 and 18 to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and Sections 17 and 18 to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgment stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said Sections 17 and 18, that each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants has received a copy of Sections 17 and 18 and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and Sections 17 and 18.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and Sections 17 and 18.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and Sections 17 and 18 and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report.

Weapons Possession - Prohibited on School Grounds

Reference - M.G.L. c. 269, § 10(j)

Whoever, not being a law enforcement officer and not withstanding any license obtained by him/her under the provisions of chapter one hundred and forty, carries on his/her person a firearm as hereinafter defined loaded or unloaded or other dangerous weapon in any building or on the grounds of any elementary or secondary school, college or university, without the written authorization of the board or officer in charge of such elementary or secondary school, college or university, shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars or by imprisonment for not more than one year, or both. For the purpose of this paragraph, "firearm" shall mean any pistol, revolver, rifle or smoothbore arm from which a shot, bullet or pellet can be discharged by whatever means.

Any officer in charge of an elementary or secondary school, college or university, or any faculty member or administrative officer of an elementary or secondary school, college or university failing to report violations of this paragraph shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and punished by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars.

Students Use of Tobacco Products - Prohibited on School Grounds

Reference - M.G.L. c. 71, § 2A

It shall be unlawful for any student, enrolled in either primary or secondary public schools in the Commonwealth, to possess, use, or distribute tobacco products of any type on school premises or at any school sponsored activity.

Students found in possession of any nicotine delivery or tobacco product, including e-cigarettes, smokeless tobacco and snus, will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

Nicotine delivery products are any manufactured articles or products made wholly or in part of a tobacco substitute or containing nicotine that is expected or intended for human consumption, but not including a tobacco substitute prescribed by a licensed physician or a product that has been approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for sale as a tobacco use cessation or harm reduction. Nicotine delivery products include, but are not limited to, e-cigarettes.

Drug Free School Zones

Any person who distributes or possesses with intent to distribute any controlled substance as defined by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 94C within one thousand feet of Worcester Public Schools' property, whether or not school is in session, shall be subject to punishment by imprisonment of not less than two nor more than fifteen years. In addition, a fine of not less than one thousand or more than ten thousand dollars may be imposed but not in lieu of the mandatory minimum term of imprisonment as established by law.

Child Abuse

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 119, Section 51A and 51B govern the reporting of child abuse and neglect and requires all professional school employees to report suspected cases of abuse of students to the Department of Children and Families (508-929-2000).

Worcester Public Schools' policy requires personnel to inform parents or guardians when there is an indication of a student's self-destructive behavior. The purpose of this is to alert the parents/guardians about the student's possible need for additional support and/or treatment.

Related to this requirement, a 51A report will be filed by school authorities when a parent/guardian ignores the school staff's efforts to involve the parent/guardian in a perceived need of the child requiring special education, counseling or emergency medical attention.

Education of Homeless Children

The Worcester Public Schools complies with all requirements of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Subtitle B - Education for Homeless Children and Youth), reauthorized in January 2002. When a family is enrolling a student or students in school or changing an address, but is unable to provide the usual form of address verification, or is sharing housing with others or is temporarily sheltered in some other alternative arrangement, the family member will be asked to verify the current living situation on the Student Address Verification Form so as to determine whether the student(s) is/are eligible under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act for required supplementary supportive services and legally-mandated exemptions from certain enrollment requirements. All students residing in a situation that meets the statutory definition of homeless are eligible for free breakfast and lunch. A free meals application must be on file for each student, but income verification is not needed if the student is classified as "homeless" on the application. In keeping with these requirements:

1. Children who become homeless have the right to continue attending their school of origin, or enroll in the school of the district in which they are residing.
2. To the extent feasible, transportation will be provided for students in order to maintain continuity of their attendance in a single school over the course of the school year.
3. When a student is residing outside of the city due to circumstances related to homelessness (in accordance with the statutory definition of "homeless") efforts will be coordinated with the district where the student is temporarily residing to provide transportation to the school of origin if this is the preference of the parent/guardian and student.
4. The parents/guardians of a homeless child have the right to decide which one of two schools their child will attend. The options are:
 - the school in which the child was last enrolled, assuming transportation arrangements are feasible and are in the best interest of the student or
 - the school in the district in which the child is temporarily living.
5. Women living in battered women's shelters or a safe house can give school officials the Post Office Box or mailing address of the shelter office, along with verification from the shelter director that the children are residing in that facility in lieu of the street address. Transportation arrangements will be made in a manner that seeks not to disclose such shelter addresses.
6. Questions or concerns regarding issues pertaining to homeless students should be referred to the Worcester Public Schools Homeless Liaison, Judith Thompson at (508) 799-3175.

Selective Service

Peacetime Registration Requirement of Selective Service System

Section 3 of the Military Selective Service Act states that male U.S. citizens and aliens residing in the United States, who are between the ages of 18 and 26, are required to register in a manner prescribed by proclamation of the President. The proclamation under which registration is presently required was signed on July 2, 1980. It provides that males born on or after January 1, 1960, must register with Selective Service within 30 days of their 18th birthday.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 reiterates that the various branches of the United States armed forces may have access to directory information of 11th and 12th grade high school students. However, the Family Rights to Privacy Act states that parents and guardians may deny this access if they so wish. Directory information includes your son/daughter's name, address, phone number and age. If you wish for the Worcester Public Schools NOT to divulge your child's directory information, you must make your request in writing to your child's principal.

Sex Offender Registry

Public Information

Massachusetts has created a sex offender registry by enacting Chapter 239 of the Acts of 1996. Under this law persons convicted of certain sex offenses are required to register with the police department where the offender lives and works. The designation for any particular offender is given by the State Criminal History Systems Board. The law requires that any person requesting sex offender registry

information appear in person at police headquarters to obtain sex offender registry information. For further information you may contact the Worcester Police Department at (508) 799-8651.

Pledge of Allegiance and "Moment of Silence" Policy

It is the policy of the Worcester Public Schools that the Pledge of Allegiance be recited and a "Moment of Silence" be observed at all levels on a daily basis in the Worcester Public Schools.

Student Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive federal funds.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their child's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

Under FERPA, parents and eligible students have the following rights:

- To inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee if copies are requested.
- To request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- To have control over the disclosure of personal identifiable information from the education record. Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
 - School officials with legitimate educational interest
 - Other schools to which a student is transferring
 - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes
 - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student
 - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school
 - Accrediting organizations
 - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena
 - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies and
 - State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law

FERPA allows schools to disclose, without consent, “directory” information, which includes: Student’s Name; Honors and awards received; Participation in officially recognized activities and sports; Weight and height of members of athletic teams; School or program attended; Enrollment status; Grade level; and Dates of attendance.

Parents and eligible students may request that the Worcester Public Schools not disclose directory information by contacting David Perda, Chief Research and Accountability Officer, Worcester Public Schools by email at perdad@worc.k12.ma.us or by U.S. mail at the Durkin Administration Building, Room 202, 20 Irving Street, Worcester, MA, 01609.

Additional information on FERPA may also be obtained from the U.S. Department of Education at the following address:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-8520

Regulations

In compliance with Chapter 71, Section 34D of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Worcester School Department is notifying the parents/guardians of public school students of its plans to gather information regarding students and their backgrounds, aptitudes and achievement in order to better meet their individual needs.

On the secondary level, students maybe be asked to complete a questionnaire which relates to identifying information, family background, interests and plans for the future. Any questions which students and/or parents/guardians feel should not be answered may be omitted. This information is necessary in order to keep school records up to date.

Any variance from the preceding plans will be made known in writing prior to implementation.

Other details pertaining to Chapter 71 Section 34D are outlined herein.

In February 1976, the Massachusetts Board of Education revised the regulations pertaining to student records. These regulations ensure parents'/guardians' and students' rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment and destruction of student records.

The Worcester School Committee adopted these regulations and approved the suggested procedure for their implementation.

Accordingly, this notice outlines the rights of parents/guardians and students, age 14 or older, with regard to the confidentiality, inspection, amendment and destruction of student records.

Types of Student Records

The school principal or his/her designee is responsible for the privacy and security of all student records maintained in the school. The Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee is responsible for all student records that are not under the supervision of the school principal.

The student's record consists of the transcript and the temporary record, according to 603 Code of Massachusetts Regulations, Chapter 23.00. It includes all information, regardless of form or characteristics, concerning a student that is organized on the basis of the student's name or in a way such student may be individually identified.

1. **Transcript** - Minimum administrative records necessary to reflect the student's educational progress and to operate the educational system. Data is limited to:
 - Name (student and parent/guardian)
 - Address (student and parent/guardian)
 - Telephone number (student and parent/guardian)
 - Date of birth
 - Course titles
 - Grades or equivalent
 - Course credit
 - Grade level completed
 - Year completed

The transcript may be destroyed sixty (60) years following the student's graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from the school system.

2. **Temporary Record** - All information in the student record not contained in the transcript which is clearly of importance to the educational process. This information may include:
 - Standardized test results (including MCAS results)*
 - Class rank
 - Extracurricular activities
 - Evaluations
 - Educational plans
 - IEP, 504, Regular Education Accommodation, Behavior Support Plans and Safety Support Plans
 - Student Support Process Reports
 - Individual Student Success Plans
 - Health records
 - Attendance
 - Incident reports involving student suspension or the committing of criminal acts
 - School Discipline Records

* In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 87, the score of any group intelligence test shall be removed from the record of the student at the end of the school year in which the test was administered.

Section 37L of the Education Reform Act of 1993 requires that any incident report involving student suspension for the committing of criminal acts must be included in the student's record. This includes reports in which the "student" was charged with an infraction that resulted in suspension. If a student transfers to a new school system, this information must be included as part of the student record, as the new system must be provided with this information.

Teachers' notes and similar information that is not accessible to authorized school personnel or third parties are not included in the student record. Such information may be shared with the student, parent/guardian, or a temporary substitute without making the file part of the student record. However, if such information is released to authorized school personnel, it then becomes a part of the student's record. Any information added to the temporary record shall include the name, signature and position of the person entering the information, date of entry, and shall be limited to that which is relevant to the educational needs of the student.

The temporary record of each student enrolled on or after June 2002 shall be destroyed no later than seven (7) years after the student transfers, graduates, or withdraws from the school district. Written notice to the eligible student and his/her parent/guardian of the approximate date of destruction of the temporary record and their right to receive the information in whole or in part, shall be made at the time of such transfer, graduation or withdrawal.

During the time a student is enrolled in a school, the principal or his/her designee shall periodically review and destroy misleading, outdated or irrelevant information contained in the temporary record. The Worcester Public Schools hereby gives notice on an annual basis that temporary records are so reviewed and destroyed at the end of each school year as deemed appropriate. Parents/guardians wanting an opportunity to receive the information or a copy prior to its destruction should contact the principal by June 1st of the school year.

3. Access to Student Records

The following personnel have access to students' records in the performance of their official duties:

- a. School administrators, teachers, counselors and other professionals who are employed by the School Committee or who are providing services to the student under an agreement between the School Committee and a service provider who work directly with the students.
- b. Administrative office staff and clerical personnel, including operators of data processing equipment or equipment that produces microfilm/microfiche who process information for the student's records. Such personnel shall have access only to the student record information that is required for them to perform their duties.
- c. The Evaluation Team which evaluates children pursuant to Chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws.
- d. School health personnel and local and state health department personnel in the performance of official duties.
- e. The following persons serving in a parental role shall have access to a student's records:

- The custodial parent(s) (parent with physical custody)
 - The student's guardian
 - A person or agency legally authorized to act on behalf of or in conjunction with the student's father, mother or guardian, assuming this father, mother or guardian has physical custody.
- f. Non-custodial parents **shall not** have access to a student's records when:
 - The parent has been denied legal custody based on a threat to the safety of the child or to the custodial parent or
 - The parent has been denied visitation or has been ordered to supervised visitation or
 - The parent's access to the child or to the custodial parent has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the student information described in the statute.Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71 § 34H requires the non-custodial parent to submit a written request for access to the student's records to the school principal. For further information contact your child's principal.
 - g. The student, if age fourteen (14) or upon entering grade nine (9).
 - h. Authorized school administrative personnel may examine records for administrative reasons even if they are not providing direct service to the student.
 - i. Federal, state and local education officials, and their authorized agents, as necessary, in connection with the enforcement of federal and state education laws. Personally identifiable data shall be protected and destroyed when no longer needed for enforcement purposes.
 - j. Worcester Public Schools will forward student records to authorized school personnel of the school to which a student transfers or seeks to enroll [603 CMR 23.07 (4)(f)].
 - k. Upon the receipt of a court order or lawfully issued subpoena, provided that the eligible student or parent/guardian is notified in reasonable time that (s)he may seek to have the process quashed, as required by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 66A, § 2(k).
 - l. The Department of Children and Families (DCF).
 - m. A probation officer.
 - n. A justice of any court.
 - o. The Department of Youth Services (DYS).
 - p. Bureau of Special Investigation on Welfare Fraud may inspect enrollment and attendance records of any student who is being investigated for welfare fraud or of any student who is the child, ward or dependent of someone who is being investigated for welfare fraud. The law prohibits the Bureau from obtaining access to academic, medical and evaluative records.
 - q. Appropriate parties, including the local police department and the Department of Children and Families (DCF), in connection with a health or safety emergency, including weapon reports, if knowledge of the information may be necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.
 - r. Schools are required by state law to "flag" or mark the student record of a child who has been reported missing, and should notify the police whenever there is an inquiry regarding the records.

- s. In line with federal regulations a school may release a student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletics teams, class, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, and post-high school plans without the consent of the eligible student or parent/guardian. This serves as Worcester Public Schools public notice of the types of information it may release. **Eligible students and parents/guardians who do not want this information disclosed to any third party must submit a written request to the principal of the school.**

Access of other third parties requires the written consent of the eligible student or parent/guardian except for the provisions specified under 23.07(4) of the regulations. When granting consent, the eligible student or parent/guardian shall have the right to designate which parts of the student's record shall be released to the third party. A copy of such consent shall be retained by the eligible student or parent/guardian and a duplicate placed in the temporary record. Except for information described in 603 CMR 23.07(4)(a), personally identifiable information from a student record shall be released to a third party on the condition that (s)he will not permit any other third party to have access to such information without the written consent of the eligible student or parent/guardian.

Amending Student Records

The student and/or his or her parent/guardian shall have the right to add information, comments, data or any other relevant written material to the student record.

The above persons have the right to request deletion or amendment of any information contained in the student record. They shall also have the right to a conference with the principal to make objections known regarding material contained in the record.

In the event any decision of a principal is not satisfactory, the student and/or his or her parent/guardian may then appeal to the Superintendent in writing for a review of the objections. A further appeal is possible to the School Committee if the Superintendent's response is not satisfactory. A hearing shall be conducted by the School Committee within four weeks of written notice of an appeal. The student and/or parent/guardian may be represented by an advocate of his or her choosing to cross-examine witnesses and to present evidence. Written notice of the decision will be furnished to the student and/or parent/guardian.

Policy on Parental Notification Relative to Sexuality Education

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 32A, the School Committee has adopted the following policy:

At the beginning of each school year, all parents/guardians of students in the Worcester Public Schools will be notified in writing of the courses and curriculum offered that primarily involve human sexual education or human sexuality issues. The principal of each school will be responsible for sending notice(s) to the child's parents/guardians. The parental notice will include the date and time for a parent/

guardian meeting to be held at the school. At the parent/guardian meeting, the school's health or biology teacher will describe the course in detail and answer questions and concerns which parents/guardians may have about course content and delivery.

At the time of enrollment, principals will give this written notice to parents/guardians of those students who enroll in school after the start of the school year.

If the school's curriculum changes during the school year, to the extent practicable, parents/guardians will be notified of this fact in a timely manner before changes are implemented.

Each written notice sent to parents/guardians will include a brief description of the curriculum covered by this policy and will inform parents/guardians that they may:

1. exempt their child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexuality issues, without penalty to the student's grades or academic standing. Parents/guardians who request to exempt their child can send to their child's principal a letter or the reply form attached to the parent/guardian notice. The parent/guardian should specify the course, class or school activity from which the child is to be exempted. Any student who is exempted by request of the parent/guardian under this policy will be given an alternative assignment or a directed study period for the duration of the exemption.
2. inspect and review program instructional materials for these curricula, which will be made reasonably accessible to parents/guardians and others to the extent practicable. Parents/guardians may arrange with the principal to review the materials at the school, and may also review them at the Worcester Public Schools' Health Education Office, 305 Chandler Street, Worcester, MA (508) 799-3075 and/or the Office of Science and Technology/Engineering, 20 Irving Street, Worcester, MA (508) 799-3479.

A parent/guardian, dissatisfied with the process for notice, the access to instructional materials, or the exemption for a student under this policy will follow the Procedures for Resolving School-Related Problems as described in this Policy Handbook.

After following the school district's problem-resolution process, a parent/guardian who is still dissatisfied can write to the Massachusetts Commissioner of Education at 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148 to request a review of the issues(s) in dispute.

Annual Notice to Parents/Guardians on the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

The Worcester Public Schools will inform parents/guardians of any student surveys that their child may be asked to participate in that include questions on drug use, sexual activity, political/religious affiliations, or other personal information. All such surveys are voluntary and anonymous. A copy of the survey will be made available for review through the principal and on the Worcester Public Schools' website.

Voluntary School Uniform Policy

The School Committee approved the following Voluntary Uniform Policy:

1. Voluntary uniform policies must comply with existing School Committee policies on student attire.
2. Prior to implementation, a majority of the school council members and the school principal must approve the school's voluntary uniform policy.
3. There will be no disciplinary action if a student does not adhere to the voluntary uniform policy.

Students' Dress Code Policy

Students' clothing shall not disrupt or distract from the school's educational process. While in school, students will wear clothing that meets the following standards:

- No hats, bandanas, scarves or sweatbands
- No bare backs
- No low cut shirts/blouses that expose cleavage
- No bare midriffs (must be able to tuck in shirts/blouses)
- No bare feet, or unsafe footwear
- No clothing that uses see-through material
- No clothing that displays words (in whatever language)/graphics that are obscene and vulgar, violent, sexist, racist and/or promote the use of illegal drugs/alcohol/tobacco
- No gang-, violence- or cult-related apparel (refer to Rule 17, policy on gang and obscene clothing)
- No droopy pants or clothing that reveals undergarments
- The length of shorts and skirts must be longer than the tip of the student's fingers when his/her extended arm is by his/her side
- No outerwear. Example: jackets/parkas/windbreakers

The school principal, having discretion to render judgments regarding what is and what is not appropriate, may, if necessary, waive these policy restrictions in religious and/or medical situations. The principal will determine what consequences should follow when a student does not comply with this policy.

Worcester Technical High School Shop and Uniform Policy

Shop instructors, with the respective department heads, have a responsibility to provide a safe shop environment for all students. All trades require specific uniforms or clothing, and adherence to workplace standards of appearance beyond the requirements for school dress described in the Worcester Technical High School Handbook. Shop instructors with the respective trade department heads identify the necessary dress as described in the Worcester Technical High School supplement. The Administration enforces these requirements.

No Child Left Behind Act 2001

The Worcester Public Schools makes every effort to comply with the regulations and requirements of the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA) Federal legislation. This legislation requires school district personnel to notify parents/guardians of a variety of issues regarding their children's education. Among them is to notify parents/guardians of students attending Title I schools of their right to know about the qualifications of the teachers and instructional assistants who work with their children.

In a Title I school, parents/guardians have the right to know the professional qualifications of classroom teachers who instruct their children. NCLBA allows parents/guardians to ask for certain information about a student's classroom teacher and requires that the district provide the parents/guardians with the requested information in a timely manner if a parent/guardian asks for it. Specifically, parents/guardians have the right to ask for the following information about each of their children's classroom teachers in a Title I school:

- Whether the Massachusetts Department of Education has licensed, qualified, or waived the teacher for the grades and subjects that he or she teaches.
- The teacher's college major, whether the teacher has any advanced degrees and, if so, the subject of the degrees.
- Whether any instructional assistants or other paraprofessionals provide services to your child, and, if they do, their qualifications.

If parents/guardians would like to receive any of this information, they must contact the principal of their children's Title I school. In addition, districts are required to notify parents/guardians in a timely manner when their child has been assigned, or has been taught four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Philosophy

The Worcester Public Schools embraces zero tolerance for language or acts of hate and intolerance. A key aspect of a student's education is the acquisition of social and behavioral skills, since effective learning can only occur when students obey basic rules of conduct. This means that:

- Students have a responsibility to conduct themselves in a manner that is in the best interest of the school and its students.
- Parents/guardians have a responsibility to develop positive attitudes toward study and behavior.
- Teachers have a responsibility to continue behavior development through teaching and discipline in the classroom.
- The Administration and the School Committee have a responsibility to support and maintain the enforcement of discipline within the school buildings.

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. Chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws, known as Chapter 766, requires that additional provisions be made for students who have been found by an evaluation team to have special needs and whose program is described in an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). Such provisions will also be made, when appropriate, for students with a disability who are receiving accommodations or related services under a 504 plan. If the student has not been identified as having a disability, the principal or his/her designee must consider whether the circumstances surrounding the disciplinary incident suggest the existence of a disability.

School-Imposed Discipline

Expulsion is an action by the School Committee to exclude a student from school and school functions permanently. While the School Committee has specifically provided for a penalty of expulsion in certain cases, a student may also be expelled for conduct such as assault, vandalism, hazing, or any other conduct disruptive to the education of students in the Worcester Public Schools or which threatens the safety of students, staff or visitors.

Suspension is a denial to a student of the right to attend school and to take part in any school function for a specified period of time, up to one year, by his/her school administrator, the Superintendent or his designee, or the School Committee.

Long-Term Suspension is a suspension of up to one year during which time the student is assigned to an off-site location.

Determination of the length of suspension is based upon the severity of the incident, its effect on the school community, or its effect on individual students or staff. The effect on the school community includes such concerns as safety of individuals, protection of property, disruption of school activities and disruption of a positive educational environment. Where appropriate, the number and nature of previous offenses will be considered in determining an appropriate penalty. Parents/Guardians may be requested to attend a conference at school with school administration regarding the suspension.

Any student who has received a long-term suspension from the Worcester Public Schools shall not be eligible for readmission until the length of the long-term suspension has been completed. Established policies and procedures require all students who have received a long-term suspension of one year from the Worcester Public Schools to perform ten (10) days or sixty (60) hours of supervised community service prior to the student's readmission to the Worcester Public Schools.

Other Discipline Demerits or detentions may be imposed for infractions of these rules at the local school level.

A student may be suspended or removed from extracurricular activities where his/her conduct has a harmful effect on the safety of the student or other persons or property or where his/her conduct has adverse effects on the reputation of the Worcester Public Schools.

If a student is suspended from an extracurricular activity, at the determination of the principal, the student may be excluded from that specific type of event involving the student's school of enrollment for the remainder of the school year.

A student may be transferred from one school to another where the transfer is deemed in the best interest of the student and the school community.

School discipline shall not include the right to inflict corporal punishment except that reasonable force may be used as is necessary to protect other students or other persons from an assault by a student. (See Rule 21)

Disruptive Conduct

Violation of any of the following rules is grounds for discipline as defined above, and pertains to actions both on or off school grounds during school or school-related situations.

Rule 1. - Damage or Destruction of School Property

A student shall not steal or cause damage to school property, nor make such attempts. The Administration intends to file criminal complaints against, and seek restitution from, any student who violates this rule.

Rule 2. - Damage or Destruction of Private Property, Cheating, Forgery, Plagiarism

A student shall not steal or cause damage to private property nor make such attempts during school situations on or off school grounds or at any school-related situations including, but not limited to, travel to and from the situation. A student shall not cheat, forge or plagiarize any work submitted for academic credit or documentation.

Rule 3. - Physical Assault on a School Employee

A student shall not cause or attempt to cause physical injury to a school employee on or off the school grounds or during school situations or school-related situations including, but not limited to, travel to and from the situation.

Any student who assaults any school employee or any student who assaults a principal, teacher, instructional assistant, or other educational staff on school premises or at school sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion or a long-term suspension from the school by the school principal.

Any subject charged with a violation of this rule shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at the hearing before the principal.

Rule 4. - Physical Assault on a Student or Other Person not Employed by the School

A student shall not cause or attempt physical injury to another student or any other person on or off school grounds at any school-related situation including, but not limited to, travel to and from the situation.

Rule 5 - Verbal Assault on a School Employee

A student shall not assault verbally any school employee on or off school grounds at any school-related situation including, but not limited to, travel to and from the situation. Verbal assault means defiance, insolence, rudeness, obscenity or abusive language. Abusive language shall include but not be limited to derogatory statements concerning race, sexual orientation, color, gender, age, religion, gender identity, national origin or disability.

Rule 5A. - Threatening a School Employee

A student shall not threaten on school grounds or at a school sponsored event any teacher, administrator or other school employee with physical harm so as to place such teacher, administrator or other school employee in reasonable apprehension that force will be used to inflict such physical harm. The principal of the school shall investigate any allegation that a student has threatened a teacher, administrator or other school employee with physical harm and shall make an initial determination whether or not the matter should be recommended to the School Committee.

The School Committee may expel or may impose a long term suspension on any student found to have threatened a teacher, administrator or other school employee with such physical harm after affording such student all due process rights specified in "Legal Policies - Due Process" - herein. In determining the response of the Worcester Public Schools, any fact-finder, or reviewing authority will have discussions with the student and the school employee(s) involved in the incident. This shall include the employee that is the subject of the alleged threat, others who may have witnessed it, as well as guidance counselors and administrators of the school. In determining whether an apprehension of anticipated physical force is reasonable, any fact-finder or reviewing authority will look to the actions and words of the student in light of the attendant circumstances.

Rule 6. - Verbal Assault on, or Threat to, a Student or Non-employee of School

A student shall not assault verbally any person on or off school grounds at any school-related situation including, but not limited to, travel to and from the situation. Verbal assault means defiance, insolence, rudeness, obscenity, bullying or abusive language. Abusive language shall include but not be limited to derogatory statements concerning race, sexual orientation, color, gender, age, religion, gender identity, national origin or disability.

Rule 6A. - Written Assault or Threat on a Student or Non-employee of School

A student shall not threaten, intimidate or bully in writing, any person on or off school grounds at any school-related situation including, but not limited to, travel to and from the situation. Written threats mean any messages including e-mail, text messaging or any other cyber-related forms of communication; e.g. chat rooms.

Rule 7. - Policy on Possession or Use of Weapons

If any device which may be considered a weapon under this policy is distributed by a teacher, for use in the classroom, then no student receiving such a device shall be charged with an offense under Rule 7 provided the device remains in the classroom and provided the device is only used for the classroom purpose.

A student shall not possess, use, or attempt to use, any weapon on school premises or at a school-related situation, including but not limited to travel to and from the situation.

In order to protect the students of the Worcester Public Schools, any student who is found on school premises or at school sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including but not limited to, a gun or a knife may be subject to expulsion or a long-term suspension from the school by the principal regardless of the size of the knife.

For purposes of this policy, a dangerous "weapon" includes but is not limited to a gun (including a B.B., pellet or other replica device), knife, sling shot, blowgun, black-jack, metallic knuckles including a ring intended to be worn on more than one finger ("fused rings") or knuckles or any substance which could be put to the same use with the same or similar effect as metallic knuckles, nunchaku, zoobow, also known as klackers or kung fu sticks, or any similar weapon consisting of two sticks of wood, plastic or metal connected at one end by a length of rope, chain, wire or leather, a shuriken or any similar pointed star-like object intended to injure a person when thrown, or any armband, made

with leather which has metallic spikes, points or studs or any similar material weighted with metal or other substance and worn on the hand, or a manrikigusari or similar length of chain having weighted ends. Any other device or object used or attempted to be used to inflict bodily harm on a person may be considered a weapon.

This policy will be implemented according to the due process provisions of the Worcester Public Schools Discipline Code applicable to Regular and Special Education students.

Rule 8. - Policy on Possession or Use of Drugs or Alcohol

- a. Any student who distributes or possesses, with intent to distribute, any controlled substance as defined in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 94C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, or heroin, on school premises or at a school sponsored activity, may be expelled or have a long-term suspension imposed from the Worcester Public Schools by the school principal.
- b. Any student who uses or possesses any controlled substance as defined in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 94C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine or heroin, or is under the influence of such a substance on school premises or at a school sponsored activity may be subject to expulsion or a long-term suspension from school by the school principal.
- c. Possession or use of alcohol on the premises of the Worcester Public Schools is forbidden. Any student who uses or possesses alcohol on school premises, or at a school sponsored activity, or is under the influence of alcohol on school premises, or a school sponsored situation, may be expelled or have a long-term suspension imposed from the Worcester Public Schools by the School Committee.
- d. This policy will be implemented subject to the due process provision of the Worcester Public Schools Discipline Code applicable to Regular and Special Education students. Any student charged with a violation of Rule 8 shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with an opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at the hearing before the principal.
- e. Possession or use of drugs or controlled substances which are medically prescribed is not a violation of this Policy (However, all prescribed medications will be administered to students by authorized personnel and will be kept in a secure location).

Rule 9. - Excessive Tardiness

A student shall not be repeatedly tardy from school or to class without legitimate cause (See Attendance/Tuancy Policy).

Rule 10. - Repeated School Violations

A student shall not repeatedly fail to comply with directions and reasonable requests of any authorized school personnel during any period of time he/she is under such authority.

Rule 11. - Search and Seizure

School Officials may legally search a student and confiscate property provided:

- a. There are reasonable grounds to suspect a search will turn up evidence tending to show that the student has violated or is violating the law or the school's rules.
- b. The search as conducted is reasonably related in scope to the circumstances that justified the search in the first place.

Rule 12. - Hazing (Ch. 536 - Acts of 1986)

A student shall not organize or participate in hazing. A student with knowledge of any hazing activity must report the incident to the school administrator.

Rule 13. - Sounding False Alarms

A student shall not, without reasonable cause, by outcry, bells, or otherwise cause a false alarm of fire (Such action shall be reported under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 269, Section 13). No student shall set a fire in a school building or at a school-sponsored site or situation.

Rule 14. - Smoking and Tobacco Products

Smoking, possession, use, or distribution of tobacco or tobacco products within school buildings, school facilities, school grounds, on school buses or at a school sponsored activity by any person are prohibited. Any student who violates this rule may be suspended.

Rule 15. - Cellular Telephones, Beepers, iPods/MP3 Players and Laser Pointing Devices

A student shall not use a beeper, pager, film/digital camera or any device with a digital camera, other mobile telecommunications or two-way radio communications device of any type, iPods/MP3 player, Bluetooth and other wireless devices, and any potentially disruptive electronic device on school premises or at a school-sponsored situation without expressed permission of appropriate school personnel. Any such device found in a locker may be considered to be in the possession of the student assigned to the locker for purposes of disciplinary action. **However, cell phones and iPods/MP3 players may be brought to school but must be secured in the student's locker.** The Worcester Public Schools is not responsible for lost or stolen property.

A student shall not possess a laser pointing device of any type on school premises or at a school sponsored situation, unless such device is distributed by a teacher or its use is authorized by a teacher in connection with school work. Use of a laser pointing device against the face, eyes, or head of another person on school premises or at a school sponsored situation may be considered use of a weapon for disciplinary purposes including the possibility of expulsion.

Rule 16. - Policy on Gangs and Obscene Clothing

- a. No student on school property or at any school sponsored function shall wear any article of clothing (including hats, bandanas, scarves and sweatbands), jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol or sign which has wording, or designs that are reasonably deemed by the School Administration to be obscene, lewd or vulgar.

- b. No student on school property or at any school sponsored function shall wear any article of clothing (including hats), jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol or sign, which displays, evidences or advertises alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, illegal drugs, or other controlled substances illegal under Massachusetts law.
- c. No student on school property or at any school sponsored function shall wear any article of clothing (including hats), jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol or sign which the School Administration reasonably deems to be evidence of membership or affiliation in any gang. As defined in this policy a "gang" is any group of two or more persons affiliated together, either formally or informally, whose purposes include the commission of illegal acts or who in concert commit illegal acts.

Rule 17. - Students Charged with or Convicted of a Felony

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71 (37 H ½) principals have the authority to suspend students charged with a felony and expel or impose a long-term suspension for students convicted or adjudicated of committing a felony if the principal has determined that the student's continued presence would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Any student charged with a violation of Rules 3, 7, 8 and 18 shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at the hearing before the principal (Due Process, page 5).

Rule 18. - Disruption of School

- a. In addition to complying with Rules 1 through 18 stated above, a student shall not use violence, force, threat, fear, passive resistance or any other conduct in order to cause the disruption or obstruction of any lawful mission, process, or function in school.
- b. Students are not permitted in any area of the school building/grounds without supervision by a staff person of the Worcester Public Schools before, during and after normal school hours. Students are not permitted access to the school building/grounds until 30 minutes before the official start of the school day or when personnel of the Worcester Public Schools are available for supervision.

Rule 19. - Bomb Threats

- a. No student shall communicate or cause to be communicated any information in any form whatsoever that a bomb or any type of explosive device is located in or on any building or property under the control of the Worcester Public Schools or is at any school sponsored situation, including but not limited to transportation provided by the Worcester Public Schools, either directly or by contracted services. Any student found in violation of the provisions of this rule may be expelled by the School Committee after all appropriate due process proceedings as specified in the Legal Policies – Due Process section of the Policies Handbook for the Worcester Public School.

- b. Before the readmission to the Worcester Public Schools of any student suspended or expelled for violation of this rule, such student shall perform ten (10) days of supervised community service, which has been approved by the School Administration, for each day which school has been disrupted by such threat. Such community service shall be performed at a time when the Worcester Public Schools is not scheduled to be in session (e.g., summer vacation, February or April vacation, etc.).

Rule 20. - Extracurricular Activity

A student may be suspended from extracurricular activities where his/her conduct has a harmful effect on the safety of the student or other persons or property or where his/her conduct has adverse effects on the reputation of the Worcester Public Schools.

The Worcester Public Schools recognizes that the safety and welfare of individual students and teams are a priority. Therefore, students will not engage in any acts of criminal activity such as, but not limited to, vandalism, assault and battery, sexual misconduct, hazing, plagiarism, theft or other disruptive conduct.

Students are expected to behave appropriately during all school-related activities. Detrimental actions prohibited hereunder include, but are not limited to, insubordination, fighting, taunting, negative attitude, unsportsmanlike conduct, lying, inappropriate language or gestures and all other infractions and violations of rules set forth in the Worcester Public Schools' Policies Handbook and school handbooks.

Bullying

The Worcester Public Schools prohibits any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation, in Worcester Public School buildings, on school grounds, property adjacent to school grounds, and school-sponsored or school-related activities. Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c.71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students or staff of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that:

- i. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the victim's property;
- ii. places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- iii. creates a hostile environment at school for the victim;
- iv. infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

Cyber-bullying is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

The Worcester Public Schools certifies that its schools have adopted and are enforcing a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. An Anonymous Bullying Reporting Line has been established at (508) 799-3472. The entire plan can be viewed at: <http://preventbullying.worcesterschools.org>

Consistent with the requirements of SB 2404, An Act Relative to Bullying (Section 1, Ch. 71, 37 O) in Schools, all students and staff will receive prevention activities that are designed to create and maintain safe, disciplined and drug-free environments which would include bullying prevention.

Based on information reported to the school administrator, the administrator will investigate all reports and complaints of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation, and take immediate action to end bullying behavior and restore the target's sense of safety and will engage support staff to determine subsequent steps which may include, but not be limited to, disciplinary action, a strategy for providing support services or referral to appropriate services for aggressors and targets and for appropriate family members of said students, and criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

Acts of bullying can result in any one, or combination of, the following legal charges:

- Assault (GL c. 265, § 13A). The act or an instance of unlawfully threatening or attempting to injure another.
- Assault & Battery (GL c. 265, § 13A). An assault upon a victim that is carried out by striking the victim, knocking the victim down, or otherwise doing violence to the victim.
- Criminal Harassment (GL c. 265, § 43A). Whoever willfully and maliciously engages in a knowing pattern of conduct or series of acts over a period of time directed at a specific person, which seriously alarms that person and would cause a reasonable person to suffer substantial emotional distress.
- Harassing/Annoying Phone Calls. (GL c. 269, § 43A). Whoever telephones another person, or causes any person to be telephoned, repeatedly, for the sole purpose of harassing, annoying or molesting such person or his family, whether or not conversation ensues, or whoever telephones a person repeatedly, and uses indecent or obscene language to such a person.
- Threats (GL c. 275, § 4) (GL c. 209A, § 7). An expression of intention and an ability in circumstances that would justify apprehension on the part of the recipient.
- Disruption of School Assembly (GL c. 272, § 40). Whoever willfully interrupts or disturbs a school or other assembly of people met for a lawful purpose.
- Civil Rights Violation (GL c. 265, §§ 37, 38). No person, whether or not acting under color of law, shall by force or threat of force, willfully injure, intimidate or interfere with, or attempt to injure, intimidate or interfere with, or oppress or threaten any other person in the free exercise or enjoyment of any right or privilege secured to him by the constitution or laws of the Commonwealth or by the constitution or laws of the United States.
- Malicious Destruction of Property (GL c. 266, § 127). Whoever destroys or injures the personal property, dwelling house or building of another.

Athletes and Participants in School-Related Activities

General

Athletes and participants in school-related activities shall be governed by local and state law, MIAA regulations, the Policies Handbook of the Worcester Public Schools, and rules included in the Worcester Public Schools Code of Conduct for Athletes and Participants in School-Related Activities.

Academic Requirements

1. A student must secure during the last marking period preceding the contest (e.g., second quarter marks determine third quarter eligibility) a grade of 65 or above in four traditional yearlong major courses. In addition, a student's overall average of all yearlong courses must be a C or above.
2. A student cannot at any time represent a school unless that student is taking courses that would be the equivalent of four traditional yearlong major courses.
3. To be eligible for the fall marking period, students are required to have passed four yearlong classes with a 65 or above. In addition, a student's overall average of all yearlong courses must be a C or above. Incoming 9th graders are exempt from academic requirement in the first quarter only.
4. Academic eligibility of all students shall be considered as official and determining only on the published date when the report cards for that ranking period are to be issued to the parents/guardians of all students.
5. Incomplete grades may not count towards eligibility.
6. A student who repeats work upon which he/she once received credit cannot count that subject a second time for eligibility.
7. A student cannot count for eligibility any subject taken during the summer, unless that subject has been previously pursued and failed.

Attendance

1. A student who is absent from school will not participate in any school-related activity. This includes in-house suspensions.
2. A student must be in school for at least three (3) hours to be able to participate in any school-related activity.
3. Any student with five (5) or more unexcused absences will be excluded from the club or team for the remainder of the current sports season. A student with ten (10) or more unexcused absences will be ineligible for any club or team for the remainder of the academic year.

Head Injuries and Concussions in Extracurricular Activities

Consistent with the requirements of Chapter 166 of the Acts of 2010, An Act Relative to Safety Regulations for School Athletic Programs:

1. At or before the start of each sport or band season, all students who plan to participate in extracurricular athletic activities shall complete and submit to the coach, athletic director, or band director a current WPS Permission Form, signed by both the student and the parent, that provides comprehensive history with up-to-date information relative to concussion history; any head, face or cervical spine injury history; and any history of co-existent concussive injuries.

2. Any student, who during a practice or competition, sustains a head injury or suspected concussion, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, shall be removed from the practice or competition immediately and may not return to the practice or competition that day.
3. The student shall not return to play unless and until the student provides medical clearance and authorization as specified in 105 CMR 201.011.

All head injuries must be reported to the school nurse, including those that occur outside of the school prior to the start of the sports season or physical activity. Parents must also complete the history of head injury section on the **Extracurricular Athletic Activities Permission Form**.

Additional information, including the *Post Sports-related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form*, can be found on the Worcester Public Schools website: www.worcesterschools.org

Chemical Health MIAA Rule 62

From the earliest fall practice date, to the conclusion of the academic year or final athletic event (whichever is later), a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product including e-cigarettes, marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as "NA or near beer". It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use by his/her doctor.

If a student who violates this rule is unable, at that time, to participate in interscholastic sports due to injury or academics, any penalty imposed will take effect only when the student is able to participate again.

See MIAA Handbook for penalties.

Reasonable Conduct

The Worcester Public Schools recognizes that the safety and welfare of individual students and teams are a priority. Therefore, students will not engage in any acts of criminal activity such as, but not limited to, vandalism, assault and battery, sexual misconduct, hazing, plagiarism, theft or other disruptive conduct.

Students are also expected to behave appropriately during all school-related activities. Detrimental actions include, but are not limited to, insubordination, fighting, taunting, negative attitude, unsportsmanlike conduct, lying, and inappropriate language or gestures and all other infractions as stated in the Worcester Public Schools' Policies Handbook and school handbooks.

Recognizing the varying degrees of severity, the type of misconduct and a student's previous record of conduct, each situation will be considered individually. The principal working with the coach/advisor will determine appropriate consequences, which may include denial of participation or dismissal from the team/activity. In all cases the student will have the right to due process (Due Process, page 5).

It is also understood that spectators, including parents/guardians of all Worcester Public Schools' athletes/students, are to conduct themselves appropriately at all athletic competitions/activities, both home and away. Parents/ guardians are not expected to taunt or display any inappropriate behavior to other fans, officials, coaches or players. Inappropriate behavior may lead to expulsion from the event.

Felony Charge/Conviction

1. Any student charged with a felony will be ineligible to participate in any school-related activities until the case has been adjudicated and the charges dismissed or reduced to a non-felony status.
2. Any student convicted of a felony and/or expelled or issued a long-term suspension from school will be ineligible to participate in any school-related activities for the duration of the expulsion or long-term suspension.

Team Management Plan

At the preseason meeting with the Director of Athletics, each coach will turn in a management plan outlining rules and expectations for the coming season that has been approved by the principal. This plan will be distributed to all candidates for the team.

Discipline of Students Under Section 504 and ADA

Under various federal and state laws and regulations, students with disabilities may not be discriminated against in discipline matters on the basis of their disability or impairment. In addition to those rights set forth in the Policies Handbook of the Worcester Public Schools, the following procedures will be implemented to comply with state and federal law and regulations regarding students with disabilities. Procedures for students eligible for special education services and/or 504 accommodations and/or related services are set forth in "Discipline of Special Needs Students" in this handbook.

1. Definition

A student with a disability is a student who has had or is perceived to have a physical or mental impairment that materially limits one or more major life activities. This category includes students who are found to have such an impairment currently, have a record of having such an impairment, or who are perceived as having such an impairment.

2. Procedure

In the event that a student is found to have violated a school rule after implementing the general due process procedures (notice and hearing) provided in this handbook or under other school policies, the principal or his/her designee shall ascertain whether the student has been identified as a student with a disability under Section 504.

- a. If the student has not been identified as disabled, the principal or his/her designee must consider whether the circumstances surrounding the disciplinary incident suggest the existence of a disability.
- b. In the event that the principal or his/her designee concludes that there is no reason to suspect a disability, the student may be disciplined according to the regular disciplinary sanction under the Worcester Public Schools Code of Conduct.

- c. If the circumstances suggest that the student may be disabled, the principal or his/her designee shall refer the student to the 504 Committee to evaluate whether the student has a disability.
- d. If the student is identified or has previously been identified as a student with a disability under Section 504, prior to taking disciplinary action which would result in a suspension of one (1) to ten (10) days the principal or his/her designee shall determine whether the student's misconduct is a manifestation of his/her disability and assure that all disciplinary actions are consistent with the mandates of Section 504.
- e. If the student is identified or has previously been identified as a student with a disability under Section 504 and/or is so identified upon an initial 504 evaluation and the disciplinary sanction, or cumulative disciplinary sanction could result in a suspension from school for more than ten (10) days, and the 504 Committee determines that:
 - (i) The student is, or continues to be, disabled and his/her misconduct has a direct and substantial relationship to his/her disability.
 - (ii) The violation of school rules is a direct result of a failure to accommodate the student's disability or an inappropriate or unimplemented 504 plan.

The student will not be suspended from school; provided, however, the 504 Committee may determine that the student's 504 plan should include modifications to address the student's misconduct including, but not limited to, delivery of educational services at an alternative site, behavioral modification or support plans, or any other appropriate modification or accommodation or disciplinary consequence consistent with Section 504.

- f. In the event that the student previously has been identified as a student with a disability under Section 504 and/or upon an initial 504 evaluation the 504 Committee determines that the student is, or continues to be, disabled but his/her violation of school rules is not related to his/her disability, a failure to accommodate or an inappropriate or unimplemented 504 plan, regular disciplinary sanctions under the Worcester Public Schools Code of Conduct may be imposed.

3. Evaluation/Re-evaluation

Initial evaluations pursuant to this policy, and re-evaluations of students with disabilities under Section 504, who may be subject to suspension or expulsion for more than ten (10) cumulative days, shall be conducted pursuant to Section 504. Determination of disability and disability relatedness under Subpart 2 (a), (c), (d) and (e) of this Policy, by the 504 Committee pursuant to this policy, will be made prior to the imposition of a disciplinary sanction.

Students with Disabilities Receiving Special Education Services

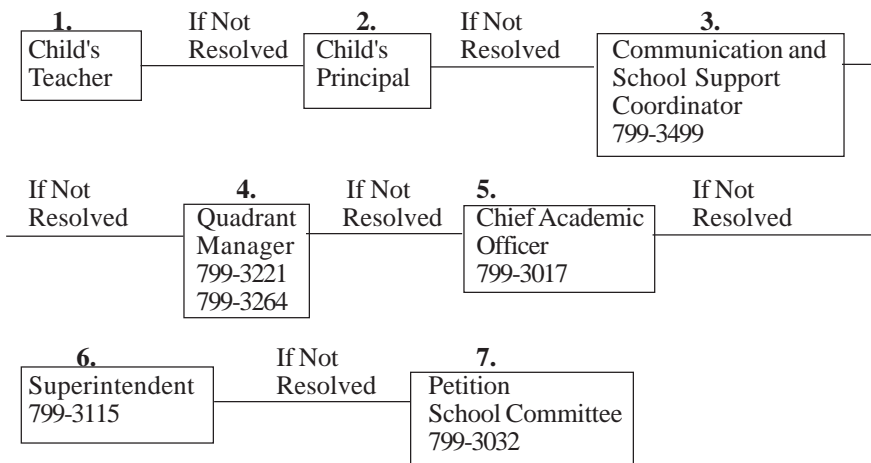
1. The Principal (or designee) will notify the Special Education Office of the suspendable offense of a student with a disability and a record will be kept of such notices.
2. When it is known that the suspension of a student with a disability may accumulate to more than ten (10) days in a school year, or there appears to be a pattern of suspensions, a Manifestation Determination meeting will be held.

- a. If the IEP Team at the Manifestation Determination finds that there is a direct and substantial relationship between the violation of the discipline code and the student's disability or that the conduct in question was the direct result of the school's failure to implement the IEP, the student returns to school and the discipline action is revoked.
- b. If the student's violation of the discipline code is not related to his/her disability or to an IEP not fully implemented, a suspension or other discipline may be imposed. The team will determine a placement in which the student will receive services during periods of suspension beyond ten (10) days, which provides access to the general curriculum and addresses his/her IEP goals.
- c. If a student carries a weapon to school or a school function, or if the student knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at a school or at a school function, or inflicts serious bodily injury upon a person at school or at a school function, the district may remove the student to an interim alternate educational placement for up to forty-five (45) school days. The placement will be determined by the IEP Team.
- d. In cases where a student's violation of the discipline code presents a danger to other students, staff, or the student himself/herself, and the parent/guardian does not accept the proposed placement, the School Committee will immediately seek court approval or an order from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA), to suspend or exclude the student from the Worcester school premises.
- e. Any dispute regarding the IEP will be resolved through the special education dispute resolution process. If a hearing is requested, the student may stay in his/her current placement unless the BSEA determines otherwise or the parent/guardian agrees to an alternate setting pending resolution of the dispute.

Resolving School-Related Problems Procedure

In order to resolve school-related problems, parents will follow this process:

If a problem arises, contact:



Policy Regarding the Reporting of any Potential or Actual Incidents that may Impact on the Safety of Children.

Principals have been directed to provide parents/guardians with verbal and written reports of any potential or actual incidents that may impact on the safety of students. It is extremely difficult to provide principals with examples of incidents which should be reported. These will very obviously be judgment calls which principals must make.

Criteria for reporting will include the following:

1. Parents/guardians should be notified immediately by telephone of any incident which might impact safety.
2. Each verbal report will be followed up immediately by a written report which is either mailed or delivered to the parents/guardians.
3. Principals will file a dual report immediately with the appropriate Quadrant Manager and the School Committee.

HEALTH SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

Wellness Policy

Preamble

It is the mission of the Worcester Public Schools (WPS) Wellness Policy to enable students to become independent and self-directed learners, responsible for meeting their own health and nutritional needs as developmentally appropriate. It is the goal of the Wellness Policy to promote the students' physical, emotional and social well being through the coordinated efforts of all departments and services offered in the Worcester Public Schools.

Overview:

National statistics show that 15.3% of student's ages 6 to 11 are obese (BMI > 95th%); and 15% of this same age group are overweight (BMI >85th but <95th). The statistics for Worcester for 2012 are 17.4% overweight and 18.8% obese for a total of 36.2% compared to the state average of 34.3%.

Given that obesity has become a major concern nationwide and locally, the WPS is committed to providing school environments that promote children's health and well-being and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the Worcester Public Schools that:

- The school district will continue to engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- Students in grades K-12 will have opportunities, support and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold at school, to students in the cafeteria, will meet the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

- Qualified child nutrition professionals will assist school administrators to provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious and appealing foods that meet their health and nutritional needs. They will take into account the religious, ethnic and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning.
- Meals will be provided in clean, safe and pleasant settings with sufficient time for students to eat.
- Schools will provide nutrition education and physical education to promote lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity and will establish linkages between health education, school meal programs and related community services.
- Students and staff will benefit from a coordinated program of accessible health and counseling services.

The Worcester Public Schools will work with our existing School Health Advisory Council to develop, implement, monitor, review, and as necessary, revise school health, nutrition and physical activity policies. The Council will also serve as a resource to school sites for implementing these policies, for it is the belief of this council that healthier students are better learners.

I School Health Advisory Council

Members of the School Health Advisory Council may include:

Manager of Supplemental Support Services
 Manager of Special Education and Intervention Services
 Member of Worcester School Committee
 Coordinator of Nursing Services
 Coordinator of Counseling, Psychology and Community Outreach
 Director of School Nutrition
 Director of Health and Physical Education
 Executive Assistant to the Superintendent on School Safety
 High School Principals
 Middle School Principals
 Elementary School Principals
 High School Students
 Parents/Guardians
 Private/Parochial School Nurse Liaison
 Worcester Public School's Physician Consultant
 School-based health center representatives
 City of Worcester Commissioner of Public Health
 Representative: City of Worcester EMS
 Representative: Edward M. Kennedy Health Center
 Representative: Family Health Center
 Representative: U Mass/Memorial Hospital
 Representative: Y.O.U., Inc.
 Representatives: Youth-serving Agencies
 Representatives: Family Organizations
 Representative: Worcester Food & Active Living Policy Council

II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus

School Meals

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will follow the nutritional parameters of Nutrient Standard Menu Planning whereas minimum levels are met for calories, protein, calcium, iron, vitamin A, vitamin C and maximum levels for total fat do not exceed 30% and saturated fats does not exceed 10%.

School principals will consult with the School Nutrition Office concerning lunch scheduling in order to cooperatively establish the required number of serving outlets ensuring all students have comfortable access to school meals.

The school cafeteria serving space(s) will focus on marketing the reimbursable meal and other "whole-food" commodities such as milk, fresh fruit and vegetables.

The School Nutrition Program will purchase locally grown fruits, vegetables and other commodities in season and continue to work with the Department of Agriculture to secure and develop availability.

In compliance with the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, water is available during meal service free of charge in the place where meals are served.

All school meals will continue to be free of artificial trans fats.

Competitive Foods

Consistent with local, state and federal guidelines, unauthorized food sales will not occur in the cafeteria and/or in competition with reimbursable meals offered through the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program.

2010 legislation includes the following new guidelines of particular note:

In compliance with the Massachusetts School Nutrition Bill, all foods sold in school stores, school snack bars, vending machines or any other location in the school comply with nutrition standards put forth by the Department of Public Health, provided that the nutritional standards shall not apply to competitive foods or beverages sold on school grounds 30 minutes before the beginning of the school day or 30 minutes after the end of the school day, with the exception of food and beverages sold through vending machines, in which case the nutritional standards shall apply at all times.

III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education and Promotion: The Worcester Public School District aims to teach, encourage, and support its students to develop healthy eating habits. Schools will provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- is part of, not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as science, language arts and family and consumer science;

- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits and school gardens;
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, health food preparation methods and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- links with school meal programs, other school foods and nutrition-related community services;
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and
- includes training for teachers and nutrition staff

Food Marketing in Schools: School-based advertising will be consistent with nutrition education and health policy. In-school advertising of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including water, fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.

Staff Wellness: All staff are members of the Employee Assistance Company, which has nurses available to coach and educate individuals regarding wellness and prevention.

IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

Physical Education

MGL Chapter 71, Section 3 states:

Physical education shall be taught as a required subject in all grades for all students in the public schools for the purpose of promoting the physical well being of students.

Therefore:

- The Worcester Public Schools will teach physical education to all students K-12, including students with disabilities, special health care needs, and in alternative educational settings.
- Students will receive regularly scheduled physical education instruction which meets the Massachusetts state guidelines.

Certified physical education teachers will teach physical education classes.

Recess: Elementary school students will have supervised recess, preferably outdoors, one or more times daily where moderate to vigorous physical activity will be encouraged.

Wide variation in Worcester Public School facilities both indoors and outdoors presents challenges in providing active recess, but sedentary activities should not be substituted. Individual schools must explore solutions that overcome their limitations to provide students active recess time. Solutions may be found in best practices locally and around the country and may include access to nearby indoor and outdoor recreation facilities.

Physical activity before and after school:

- Students are given opportunities for physical activity through a range of before-and/or after-school programs including, but not limited to, intramurals, interscholastic athletics, and physical activity clubs (i.e. Fit Math, Walking clubs, etc.)
- After-school enrichment programs and child care programs will be encouraged to provide appropriate space, equipment, and activities that support daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

V. School Environment

School Celebrations/Fundraising:

The Worcester Public Schools encourages cultural food celebrations and sharing of food traditions amongst students, families, teachers and staff. We recognize that food is a central component to our various cultures, and we encourage celebrations to have a “healthy food” focus.

Schools should limit parties/celebrations that involve low-nutrition foods and should explore fun non-food alternatives for celebrations as well. (see http://cspinet.org/new/pdf/healthy_school_celebrations.pdf).

Fundraisers involving low-nutrition foods (such as cookie and cupcake sales) should also be limited and creative non-food fundraisers should be explored (examples include walk-a-thons, car washes, raffles for lunch with the principal):

<http://www.cspinet.org/nutritionpolicy/fundraiserfactsheet.pdf>

<http://www.cspinet.org/new/pdf/schoolfundraising.pdf>

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM2039A.pdf>

Water intake: Water intake should be encouraged for all students, and students should have access to drinking water throughout the school day. Adequate water intake is not only key to prevention of obesity, but also essential for maintaining hydration. Inadequate hydration can be related to headaches, constipation, and may interfere with cognitive functioning.

Bathroom access: Students should readily have access to bathrooms as needed. Restriction of access to bathrooms can pose health risks to students (such as increased urinary tract infections), and result in discomfort, poor hygiene and may impede learning due to an inability to maintain attention. Furthermore, since hand washing is key to prevention of spread of germs and illness such as influenza, ready access to bathrooms (which are clean and have adequate supplies of soap and towels) is essential.

VI. School Health/Nursing Services

A coordinated program of accessible health services will be provided to students and staff through the leadership of the school nursing department, in collaboration with the school physician consultant, various departments within the school system, and outside agencies, as applicable. The program will include communicable disease prevention, immunizations, health assessments and screenings, chronic condition management, counseling, community health referrals, first aid and emergency care.

School nurses will continue to provide screening services including vision, hearing, scoliosis, height, weight and BMI. Students with screening results needing follow-up will have a letter sent to parents to be shared with the student's primary physician provider (PCP)/medical home. School nurses will make an effort to contact the PCP/medical home in cases where the family has not followed-up.

When a student with a chronic health condition (including, but not limited to, asthma, diabetes, life threatening allergies, obesity, ADHD) has an Individual Care Plan in place, and the parents/guardians have given consent, the school nurse will provide the education and training on a need to know basis to all involved staff, including coaches and physical education staff, in order to keep the student safe at school. The school nurse will act as the resource person for staff questions relating to a student's chronic condition and will work collaboratively with the family and the student's primary care provider. The school nurse will educate individual students on any limitations or accommodations needed, before any physical activity. The Worcester Public School Department of Nursing will continue to work with our physician consultant and other allied health organizations on issues relating to students' health conditions.

Life Threatening Allergies: The Worcester Public School nurses will provide life-threatening allergy (LTA) awareness education and Epi-pen training as needed for Worcester Public Schools employees based on the Department of Public Health (DPH) and Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) recommendations including but not limited to:

- The significance of life threatening allergies (LTA) and a discussion on the most common types of LTA (food, stinging insect, latex and medication allergies);
- Creating a safe environment for students with LTA's;
- Designation, when necessary, of a table in the cafeteria or a student's classroom as a peanut-free or a food specific-free zone;
- Implementation of a "NO FOOD OR UTENSIL" sharing practice among students, as needed, with focus on the elementary level;
- Training of cafeteria employees about the precautions necessary to ensure the safety of student/staff from the cross contamination of food or utensils;
- Parent guidelines regarding snacks;
- The signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis;
- Use of an Epi-pen
- Activation of the Emergency Response System, i.e. nurse and 911 EMS, to deal with an actual, suspected or potential anaphylactic reaction.

Asthma: The school nurse will provide education and instruction to all staff involved with students, on a need to know basis including:

- Guidelines established for students to self-carry and administer their own inhaler, with parent/physician permission, and cleared by school nurse.
- A medication plan will be developed and in place for the student. The school nurse will instruct the student and staff on recognizing the signs and symptoms of an asthma attack; what is a rescue inhaler vs. nebulizer treatment and review proper administration

- Activation of the Emergency Response System when a student is still having difficulty breathing after using his/her inhaler or nebulizer treatment.

The school nurse will work collaboratively with the family and student's PCP, to assist in asthma management, and will educate and reinforce teaching of students on the use of their asthma action plan.

Diabetes: The school nurse will provide education and instruction to all staff on a need to know basis including:

- Guidelines established for students to carry, test and administer their own insulin with parent/physician permission and cleared by the school nurse. A medication plan will be developed and in place for the student;
- Signs and symptoms of low blood sugar and the necessary treatment established by the student's physician;
- Dietary and carbohydrate needs of a student in consultation with school nutrition;
- Activation of Emergency Response System when the student is still not responding to treatment.

ADHD

ADHD is one of the most common chronic health conditions for school aged children, and collaboration amongst medical providers, families, and schools is key for diagnosis and management to ensure school success. School nurses will provide medication administration for students with ADHD when necessary, and will act as a resource for teachers and staff regarding medication use/side effects. School nurses will assist with communication between families, physicians and school regarding ADHD evaluation and management.

Mental Health and Counseling Services

Mental health and positive social and behavioral skills are integral to the wellness of our students.

In both elementary and secondary schools, our Counseling and Psychological Services staff members provide supportive services to address identified social, emotional and adjustment needs of students in cooperation with their parents or guardians, as well as our teachers and administrators.

With regard to this policy, on the elementary level, School Adjustment Counselors and School Psychologists work closely with administrators, teachers and school nurses when children develop adjustment or behavioral difficulties that may be related to their emotional health and may compromise their abilities to be successful learners. In our middle and high schools, every student is assigned to a guidance counselor who is knowledgeable about the developmental needs of adolescents regarding issues that result from unmet emotional needs. The guidance counselors will refer parents and students to the school adjustment counselor or school psychologist for assistance in determining an appropriate course of action when needs

are identified. This support staff may assist families to access community-based services through a school-based health center or through our referral protocol with local providers of behavioral health services when such ongoing support appears necessary.

If a student is functionally disabled by the condition of their mental health referrals to the Student Support Process are made so that additional necessary services or supports in school can be accessed.

VII. Communication

The Wellness Policy will be made available publicly on the Worcester Public Schools website and shared with the community partners

Communications with Parents:

- The Worcester Public Schools will distribute the Wellness Policy to CPPAC, Site Councils and PTOs and will engage families in the goal of creating a health-supporting environment at school.
- Each year the Worcester Public Schools will send families a letter that includes relevant research findings, local and national child health statistics, examples of healthy snacks, fund-raising and celebrations, and school-based programs and policies that are designed to guide children in making wise nutritional choices. The district/school will also provide families with information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during and after the school day and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school through distribution of information regarding services available from youth serving agencies.
- The Worcester Public Schools will also utilize school newsletters, the school health website, individual school websites and community partners to inform parents about wellness and highlight promising practices.

Communication with principals and staff - The Wellness Policy will be distributed system-wide to include all principals, who will share it with their staff and site councils.

VIII. Monitoring

Per Federal Regulation regarding the implementation and monitoring of Wellness Policies, this policy will be implemented at both a district and individual school level, and the monitoring of activities will reflect this implementation strategy.

The Superintendent will meet annually, each spring, with the School Health Advisory Council to review, recommend and approve revisions to the Wellness Policy as needed.

The School Health Council will provide implementation templates for the following sectors:

- General school environment: This piece of implementation will be monitored at an individual school level. Principals will work collaboratively with their Site Council and PTO to implement and monitor activities.
- School Nursing: This piece of implementation will be monitored at a district level by the head of School Nursing with input from individual school nurses.

- Physical Education and Nutrition Education: This piece of implementation will be monitored at the district level by the Athletic Director with input from teachers and individual schools.
- School Nutrition: This piece of implementation will be monitored at the district level by the School Nutrition Director with input from individual schools. Data regarding implementation will be collected annually by the School Health Council and an annual report will be prepared summarizing district-wide activities for implementing the Wellness Policy. The report will be submitted to the School Committee's Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning, and Student Supports. It will also be shared with WPS staff, students and families and the community.

Department of Public Health Regulations

1. Immunization - All Massachusetts public school students must be immunized for Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus, Polio, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Hepatitis B and Varicella. Hib vaccine is required for child-care attendance and preschool entry. The number of primary doses is determined by vaccine product and age the series begins. (102 CMR 7.07 and 105 CMR 220.00). Students lacking proper documentation of required immunizations shall be excluded until proof of such immunization is provided. If a parent/guardian refuses to have a child immunized because of religious or medical reasons, as required by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and M.G.L. c. 111, ss 3, 6, 7, 109, 110, 111, 112 and 105 CMR 300.000, the non-immunized student will be excluded from school during outbreaks of diseases for which the student is not immunized.
2. Lead Poisoning - Children must present documented evidence of lead poisoning screening prior to entrance into kindergarten (105 CMR 460).
3. Physical Examinations - required for students in grades K, 4, 7 & 9. It is recommended that this examination be done by the primary care physician or health care facility. Forms will be provided.
4. Screening Programs – 105 CMR 200.500 mandates height, weight and Body Mass Index (BMI) screening in grades 1, 4, 7 and 10.
 - a. The Department of Public Health shall be provided annually with student BMI data, by school or school district, as specified in the guidelines of the Department.
 - b. A copy of the student's BMI score shall be maintained in the student's school health record.
 - c. Parents and legal guardians shall be provided with an opportunity to request, in writing, that their child not participate in the program.
5. Head Lice Protocol – Based on facts that head lice are not known to cause any disease, that no-nit policies have not been shown to be effective in preventing the spread of lice, and that children miss valuable educational time every year due to no-nit policies, the Worcester Public Schools has changed our practice from a “no-nit” to a “no live lice.” This new practice is based on evidence and research and will greatly benefit the children and schools in our community. If live lice are found, the student will be excluded until he/she has been treated and lice removed. It will be the parent's responsibility to regularly check, treat and remove lice/nits. Students must be checked by the school nurse before returning to class.

- Dismissals - Students who are found to be ill will be dismissed by the school nurse or building principal. Parents/guardians are responsible for providing a means of transportation home. Parents/guardians are required to provide the school with a home telephone number, or an alternate phone number in case of emergency.

Administration of Medication

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulates the administration of prescription medications and has promulgated detailed "Regulations Governing the Administration of Prescriptive Medications in Public and Private Schools" (105 CMR 210.000). The regulations seek to ensure that students requiring prescription medication during the school day will be able to attend school and that prescription medications are safely administered. The Worcester Public Schools provides nursing services for Worcester Public School students. Only licensed nurses may legally administer prescription medications to students, with the exception of the delegation of medication for field trips and other short-term school events.

The "Administration of Medication" procedure identifies the medications that are to be given during the school day when it is absolutely medically necessary that they be given during these hours. In order for a student to be given any medication in school the following must occur:

- The student's physician must complete the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Form.
- The parent/guardian must sign the parental permission form.
- The completed form must be given to the school nurse.
- A parent/guardian, or designated adult must bring the medication in the prescription bottle and give it to the school nurse, if nurse is not available, to the principal.
- The Worcester Public Schools' Nursing Department will keep a copy of the completed form and the original will be kept with the student's school record.
- An administration record form will be kept by the nurse to initial at the time of administration.
- Both the physician's order form and the parent/guardian permission form must be renewed annually at the beginning of each school year.
- The medication will be kept in a locked cabinet or refrigerator.
- The student's school photo must be included on the nurse's medication sheet.

The procedure for the delegation of medication for field trips and other short-term events involves the following:

- Completion of the Field Trip Waiver - "Medication Administration Plan" signed by the parent/guardian.
- At least two (2) weeks advance notice to the nurse so that the nurse may train the designated person on how to administer the medication as well as any special side effects requiring intervention.

Medication and Physical forms are available on www.worcesterschools.org/administration/nursing.

HIV-AIDS Policy

The Worcester Public Schools' policy reflects that of the Massachusetts Board of Education's Policy on AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) and HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) of April 1990, and is in keeping with state law regarding the confidentiality of medical information.

Students with AIDS/HIV infection have the same right to attend classes and participate in school programs and activities as any other student.

Guidelines:

- No one except the student and/or the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) necessarily needs to know of a student's AIDS diagnosis or HIV infection. There are several medical reasons that a student and/or his or her parent/guardian may wish to disclose the diagnosis to the school nurse or school physician, even though they are not obligated to do so:
 - A student who has AIDS/HIV may be at a greater risk of contracting infections. If there is an occurrence of a contagious disease in school such as chickenpox or influenza, the school nurse or physician who is aware of a student's HIV status may be able to alert the student's parent(s) or guardian(s), who then may consult their personal care physician for preventive treatment.
 - A young student with AIDS/HIV infection may be taking medications that should be administered by a health care professional; he or she may require immunizations different from those of other students. (See Administration of Medication during School, page 50).

If the parents or guardians, in consultation with the student's primary care physician, decide to inform certain school personnel, particularly the school nurse and school physician, about the student's AIDS/HIV status, the MDPH recommends the following guidelines for disclosure:

- The student's parent(s) or guardian(s) or the students themselves, under certain circumstances, may inform the school nurse or school physician directly.
- Given the privacy protection of M.G.L., c.214,s.1b, all school personnel are under a similar duty to protect the confidentiality of the information.
- Further disclosure of a student's HIV status by the school nurse/school physician to other school personnel requires the specific, informed, written consent of the student's parent/guardian.
- Licensed physicians, nurses, social workers, and psychologists (according to M.G.L., c. 111, s. 70F as well as c. 112, s. 135A and c. 112, s. 129A) have a duty to protect AIDS/HIV-related and other private information. The signed consent form and any HIV/AIDS-related information should be kept by the school nurse in a locked file separate from the school health records.
- Worcester Public School employees will not arrange for student testing for the HIV antibody or provide for transportation to testing sites.
- All school staff shall use universal precautions, as set forth in this policy, in order to reduce their risk of infection.

NOTE: This is only a summary; complete guidelines are available in the principal's office, the nurse's office, and school library. You are encouraged to read the policy in its entirety, and a copy is available to you upon request.

Source: Massachusetts Department of Public Health: The Comprehensive School Health Manual, Updated 2007.

Access for Pregnant Students

Pregnant students are encouraged to continue to attend school. Every effort will be made to see that the educational program of the student is disrupted as little as possible, that return to school after delivery is encouraged, and that every reasonable opportunity to complete high school is provided.

In accordance with Federal Law and Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regulations and guidance, a student who is pregnant in the Worcester Public Schools is permitted to remain in regular classes and participate in extracurricular activities with non-pregnant students throughout her pregnancy. After giving birth, a student is permitted to return to the academic program in which she was enrolled and is permitted to participate in extracurricular programs.

The district does not require that a pregnant student obtain certification from a physician that she is physically and emotionally able to continue in school unless certification is required for all students with other physical or emotional conditions requiring the attention of a physician.

911 Procedures

In the case of a medical situation, if the nurse's decision is to call 911, then the school administration is instructed to assist in the nurse's decision. If in that situation, a parent/guardian is present and on site, and does not want 911 to be called, the principal and the nurse should work with the parent/guardian to explain that calling 911 is the protocol. If the parent/guardian indicates that he/she will take responsibility for obtaining medical help for the child, then the procedure is to ask the parent/guardian to sign the "Worcester Public Schools Emergency Service Waiver Form." When the ambulance arrives, the parent may exercise the parental authority by signing the patient refusal form supplied by the ambulance company personnel.

Suggested Guidelines for Safe Backpack Use

Recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics for choosing the correct backpack include:

- Do not carry weight greater than 20% of body weight
- Select a style that has padded shoulders and waist strap
- Use both shoulder straps
- Tighten the straps so the pack is close to the body
- Distribute the weight of objects evenly in the backpack
- Utilize all compartments
- Pack heaviest objects close to the back with the center of gravity near the pelvis

School Based Health Centers

The school-based health center provides health services to promote the physical and emotional well-being of the students. Services include: emergency treatment, physical examinations, immunizations, health care for minor illness, health education and information, laboratory screening, counseling referral and related health care. The centers are located at: Burncoat Middle School, Burncoat High School, Claremont Academy, Doherty Memorial High School, Elm Park Community School, Roosevelt School, South High Community School, Sullivan Middle School, Woodland Academy, Worcester Technical High School, Goddard School of Science and Technology and North High School.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation Program

Free transportation is granted to pupils in grades kindergarten through 12 who reside two (2) miles or more from the school which they are entitled to attend. **The legal obligation of the School Committee in this respect is limited to provision for transportation for elementary school children and the School Committee does have the right, if necessary, to charge for transportation or not provide transportation at the secondary level regardless of where students may live.**

All eligible K-12 students are expected to ride only the bus to which they are assigned both to and from school and be picked up and dropped off at their assigned bus stops. Students will be asked to walk to a common bus stop. In that situation, students in grades K-6 should be accompanied to the stop by a parent or guardian. The safety responsibility for escorting a child to and from the bus stop shall rest with the parents or guardians of the student involved.

Parents or guardians of students are responsible for supervision until such time as the child boards the bus in the morning and after the child leaves the bus at the end of the school day. Once the child boards the bus – and only at that time – does he or she become the responsibility of the school district. Such responsibility shall end when the child is delivered to the regular bus stop at the close of the school day. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to escort the child to and from the bus stop where there are no sidewalks, where sidewalks are only on one side, where the bus stop is on the opposite side of the street, or where the parent/guardian has other traffic concerns.

It is also expected that all students will be outside at the bus stop TEN minutes before the bus arrives. Bus drivers have been instructed NOT TO STOP if no child is waiting. Students should be visible and not in cars, stores or otherwise not easily seen by the school bus driver. For safety reasons, it is most important that a parent or guardian be at the bus stop to receive the homecoming child.

Students in kindergarten who are transported will receive an identification tag at their school to ensure that they are not discharged from the school bus without a parent/guardian being present. Students not released from the school bus because no parent/guardian is present will be taken to the Elm Park Community School, 23 North Ashland Street (telephone 508-799-3568) to be picked up by a parent or guardian.

Students who are assigned a school bus pass through their secondary school are expected to carry the pass with them at all times when riding the school bus and to display it to the driver for inspection, if requested. Only students with valid passes will be permitted to ride the school bus.

Transportation eligibility is based solely on the student's home address and is only for the transportation between the student's home bus stop and the school he/she attends.

Additionally, transportation shall be provided at city expense for children whose Individualized Education Plan (IEP) requires such transportation.

Free transportation will be provided when the presence of long-term heavy construction projects on the prescribed routes creates a hazard. This would apply only for the duration of the project.

Busing Privileges

In view of the fact that a school bus is an extension of the classroom, the Worcester Public Schools shall require each student to conduct himself/herself in a manner consistent with the Code of Conduct and Safety and Behavior Rules for Pupils Riding School Buses as stated in the student handbook. School bus drivers have the authority and the responsibility to maintain good order while operating the bus. Additionally, bus drivers are instructed to inform the building principal about any student misconduct that creates an annoyance or distraction while driving. The building principal will inform the parents/guardians of the misconduct and request their cooperation in monitoring the child's behavior. Any student who becomes a disciplinary problem on the school bus may have riding privileges suspended on a temporary or permanent basis. In such cases, the parents/guardians of the child involved become responsible for seeing that the child gets to and from school safely.

Worcester Public Schools' school buses may be equipped with cameras to create a video and audio record of each trip. This video and/or audio may be used to assist the school principal in determining what discipline, if any, is appropriate in cases of reported violations of safe riding practices. It may also be used as a tool to teach and reinforce safe riding practices for all students.

As always, safety is of primary importance. At the bus stops and on the school bus, students are expected to be well behaved and cooperative at all times.

Transfer Students

Transportation will be provided to transfer students only if their transfers have a positive effect on the state approved deisolation plan.

Homeless Students

Refer to transportation services described on page 17 under Education of Homeless Children.

Two Mile Limit

The two-mile measurement is the shortest vehicular route between the nearest walkway or driveway to the student's residence and the nearest walkway or gateway leading to the front door of the school. Mileage will NOT be calculated to or from a daycare provider.

School Bus Stops and Routing

Students will walk to a common bus stop. Bus stops will be set up, approved, and verified by the Worcester Public Schools Transportation Department only. Students are not entitled to street-to-street or door-to-door pickup or delivery. All stops will be at corners, whenever possible, to make them fair and consistent for all. All requests for additions or changes of school bus stops must be made through the student's school Principal or designee. Parents or guardians are responsible to ensure that their child is at the correct bus stop. Any child standing at unauthorized locations, or bus stops not assigned by the Transportation Department, will not be picked up. Do not assume bus stops are in the same location as the previous year, as they may change due to student location and population. School bus drivers are not permitted to make changes, additions or deletions of any bus stops. While the law requires school departments to furnish transportation to those students falling within the state's guidelines, it does not relieve the parent or guardian of the responsibility of supervision of the child until the child boards the bus in the morning and after the child leaves the bus at the end of the day. Once a child boards the bus, only at that time does he or she become the responsibility of the school district. Such responsibility shall end when the child is delivered to the bus stop at the close of the school day.

SAFETY AND BEHAVIOR

Riding School Buses

The following safety and behavior rules for pupils riding school buses are published as a guideline for students entitled to transportation by the Worcester Public Schools. A breach of these rules may result in loss of busing privileges.

1. Only pupils and school personnel assigned to the bus shall be allowed to ride in a school bus unless permission is granted by the Director of Transportation.
2. Students should be at the pick-up point at the time designated and prepared to get on the bus with the least possible delay in order to keep the bus on schedule.
3. While at a bus pick-up point, students must:
 - Conduct themselves in an orderly manner
 - Stay out of the street
 - Respect nearby private property rights
 - Remain at least eight (8) feet from the bus when it stops to pick up, and move toward the bus only when the door opens
4. Students should ride only the bus to which they are regularly assigned.
5. Students should take seats promptly after boarding the bus and remain in their seats while the bus is in motion.

6. Students shall not open or close windows or emergency doors except when asked to do so by the driver or the bus monitor. Students must keep arms and heads inside the bus.
7. While a passenger on a bus, a student must not:
 - Smoke
 - Throw any objects on the bus or out the windows
 - Disturb the driver or other students
 - Litter
 - Make loud or unnecessary noises
 - Eat food or drink
 - Transport items which may endanger the health or safety of any other passengers
 - Damage or deface any part of the bus
8. Students must remain quiet when approaching a railroad crossing.
9. Students who exit from the bus should pass ten (10) feet in front of the bus and look in both directions before crossing.
10. In the event of a road emergency, students are to remain on the bus unless requested to leave by the driver of the bus.
11. After exiting the bus, students should enter the school directly for safety purposes.
12. A student who has been issued an identification card by school authorities should carry such card with him/her at all times and show it when requested.
13. Bus drivers/monitors must report violations of the above rules and regulations to the school official on Bus Conduct Forms. Riding the bus is a privilege that can be denied temporarily or permanently when the student's behavior warrants it.

Science Laboratory Safety

Science is taught using an inquiry based approach in the Worcester Public Schools. This can be done safely only with the cooperation of students to the teacher's directions and procedures. It is the responsibility of students to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner in the lab setting. Students are expected to:

- Sign a safety contract which emphasizes their responsibilities in the science lab
- Have parents/guardians co-sign the contract to alert them to these responsibilities
- Be aware of measures to be taken should an accident occur
- Know classroom evacuation procedures in case of an emergency and
- Use protective equipment (gloves, aprons, goggles, etc.) provided as instructed
- Food or beverages are not permitted in the laboratory

Security Measures Physical Restraint

The Board of Education adopted new regulations on the use of physical restraint in public education programs. The regulations (603 CMR 46.00) are meant to promote safety for all students and staff in school. Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations, after other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution.

The Worcester Public Schools' policy reflects the content of Chapter 69, Section 1B, and Chapter 71, Section 37G of the Massachusetts General Laws. The purpose of the Law is to ensure that every student participating in a Massachusetts public education program is free from the unreasonable use of physical restraint.

Policy

Worcester Public School personnel are required to ensure that every student is free from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations, after other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. School personnel shall use physical restraint with two goals in mind:

- a. To administer a physical restraint only when needed to protect student and/or a member of the school community from imminent, serious, physical harm and
- b. To prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the physical restraint.

Student Lockers

All lockers available to students are the property of the Worcester Public Schools. Use of lockers by students is regulated by the school administration and all lockers are subject to inspection by the school administration when deemed appropriate.

Any student assigned a locker must use a school issued lock. The administration will remove all non-school issued locks. If a locker is not used/assigned, the administration will secure it with a lock.

Students must store all cell phones, book bags, gym bags and outerwear (coats and jackets) in their lockers during the school day.

For security reasons, students will not be permitted to wear outerwear (coats and jackets) during the school day. Students will be permitted to carry backpacks made of a mesh or transparent material at the secondary level.

Any weapon and/or drugs or other prohibited items or substances found in a locker in violation of school policy may be considered to be the property of the student assigned to the locker for purposes of disciplinary action under this code.

Access to Students During School Hours

The Legal Office of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has supported the present policy of the Worcester Public Schools regarding permitting persons to meet with students during school hours without parental permission.

The following persons may be granted access to students during school hours:

1. The custodial parent (the parent with physical custody more than 50% of the time) or guardian or personnel or agency legally authorized to act on behalf of the child in place of or in conjunction with the father, mother, or guardian. According to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, § 34H, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request to the school principal for such access. For further information, contact your child's principal.

2. A student, age 14, or upon entering grade 9, may consent to meet with an individual.

The following personnel may be granted access to students in the performance of their official duties:

1. School administrators, teachers and counselors who work directly with the students.
2. Administrative office staff and clerical personnel who process information for the students' records.
3. The Evaluation Team which evaluates the students.
4. School health personnel when such access is required in the performance of official duties.
5. Appropriate parties including the local police department, and the Department of Children and Families (DCF) in connection with a health or safety emergency, including weapons reports, if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.
6. Employees of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) who are investigating child abuse cases may be allowed to interview a child without parental consent if it appears that the child may be placed at risk of further abuse by parental notification. This interview may take place in the presence of a teacher or other school professional to provide help and reassurance to the child.
7. Probation Department employees, Department of Youth Services employees, or an employee from the Bureau of Special Investigation on welfare fraud.

If you have any Court restrictions regarding your child, it is imperative that the Worcester Public Schools have a copy on record so that we can implement the wishes of the Court.

Visitors in the Schools

All Worcester Public Schools are posted with signs requiring that all visitors must report to the Office of the Principal. This ensures that the school administration knows who is visiting in the building, the reason for the visit, and if the timing of the visit is appropriate.

The following sign-in procedures will be adhered to upon entering a school building:

- Enter through the front door (some schools have Intercom Systems that will allow you to enter after ringing a bell and identifying yourself)
- Go immediately to the front office
- Please sign in at the register
- Affix a Visitor's Tag on a visible area of your attire
- Wait for further instructions from the school clerk or administrator on how to proceed to the respective visiting area or classroom

Any other entry into a school building by visitors will be considered trespassing. Intruders into the building are immediately asked to leave, and if they refuse to do so, local law enforcement officials are contacted for assistance. Trespassing laws will be enforced in accordance with this policy.

Use of Motor Vehicles

Students are extended the privilege of bringing automobiles to school as long as they respect the safety of others and obey these basic rules:

1. Automobiles must be parked in the assigned student parking areas.
2. Students who leave the campus in motor vehicles during the school hours without following established dismissal procedures will be suspended.
3. Students must drive slowly and carefully on or near school grounds, always remembering that pedestrians have the right of way.
4. Cars may not be visited during the school day except with the approval of the principal.
5. Parking privileges will be revoked or suspended for the following reasons:
 - a. Speed in excess of 15 m.p.h.
 - b. Any act endangering life or property while on school grounds.
 - c. Parking in areas other than student parking areas.
 - d. Parking privileges will not be available without an appropriate school registration and parking permit.

STUDENT SERVICES

Child Study Department

The Child Study Department consists of School Psychologists and School Adjustment Counselors who assist students, referred as a result of academic, social or behavioral difficulties. **A referral to the Child Study Department does not constitute a referral for a Special Education Team Evaluation.**

Child Study Department services include:

- Collaborative consultation with teachers
- Individual and group counseling - (bilingual and monolingual)
- Individual assessments
- Collaboration with community agencies
- Referral and case management services
- Parent Consultation and Support and referral to appropriate community-based resources
- Supervision of attendance
- Mediation
- Participation in SSP and 504 committees as requested by building principal
- Risk/lethality assessments
- Crisis intervention and stabilization services
- Specialized case management, service coordination and support for students in the care of DCF and for homeless students
- Coordination, training and support of the district's PBIS initiative.

Section 504 - Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act

It is the policy of the Worcester Public Schools to comply with Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAA, 2008) in all aspects of its programming, including both academic and extra-curricular activities and programs.

The Rehabilitation Acts of 1973, also known as "Section 504," is a non-discrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. The purpose of the Act is to prohibit discrimination by institutions that receive federal funding and to assure that qualified disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits

equal to those provided to non-disabled students. Section 504 requires that school districts provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to qualified students in their jurisdictions who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

An eligible student under Section 504 is a student who:

- a) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of such person’s major life activities
- b) has a record of such an impairment
- c) is regarded as having such an impairment

Major life activities include but are not limited to caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating and working.

Under the ADA Amendments Act, whether an impairment substantially limits a major life activity is to be determined without reference to the ameliorative effects of mitigating measures. This means that the school cannot consider the ameliorative effect of mitigating measures — with the exception of eyeglasses and contact lenses — in determining whether someone has a qualifying disability.

Eligibility

If you believe that your child may qualify for a 504 accommodation plan in order to access programs or activities in the Worcester Public Schools, please notify the Principal at your child’s school. If you have medical or other documentation about the disabling condition it is helpful to bring this to the Principal, although a medical diagnosis is not required. The Principal or their designated 504 coordinator for the school will review the concerns and gather data from teachers, school nurses, parents or others working with your child. This information will assist the 504 committee to determine how and whether your child’s impairment substantially limits a major life activity. Specialists at the school maybe consulted. If an assessment by a specialist is needed you will be asked for written consent to complete these at school at no charge to you. When relevant data and information has been collected, the 504 committee will meet with you to determine the student’s eligibility under Section 504 and to develop a plan of appropriate accommodations for your child. If it is determined that your child is not eligible, you will be provided this decision in writing and receive information concerning your procedural rights.

Who Might be Eligible Under Section 504?

Students may be eligible for accommodations or related services for a variety of reasons. Following are examples of students who may be eligible under Section 504 depending on the degree to which the disability interferes significantly with a major life activity:

- a student who has a hearing impairment
- a student who has exercise-induced asthma
- a student diagnosed with ADD/ADHD
- a student with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis
- a student with Crohn’s disease

School Districts Must

Conduct an evaluation of any student who, because of a disability, needs or is believed to need special education or related services in order to access all learning activities in a manner comparable to that of non-disabled same age peers. The evaluation will consist of the collection and analysis of data relevant to the impact of the disability on the student’s functional access to curriculum, learning, social and enrichment opportunities that comprise the educational program.

Additionally, the Worcester Public Schools must “undertake to identify and locate every qualified handicapped person between the ages of 3 and 22 residing in the district who is not receiving a public education” 34 CFR 104.32 (a). In addition, the Worcester Public Schools must take appropriate steps to notify students with disabilities and their parents or guardians about this child find duty 34 CFR 104.32 (b). Written notice of Parent Rights under Section 504 may be requested at your child’s school or accessed through the Worcester Public Schools website: www.worcesterschools.org.

The person responsible for Section 504 at your school is:

BURNCOAT QUADRANT

Burncoat High	Christine Steinwand
Burncoat Middle	Jane McNamara
Burncoat Prep.	Michelle Gabrielian
Clark Street	Patricia McCullough
Lincoln Street	Martha Dewar
McGrath	Paula Severin
Norrback	Tabitha Muchai-Kahura
Thorndyke Road	Jean McNulty
Wawecus Road	Joanna Loftus/ Jean McNulty
Worcester Arts	

DOHERTY QUADRANT

Doherty High	John O’Malley/ Chris Whalen
Forest Grove	Fred King
Chandler Elem.	Jessica Boss
Chandler Mag.	
Elm Park	Rob Pelczarski
Flagg Street	Mary Labuski
Jacob Hiatt	Maureen Power
May Street	Luke Robert
Midland Street	Michele Lodowsky
Nelson Place	Deb Daley
Tatnuck Magnet	Caryn McCrohon/ Donna Fluhr
West Tatnuck	Steve Soldi

NORTH QUADRANT

North High	Shannon Sutton
Worcester Tech.	
Worcester East	Stacey Homan
Belmont Street	Michael Dumphy
City View	
Grafton Street	Joanna Cackett
Lake View	Margaret Bondar
Rice Square	Susan Donahue
Roosevelt	Cindy Cramer
Union Hill	

SOUTH QUADRANT

Claremont	Terrence Fontaine
South High	
Sullivan Middle	Josephine Robertson
University Park	Lauren Mills
New Citizens Ctr.	Steve Alzamora
Canterbury St.	Lauren Chuk
Columbus Park	
Gates Lane	Christine Pappas
Goddard	Ann Marie Kahn
Heard Street	
Quinsigamond	Margaret Doyle
Vernon Hill	Kristine Hersey
Woodland	Elaine Irizarry Kline

HEAD START

Head Start	Darlene Donaldson
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ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS

Alternative School	Michael O’Neil	Gerald Creamer Center	Kelly Denault
Reach/Challenge Acad.	Olga Rivera		

The person responsible for assuring that the district complies with Section 504 is Judith Thompson (508)799-3175 or thompsonj@worc.k12.ma.us. Please contact Ms. Thompson if you have any questions or concerns regarding this notice or Section 504.

Special Education

A full continuum of Special Education services is provided for students with disabilities ages 3-22 (without a high school diploma) who have been found eligible for specialized instruction.

The student's rights to be educated in "the least restrictive environment" with full "access to the general curriculum" guide all team decisions.

Assignment and transfers of students with disabilities enrolled in substantially separate programs

If an IEP Team determines that a student's placement is in a "substantially separate program" (Life Skills, Structured Therapeutic Educational Program, SAIL, COAST, Intensive Learning Disabilities) the student will be assigned to the school which has the designated program in the quadrant in which the students resides. If there is not a program in the home quadrant, or the program is at capacity, the student will be assigned "out of quadrant" at a school identified by the Special Education Department in collaboration with the Transportation Department and approved by the Quadrant Office.

If a student has medical needs, which require placement in an accessible building and/or nursing services, he/she may be assigned out-of-quadrant.

If a student was assigned out-of-quadrant because of the lack of available space, he/she will be reassigned to the home quadrant for the following school year if it is anticipated that space will be available. Families will be advised of this policy at the Team meeting. Exceptions to reassignment may be made if the unique needs of the student can only be met at the current school.

If a student is entering his/her final year at the current school, he/she may remain if special transportation can be arranged without the allocation of additional resources or if, the assignment will have a positive effect on the state deisolation plan. If it is not possible to transport the student without additional resources being required, the student must transfer to the home quadrant school if space is available, or may continue to attend the current school and provide his/her own transportation.

If a student moves out of his/her home quadrant school prior to October 1st, he/she will be reassigned to the new home quadrant school, if space is available.

If a student moves out of his/her home quadrant after October 1st, he/she should be allowed to remain for the duration of the school year consistent with the current policy of the Worcester Public Schools. Assignments made under this policy are not special education placements.

Employment Information and Procedures

Employment Permits (14-18 years of age) are issued in the nine (9) secondary schools for students enrolled in those schools. Other students may obtain the permit or certificate at the Parent Information Center, 768 Main Street between 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday throughout the year. Students who do not attend public schools must present proof of date of birth when applying for the certificate or permit.

Effective January 3, 2007, anyone under 18 years of age must obtain a work permit before starting a new job (M.G.L. c. 149 § 86-89). Applications for work permits and complete information on legal limits of work hours and conditions of employment are available on the Massachusetts Department of labor's Division of Occupational Safety website at:

www.mass.gov/dos/youth/index.htm

Occupation Restrictions

Minors under 14 may not work

There are a few exceptions to this such as working as news carriers, on farms, and in entertainment (with a special permit).

Home and Hospital Instruction

Any student who will be out of school for fourteen (14) school days or longer, or a chronically ill student who will be at home or in a hospital for a recurrent period of less than fourteen (14) days each time, and for whom home or hospital instruction has been requested by a physician in accordance with state regulations, is eligible for this service.

Home and hospital instruction is a service of the Worcester Public Schools as a result of a Physician Request Statement. Parents/guardians must notify their child's school principal, guidance counselor or school nurse immediately if service is indicated. The program begins as soon as the physician requests Home or Hospital Instruction on the state mandated "Physician's Request" form. A teacher will be assigned to instruct the student and the teacher will contact the home to schedule the lessons.

The home and hospital teacher will contact the guidance counselor for the assignments and books for students in the middle and secondary schools, and principals and classroom teacher to get the assignments and books of students in the elementary schools.

Home Schooling

Parents/guardians who choose to educate their children at home, as allowed under Massachusetts law, can fulfill the requirements of the compulsory attendance statute by having their educational programs reviewed and accepted by the Worcester Public Schools. The notifications to home-school (elementary and secondary versions) are available upon request from the office of the Child Study Department at (508) 799-3175.

Following a review of a family's proposed home schooling program to determine that required curriculum areas are included, a notification letter will be issued by the Quadrant Manager's Office. Annually, home schooling families must provide evidence of their students' educational progress and must re-apply for approval of their programs.

Students completing high school with approved homeschooling plans are not eligible for a Worcester public school diploma.

INSTRUCTIONAL POLICIES

Homework Policy

The School Committee recognizes that a reasonable amount of study and preparation is necessary for the scholastic growth of all students. It is also aware that the amount of preparation should increase as the child progresses through the grades. Teachers will ensure that homework supports the district's curriculum.

Meaningful homework is connected to district expectations for accelerating academic performance, college readiness and career readiness.

Parents/guardians are important partners. They can support student success when they:

- ensure that students complete homework
- check work to assure quality
- stress importance of systematic study
- supervise and assist when necessary and,
- provide a suitable place to study

Elementary Schools

The purpose of homework is to reinforce skills that are taught in the classroom. Homework assignments should be related and/or connected to the Massachusetts Frameworks.

Assignments should be an extension of the class lessons that provide students with opportunities to (1) increase or practice learning objectives, (2) engage in higher order thinking, (3) reinforce concepts and apply learning, (4) work on open-ended questions and writing skills, or (5) project work.

Teachers will adhere to the following guidelines and coordinate their assignments so that students are not overloaded with homework on any particular night.

- | | |
|------------|--|
| K-grade 2 | Introduction to homework. Students might be asked to finish papers that were started in school or rehearse early reading skills and math skills. |
| grade 3 | Formal homework is introduced at this level. Students are assigned between 15 and 30 minutes of homework on a daily basis. |
| grade 4 | Students are assigned between 45 and 60 minutes of homework on a daily basis. |
| grades 5-6 | Students are assigned between one and one-and one half hours of homework on a daily basis. |

Secondary Schools

Homework assignments will be designed to accelerate student learning, engage students in higher order thinking and facilitate career and college readiness and should be related to the Massachusetts Frameworks in support of success on the MCAS.

Purposeful homework will vary from day to day for each student. The combined minimum daily homework for academic assignments from middle school teachers should be 120 minutes. The average minimum daily homework assignment from the high school teachers should be 45 minutes per academic subject.

Teachers are responsible for including homework in their individual lesson plans and providing students with guidelines for:

- linking assignments to learning objectives that reflect and support the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, Worcester Public Schools curricula, School Improvement Plans and Worcester Public Schools benchmarks
- providing learning experiences that are both rigorous and relevant and that can be completed independently by the student
- ensuring that homework is an extension of learning that takes place in the classroom and applying the same standards of performance as applied to classroom work
- assigning homework that is explicit and of reasonable length
- ensuring that the quality of homework is more important than the quantity
- completing and evaluating assignments as part of the students' progress toward standards
- showing how homework is factored into the student grade and,
- never assigning homework as punitive work
- Ensuring all students can complete the work assigned regardless of home or family access to technology or the media

Principals are responsible for encouraging school communities to embrace homework as a true extension of student learning and to evaluate the utilization of homework as part of student achievement in the learning process.

With the support and encouragement of teachers, principals, parents/guardians, students will be responsible for completing their homework assignments with care and constancy.

Process for Assigning Textbooks

Students and parents/guardians are responsible for books and all other equipment issued to a student of the Worcester Public Schools. All books and equipment shall be returned by the student and in the condition in which they were issued. Reasonable wear on books and materials is anticipated due to students use.

Worcester Public Schools reserves the right to collect payment for lost or damaged textbooks and other equipment from the students and/or their parents/guardians.

Promotion Policy

General

The principal, after considering recommendations from members of the Student Support Process (SSP), may determine that a child, who is trying but lacks the maturity or has failed to grasp the basic skills, and can gain academically from an additional year at his or her present grade designation, may be retained for one (1) year. Before retaining a student, all elementary principals will meet with the SSP members to consider and discuss the eighteen (18) items of the Light's Retention Scale (without any numerical rating scores and conference with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s)).

The principal is the final authority in promotion at the building level and for good cause may override the passing of promotional subject requirements. In all such cases, the principal must file a statement with his/her supervisor stating the reasons for such promotions and the steps that will be taken to provide the necessary remediation at the next level.

Elementary (K-6)

Promotional Subjects

Grade 1
English Language Arts:
(Reading, Language and Writing)

Grades 2-6
English Language Arts:
(Reading, Language and Writing)
Mathematics

Students must pass English Language Arts (Reading, Language and Writing) at the first-grade level. Students must pass English Language Arts and Mathematics from the second-grade level through the sixth-grade level.

Students in grades 2-6 must pass English Language Arts and Mathematics each year.

Grades 7-8

Middle school students must complete core academic subjects and enrichment courses that are unique to each school. All middle school students participate in physical education as required by state law (M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 3).

Core Academic Courses (full year)

English Language Arts
Mathematics
Science and Technology/Engineering
History and Social Sciences

Pathway/Enrichment Courses may include:

Academic Literacy, Word Study or Intervention Reading Courses
Academic Numeracy - supplemental math course
AVID
Art
Music
Industrial Technology
Computer Literacy
Health/Physical Education
Family/Consumer Science
Other: Dance, Theatre, etc.

For promotion, students must pass English Language Arts and Mathematics, two (2) additional core academic subjects and two (2) enrichment courses each year. Students cannot fail ELA and Mathematics in grade 7 and grade 8 and pass to grade 9.

Academic Dishonesty

Cheating, plagiarism and forgery are considered to be academic dishonesty. For any work containing any information improperly submitted as one's own, or completed by means of academic dishonesty or deception, including information obtained from the Internet and not properly cited, students will receive appropriate consequences which may include suspension and require that the student redo the assignment for credit. Violation of this policy may result in discipline ranging from a student receiving a failing grade for the assignment to suspension from school.

Attendance Policy

Overview:

In accordance to the Massachusetts General Laws, the Worcester Public Schools recognizes and enforces that every child, between the ages of six and sixteen, must attend school. School personnel and parents/guardians must work together to ensure that all students, Pre-Kindergarten through grade 12, attend school every day, and on time, during the 180-day pupil calendar.

The Worcester Public Schools view consistent, daily attendance as a priority in student achievement and success. Students' academic, social and emotional growth and development depend upon students' daily attendance, classroom participation and exposure to high quality teaching and learning. The daily interactions among teachers and students are irreplaceable components of the learning experience. In addition, daily attendance and punctuality habits acquired during schooling are essential skills in the adulthood life, and it begins as early as the pre-school years.

Excused Absences:

The following is a list of absences which will not count toward retention or loss of credit:

1. **Religious holy days:** The student's religion must require that the student does not attend school on the specific holy day or that school attendance would interfere with required religious observances. The parent/guardian must notify the school in writing within two (2) school days before or after the absence.
2. **Death in the immediate family:** Up to five (5) consecutive days for bereavement due to the death of a member of the student's immediate family: mother, father, sister, and brother. One (1) day to attend the funeral of grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces or nephews. The parent/guardian must notify the school in writing within five (5) school days after the absence(s) occurred.
3. **Court appearance:** The student must have been subpoenaed to appear in a court of law. The student must be a witness, plaintiff, or defendant in a court proceeding. Within five (5) school days before or after the required court appearance, the parent/guardian must notify the school in writing and provide documentation from the court.

4. **Hospitalization:** The parent/guardian must submit to the school release papers from the hospital documenting the student's hospitalization.
5. **Illness:** The parent/guardian must submit to the school medical documentation of the illness that requires the student's exclusion from school. The principal has the right to require and seek additional medical opinions and diagnosis regarding a student's absence(s) due to illness.

Students who will be out of school for more than fourteen consecutive days because of illness or hospitalization will receive home or hospital instruction (for more information, refer to Home Instruction).

Family vacations taken during school time are absences. Families should plan their vacations during the regularly scheduled vacations. Non-emergency appointments should be scheduled after school hours.

Tardiness and Dismissal:

A student who is not in his/her assigned seat at the start of homeroom or class is tardy.

If a student starts school after half of the academic day has passed, then that student will be marked absent from school for that day. The student may not participate in any school activity (e.g., sports, dances, prom) during the rest of that day.

If a student leaves school before half of the academic day has passed, then that student will be marked absent from school for that day. The student may not participate in any school activity (e.g., sports, dances, prom) during the rest of that day.

Each principal will meet with the parent/guardian and school's faculty to develop and institute an intervention plan for students who reach 10 tardies and/or dismissals.

Faculty Responsibility

Faculty members will record all absences, tardiness, and dismissals of students from their assigned classes. As students may miss some classes more frequently than others, each faculty member will be responsible for notifying the administration on occasions when notification must be sent to a parent or guardian.

Attendance Notification to Students and their Parents/Guardians:

Parents and guardians are notified by phone on a daily basis if their child is absent. After five unexcused absences, the principal (or his/her designee) will notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) in writing and, when appropriate, request a meeting to discuss the student's attendance. Parents will continue to receive written notification of their child's attendance at every 5th absence from school.

Parents and guardians will also receive attendance information through:

1. Interim progress reports (at five weeks into each marking period)
2. Report cards (every ten weeks). The secondary report cards show students' absences from each class and students' total absences from school

Retention and/or Loss of Credit:

Fourteen absences or more per school year may result in retention and/or loss of credit.

Absences accumulated due to out-of-school suspensions do not count towards a loss of academic credit. Students who are absent because of out-of-school suspensions must make up missed assignments, including homework and test(s).

The principal can determine that other extenuating circumstances justify absences which do not merit a loss of academic credit.

Truancy

When a student accumulates excessive unexcused absences, the principal (or his/her designee) may seek assistance from the Juvenile Court and/or the Department of Children and Families to resolve attendance matters.

High School Attendance and Academic Credit Policy

1. Attendance required to earn credit
 - A student who has enrolled in a class is expected to be present each time the course is in session. For the 2014-15 school year, high school students will not receive credit when they exceed the following number of absences:
 - Fourteen (14) unexcused class absences per one-credit course
 - Seven (7) unexcused class absences for courses less than one credit
2. Administrative Procedure for Loss of Credit
 - In any case where a student fails to receive credit for any course, the final course grade will still be recorded on that student's permanent record card.
 - In the case where no credit is received for a course required for graduation (e.g., American History) and in which a passing grade has been received, it is required that the course be repeated.
 - A minimum of twenty-four (24) credits is required to graduate.
3. Attendance Buyback Program
 - During the 2014-15 school year, eligible high school students will be able to voluntarily participate in an Attendance Buyback Program. Through this program, students can make up the credit(s) which they lost due to excessive absences. To be eligible for the Attendance Buyback Program, students must have passed a course and must have between 15 and 22 absences. Eligible students who complete additional hours of instruction on Saturday mornings can then receive full credit for the course. Students will not be able to change their passing grade for their course. Eligible students who are interested in this program, should contact their high school guidance counselor for additional information.
4. Appeal Procedure
 - The following areas may be considered in the appeal process:
 - Documented illness
 - Mandated school-sponsored activities
 - School-sponsored field trips

Alternative Education Programs

Home tutoring assigned by the school

- Appeals for waiver of the policy will be heard by the Principal or his/her designee.
- The parent/guardian may appeal an adverse decision by the Principal or his/her designee to the Quadrant Manager
- The parent/guardian may appeal an adverse decision by the Quadrant Manager to the Superintendent
- The parent/guardian may appeal an adverse decision by the Superintendent of Schools to the School Committee. Appeals to the School Committee must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent, who will place the parent's or guardian's appeal on the School Committee agenda for the next regular meeting. The parent or guardian is to be notified of the date, time and place of the School Committee meeting.

Note: Confirmed class cuts and confirmed truancy cannot be appealed.

Policy Regarding Televised Broadcasts

Many times Worcester Public Schools extra curricular activities and programs are broadcast on Channel 11 WEA-TV and participants may be shown in these broadcasts. Re-broadcasts of all programs may be made throughout the school year at unannounced times.

Internet Safety and Acceptable Use Policy

Purpose

The Worcester Public Schools recognize the value of computer and other electronic resources to improve student learning and enhance the administration and operation of its schools. Worcester Public Schools encourages the responsible use of computers; computer networks, including the internet; and other electronic resources in support of the mission and goals of our district.

It is the policy of the Worcester Public Schools to: (a) prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)]. The Worcester Public School system certifies that its schools have adopted and are enforcing Internet safety policies as part of Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act. Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) as amended in the Broadband Data Improvement Act S. 1492 to include educating minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyber bullying awareness and response. The district has adopted curriculum to remain in compliance with the most recent FCC Report and order FCC 11-125.

Terms of Agreement

In order to use networked and Internet resources, all students and parents/guardians must sign and return the signature page as contained on the back cover of the Policies Handbook, and those under age 18 must obtain parental permission.

Internet Safety

The Worcester Public Schools is in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA). The Worcester Public Schools will comply with any additional state and federal regulations that pertain to technology use within the district and through use of the Worcester Public Schools District network infrastructure and servers that is forthcoming from the local, state and federal regulatory agencies.

A third party filtering system is in place that prevents accessing web pages that are 1) obscene, 2) pornographic, or 3) deemed harmful to minors. The district will monitor the online activities of users. The staff and students are advised never to access, keep or send anything that they would not want made public. While some pages are blocked by human intervention, other sites are blocked based on an algorithm that attempts to discern inappropriate sites. Best efforts are made to make the filtering as accurate as possible given the vast number of websites on the Internet. Subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled or, in the case of minors, minimized only for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

Inappropriate Network Usage

Staff and students should be aware that some material accessible via the Internet might contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate or potentially offensive. The Internet is to be used for constructive educational purposes only. Drives and files may be reviewed by network administrators occasionally to maintain system integrity.

To the extent practical, steps shall be taken to promote the safety and security of users of the Worcester Public Schools online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications.

Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes: a) unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking," and other unlawful activities; and b) unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.

Unacceptable Uses

The activities listed below are not permitted. The list of activities described below is not meant to be comprehensive. The Worcester Public Schools reserves the right to make judgments both as to what constitutes inappropriate behavior and the consequences that apply.

- Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
- Using obscene language
- Giving personal information, such as complete name, phone number, address or identifiable photo without permission from teacher and parent or guardian
- Harassing, insulting or attacking others (cyber-bullying)

- Damaging or modifying computers, computer systems or network resources, whether physically or through use of software means such as deletion, formatting, viruses, hacking, phishing, cracking
- Attempting to bypass the web content filter through proxy sites or other means
- Violating copyright laws
- Using others' passwords
- Trespassing in others' folders, work or files
- Intentionally wasting limited resources
- Installing any software, shareware or freeware without Principal approval and installation by on-site contact person
- Employing the network for commercial purposes, financial gain or fraud
- The network, wired and wireless, is for educational uses only. Any non Worcester Public Schools device on the Worcester Public Schools network shall be used for educational purposes only. Non educational use is prohibited.

Penalties

Violation of any terms set forth in this policy may result in the loss of Worcester Public Schools computer network privileges, disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action.

Electronic Messaging Guidelines

Note: Worcester Public Schools' teaching staff is not contractually obligated to check email or other electronic messaging systems. Please contact your child's teacher personally to confirm whether they utilize these systems. When using email, please follow these important guidelines: Email is not confidential. Teachers will not respond via email to discuss contentious, emotional, or highly confidential issues. These issues are to be handled by phone or personal contact. Emails should be used for general information that is non-vital. For example, do not use email to inform a teacher that your child is not to go home on the bus. A teacher may not read the message in time. A phone call should be made to make sure your message is clearly received.

Adoption

The School Committee of the Worcester Public Schools adopted this Internet Safety and Acceptable Use Policy at a public meeting following normal public notice on May 21, 2009. This amended policy was adopted by the School Committee of the Worcester Public Schools on June 6, 2013.

Field Trip Policy*

The Worcester Public Schools has adopted a Field Trip Policy that is in compliance with the requirements of Chapter 346 of the Acts of 2002, An Act Relative to Safety of School Sponsored Travel. The policy establishes procedures for school sponsored student travel that is planned between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m., overnight or foreign trips, and over water or air travel.

A copy of the policy is available through the Quadrant Managers' Office.

Cancellation Policy: The Superintendent reserves the right to cancel an approved field trip until the time of departure. In the event of a cancellation, the school system is not responsible for any expenses incurred.

***The Worcester Public Schools does not condone or take responsibility for privately funded trips without authorization of the school principal.**

Honor Roll Policy - High School

Honor roll status in the Worcester Public Schools is determined by the individual student's average in all major subject areas. A major subject is defined as a course that yields a minimum of 1.00 unit of credit.

Eligibility

First Honors is defined as those students who receive grades of 90 or above in all major subjects.

Second Honors is defined as those students who receive grades of 80 or above in all major subjects.

Note: There is no weighting relative to courses of study.

Honor Roll Policy - Middle School

Honor roll status in the Worcester Public Schools is determined by the individual student's average in all major subject areas and enrichments. A major subject is defined as a full year course or the equivalent thereof.

Eligibility

First Honors is defined as those students who receive grades of 90 or above in all major subjects and A's in conduct and effort in all subjects including enrichments.

Second Honors is defined as those students who receive grades of 80 or above in all major subjects and A's and B's in conduct and effort in all subjects including enrichments.

Note: There is no weighting relative to courses of study.

Standardized Testing

Throughout their education, students will take selected standardized tests. A standardized test is one that is administered under uniform and controlled conditions. This ensures that any difference in scores (pre- and post-results, between students, etc.) reflect differences in knowledge and skills, rather than differences in unrelated factors such as test conditions. These tests are one of many ways educators assess what students know and can do. This can include paper-based or computed-based tests, oral and written tasks, classroom observations and portfolios of student work. These measures are used to monitor progress, refine instructional practices and improve our capacity to ensure that all students reach and exceed grade level expectations and graduate from the Worcester Public Schools career and/or college ready. Students whose parents opt them out of state or district standardized assessments will not be academically penalized or face disciplinary action except as prohibited by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or by the United States.

District Testing

Standardized instruments commonly used in the district include:

- *Early Screening Inventory (ESI-R; K)*: a brief developmental screening instrument designed to be individually administered to children entering kindergarten
- *Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy (DIBELS NEXT; K-1)*: individually-administered fluency measures used to regularly monitor the development of early literacy and early reading skills. The instrument is generally used in kindergarten, but may be administered to students in other grades.
- *Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (Benchmark; K-8)*: a formative assessment that measures decoding, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension skills. This instrument may be administered to students in kindergarten through 8th grade, but is predominantly used in grades 1 and 2
- *Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)*: adaptive computer-based tests in mathematics and reading administered in a group setting
 - o *Goal areas in Reading*: (1) Literature; Information Text; (2) Foundational Skills and Vocabulary Acquisition and Use; (3) Writing: Purposes, Language Plan, Develop, Edit; (4) Language: Grammar and Usage; and (5) Language: Capitalization, Punctuation, Spelling
 - o *Goal areas in Mathematics*:
 - *Grades 2-5*: (1) Operations and Algebraic Thinking; (2) Number and Operations in Base Ten; (3) Number and Operations-Fractions; (4) Measurement and Data; and (5) Geometry
 - *Grades 6+*: (1) Algebra Functions, Expressions and Equations; (2) The Real and Complex Number System; (3) Geometry; and (4) Statistics and Probability

Schools may also administer additional common-assessments (i.e. those used across a given grade in a given school or across the district). The use of common instruments across schools supports the application of consistent high standards and learning targets throughout the district. This also ensures that a common set of data is available for all students should a student of the U.S. move within the WPS school system during the year.

State Testing

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)

Students must also participate in a number of state assessments as part of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), fulfilling the requirements of the Education Reform Law of 1993 and the federal No Child Left Behind law. The MCAS is the Commonwealth's statewide assessment program for students educated with public funds. MCAS tests measure the performance of students, schools, and districts on the academic learning standards in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. All students, including students with disabilities and limited English proficient students, are required to participate in all MCAS tests scheduled for their grade. Results are reported for individual students, schools, and districts according to four performance levels defined by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education:

- Advanced/Above Proficient (260-280)
- Proficient (240-258)
- Needs Improvement (220-238)
- Warning/Failing (200-218)

In fulfillment of state requirements, students are tested in the following areas:

English Language Arts/Reading (Grades 3-8, 10) includes multiple-choice, open response and short response items (grade 3 only).

English Language Arts - Composition (Grades 4, 7, 10) includes writing prompts that require students to respond by creating a written composition.

Mathematics (Grades 3-8, 10) includes multiple-choice, open response and short answer items.

Science, Engineering and Technology (Grades 5, 8, 9-12) tests include multiple choice and open response items. High school tests administered in grades 9-12 include biology, chemistry, introductory physics and technology and engineering.

A small number of students “with the most significant disabilities who are unable to take the standard MCAS tests even with accommodations” may participate on the MCAS Alternate Assessment (Grades 3-10) in lieu of regular MCAS assessments. The MCAS Alternate Assessment consists of a portfolio of materials collected by the teacher and student, including work samples, instructional data, videotapes and other supporting information.

During the 2014-15 school year, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education will continue to implement a two-year transition plan and pilot of a potential new state test (i.e., PARCC). At the end of these two years (i.e., in 2015-2016), the state will determine whether to continue with MCAS or to implement PARCC.

Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners (ACCESS for ELLs)

Students with limited English language proficiency will also be administered the Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners assessment (ACCESS for ELLs; Grades K-12). ACCESS for ELLs will be administered to Kindergarten through 12th graders who have been identified as English language learners (ELLs). Results will be used to monitor students' progress in acquiring academic English. Scores are reported for each of the four language domains (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing) and in several composite scores (Oral Language, Literacy, Comprehension, Overall Proficiency).

Work Sampling System (WSS)

Schools also administer the Work Sampling System (WSS; also referred to as the Massachusetts Kindergarten Entry Assessment) to all kindergartners. WSS consists of 3 interrelated elements: observational checklists, portfolios of student work and summary reports. Portfolio samples are gathered throughout the year and

help demonstrate progress through concrete illustrations of the child's thinking. Developmental guidelines and checklists cover seven major curriculum areas: personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematical thinking, scientific thinking, social studies, the arts, and physical development and health. This provides structure to teacher observations of students, aids in systematic data collection to monitor student progress, and helps to identify what children are learning, what they are beginning to master and what they still need to work on.

Testing Accommodations

Students with IEP or 504 plans may receive test accommodation(s) during testing. A test accommodation is a change in the way a test is administered or in the way a student responds to testing. Test accommodations are intended to offset the effects of a disability that may prevent student access to test content and are used to ensure that all students have the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and skills on statewide assessments.

Additional High School Tests

To monitor student progress toward career and college readiness, students may also participate in the following in grades 9–12:

Advanced Placement (AP) Exams (AP exams - Grades 9-12) are end of year assessments that students may complete as part of the Advanced Placement program. Assessment formats will vary by subject and may include multiple choice items, free response items or require a student to put together a portfolio of their work. Students who earn qualifying scores (generally 3 or above, though actual qualifying scores can vary by subject and higher education institution) may have an opportunity to earn college-level credit.

Preliminary SAT (PSAT – Grades 10-11) is offered to all grade 10 students in the Worcester Public Schools at no cost, though students may also take this test in grade 11. The PSAT is a paper-based test and is used to prepare students for the SAT, enter competitions for scholarships (e.g. National Merit Scholarship), and assess their academic skills necessary for college-level work. Assessed skills include reading, math reasoning, critical thinking and writing.

SAT (Grades 11-12) is a paper-based standardized college entrance test to help colleges and universities identify potential candidates for admission and to connect students with educational opportunities beyond high school. Three scores in critical reading, mathematics, and writing are reported on a 200 to 800 point scale.

SAT Subject Tests (Grades 11-12) are taken by students to demonstrate to colleges their mastery of specific subjects such as English, history, mathematics, science, and foreign languages. Content of each test is not based on any one approach or curriculum but rather evolves to reflect current trends in high school course work.

Accuplacer is a suite of computer adaptive assessments offered by local higher education institutions that provide information about a test taker's academic skills to determine if they would benefit from developmental classes before beginning college level work. Students in the Worcester Public Schools may be asked to complete Accuplacer tests to be eligible for dual enrollment in local higher education institutions.

For Information on Testing

During the school year, students may also participate in additional testing programs and activities (e.g. MCAS retests, diagnostic testing). Through school newsletters, and other notices, school staff will notify parents/guardians of these additional testing activities as well as regular testing.

For questions or concerns related to testing procedures and security or for information on your child's performance or participation in testing, please contact your child's principal or teacher. For general questions about assessment or for questions or concerns related to testing procedures and security or for information on your child's performance or participation in testing in the Worcester Public Schools, please contact Maureen Kavanaugh at the Office of Research and Accountability (508) 799-3019 or via email kavanaughm@worc.k12.ma.us. You may also visit the Worcester Public Schools website (<http://www.worcesterschools.org>) for information on testing. Information from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education concerning state assessments can also be found online at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/> or by contacting the State Office of Student Assessment at mcas@doe.mass.edu or by phone at (781) 338-3625.

MCAS Appeals Processes

The Worcester Public Schools carries out the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's appeal processes for regular and special education high school students who have not passed MCAS. The MCAS Performance Appeals process was established in 2002 to provide eligible high school students who have been unable to pass the required MCAS tests an additional opportunity to demonstrate through their course work that they meet or exceed the state's Competency Determination (CD) standard in order to earn a high school diploma. There are specific eligibility requirements relative to student achievement in English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science and Technology/Engineering, attendance and participation in tutorial and remediation efforts. Further information on these processes is available through your child's school or the Office of Research and Accountability (508-799-3060). Information from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education concerning MCAS appeals can also be found online at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcasappeals/>.

High School Graduation Requirements

In order to graduate, all students must:

- Receive a proficient score of 240 or above on both the English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics sections of the Grade 10 Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) or receive a passing score of 220 on both the ELA and Mathematics sections of the MCAS test and complete an Educational Proficiency Plan (EPP), in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and

Secondary Education (DESE).

- Receive a passing score of 220 on a science section of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System in one of the following: Biology, Chemistry, Engineering/Technology or Physics.
- Earn twenty-four (24) credits.
- Worcester Technical High School students must also complete the minimum required credits and required graduation subjects established for them by the School Committee.

To receive a diploma with a specific high school name, a student must meet the Worcester Public Schools graduation requirements which must include a minimum of 10 credits earned from that particular high school. If a student has earned less than 10 credits but meets the Worcester Public Schools graduation requirements, the student will be eligible to receive a generic Worcester Public School Diploma.

Graduation Course Requirements

Grade 9 beginning 2013-14

- 4 credits English
 - 4 credits Mathematics
 - 3 credits Science and Technology/Engineering
 - 3 credits History/Social Science (including 1 credit World History and 2 credits U.S. History)
 - 2 credits Foreign Language (of the same language)
 - 1 credit Arts
 - 5 credits additional core courses
- Additionally, students must complete a physical education course each year

Grades 10, 11 & 12 students enrolled prior to 2013-14

- 4 credits English
- 3 credits Mathematics
- 3 credits Science and Technology/Engineering
- 3 credits Social Studies (includes 2 credits of U.S. History)
- ½ credit Health
- 1 credit Physical Education

1. Beginning with students who entered the 9th grade in September 2013, the High School Graduation Requirements were replaced by the Mass Core requirements.
2. Students who successfully complete Algebra in grade 8 have the option of receiving one (1) high school credit that will be recorded on their high school transcript. (Massachusetts college admissions accept Grade 8 College Preparatory Courses, provided that the student successfully completes the next level course with a grade of “C” or better). Students electing to take Algebra I in high school will not receive credit for Algebra taken in grade 8. Students who have earned a credit for 8th grade Algebra must complete 4 credits of Mathematics during their high school years.
3. Students who successfully complete the second course of a Foreign Language in grade 8 have the option of receiving one (1) high school credit that will be recorded on their high school transcript. (Massachusetts College admissions accept Grade 8 College Preparatory courses, provided that the student successfully completes the next level course with a grade

of “C” or better). Students electing to take the first course of a Foreign Language in high school will not receive credit for the course taken in grade 8.

4. The intent of awarding credits for College Preparatory courses taken in grade 8 is so that students can have additional learning opportunities while in high school. These additional opportunities include but are not limited to Advanced Placement, Dual Enrollment, Online, Service Learning and Work-based learning courses. All students must complete 24 credits of coursework while in high school in addition to fulfilling the other graduation requirements as per the policy handbook.

Massachusetts State College and University Minimum Required Courses for Admission

English 4 courses
Mathematics 3 courses (Algebra I & II and Geometry or Trigonometry or comparable coursework)
Sciences 3 courses (including two with laboratory work)
Social Sciences 2 courses (including one in U.S. History)
Foreign Language 2 courses (in the same language)*
Electives 2 courses (from the above subjects or from the Arts & Humanities or Computer Science)

Advanced Placement Policy

Advanced Placement courses provide students with unique learning experiences that help ensure college success. Students engage in intense discussions, solve problems collaboratively, and learn to write clearly and persuasively, while developing time management skills, discipline and study habits. Students who achieve a score of 3, 4, or 5 on the Advanced Placement Exam may earn college credit from **many** four-year colleges in the US. Worcester Public Schools offers over 20 Advanced Placement Courses in on-site, community-based or virtual learning settings.

Recommendations for Advanced Placement Enrollment

Students who are interested in enrolling in Advanced Placement Courses should discuss readiness for this challenging learning opportunity with their parents, teachers and guidance counselors.

The following indicators should be considered together when assessing a student’s readiness. One indicator is not more valuable than another in determining readiness.

- AP Potential using PSAT results
- Motivation and interest
- Course expectations and course work
- Prior grades in the same-discipline courses
- The number of same-discipline courses taken

Teachers may assign work to students during the summer to help prepare them for the course. Summer course work supports students’ preparation, but it is not required as a component of the student’s grade; teachers may waive this requirement for individual students when necessary.

Advanced Placement Exams

Students are responsible for costs for Advanced Placement Exams. The range of cost for one Advanced Placement Exam is between \$86.00 and \$90.00. Scholarships and reduced fees are available for eligible students. School guidance counselors can provide additional information. Students must take the Advanced Placement Examination in their course in order to receive Advanced Placement credit for the course. Students who do not take the Advanced Placement Examination, but pass the course, shall receive honors credit for the course.

Class Rank Grade Point Average

Class rank is computed at the end of the 6th semester, using major subjects only. The official class rank will be recomputed at the end of the first marking period senior year for supplemental college admissions purposes. Class rank will be recomputed at the end of the third marking period senior year for the purpose of determining the valedictorian and other graduation speakers. The student grades are weighted as follows:

Average	A.P.	Honors	College
100-99	5.3	4.8	4.3
98-97	5.2	4.7	4.2
96	5.1	4.6	4.1
95-94	5.0	4.5	4.0
93	4.9	4.4	3.9
92	4.8	4.3	3.8
91	4.7	4.2	3.7
90	4.6	4.1	3.6
89	4.4	3.9	3.4
88	4.3	3.8	3.3
87	4.2	3.7	3.2
86	4.1	3.6	3.1
85	4.0	3.5	3.0
84	3.9	3.4	2.9
83	3.8	3.3	2.8
82	3.7	3.2	2.7
81	3.6	3.1	2.6
80	3.4	2.9	2.4
79	3.3	2.8	2.3
78	3.2	2.7	2.2
77	3.1	2.6	2.1
76	3.0	2.5	2.0
75	2.9	2.4	1.9
74	2.8	2.3	1.8
73	2.7	2.2	1.7
72	2.6	2.1	1.6
71	2.4	1.9	1.4
70	2.3	1.8	1.3
69	2.2	1.7	1.2
68	2.1	1.6	1.1
67	1.9	1.4	0.9
66	1.8	1.3	0.8
65	1.7	1.2	0.7
64-0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Marking System

A=100-90 B=89-80 C=79-70 D=69-65 F=64-0

College Courses for High School Students

High school students in the Worcester Public Schools who wish to pursue advanced or specialized courses beyond those offered in their high schools may take courses at these area colleges:

Anna Maria College
Assumption College
Becker College
Clark University

College of the Holy Cross
Quinsigamond Community College
Worcester Polytechnic Institute*
Worcester State University

*Worcester Polytechnic Institute offers courses at reduced tuition to high school students.

With a Guidance Counselor's recommendation and approval by the college/university, students may take one college course per semester as agreed upon by the Worcester Public Schools and the individual college/university. Called *Dual Enrollment*, students receive high school *and* free college credit from Assumption College, Becker College, Clark University, and for college-level courses at Quinsigamond Community College and Worcester State University. For GPA computation, Worcester Public Schools students will receive the same weight as an A.P. course for each completed college course.

GENERAL SCHOOL ISSUES

Delayed School Opening/Early Dismissal/School Cancellation Policy

The School Administration will exercise one of the following options when weather conditions dictate a change in the normal opening of the school day:

- Cancellation of school
- Delay of one hour in the opening of school
- Delay of two hours in the opening of school
- If a delay is in effect, a.m. preschool will be cancelled, p.m. preschool will be held.

Delayed AM School Opening

If there is a one-hour delay in the opening of school, all procedures now in place will be delayed by one hour. A two-hour delay requires that all procedures in place be delayed by two hours. These procedures include:

- reporting time of pupils
- pick up time of all bus routes (i.e.: If a bus normally picks up a child at 7:15 a.m. in a one-hour delay it would be 8:15 a.m. If a bus normally picks up a child at 7:15 a.m., in a two-hour delay it would be 9:15 a.m.)

Early Dismissal

***Please note.** When schools are dismissed early all after-school programs are canceled.

The School Administration may implement the following steps during adverse weather conditions affecting school dismissal:

Step 1 - Tier 1 Schools will be dismissed at **12:45 p.m.**

Alternative School
 Burncoat High School
 Burncoat Middle School
 Doherty Memorial High School
 Holy Name
 North High School
 St. Peter-Marian High School
 South High Community School
 The Gerald Creamer Center
 University Park Campus School
 Woodward Day School
 Woodward Day Satellite
 Worcester East Middle School
 Worcester Technical High School

Step 2 - Tier 2 Schools will be dismissed at **1:25 p.m.**

Canterbury Street Magnet Computer-Based School
 Columbus Park Preparatory Academy
 Lincoln Street School
 Union Hill Preschool
 Vernon Hill School

Step 3 - Tier 3 School will be dismissed at **1:25 p.m.**

Challenge and Reach Academies
 Norrback Avenue School

Step 4 - Tier 4 Schools will be dismissed at **1:25 p.m.**

Belmont Street Community School
 Claremont Academy
 Goddard School of Science and Technology
 Roosevelt School
 Woodland Academy

Step 5 - Tier 5 Schools will be dismissed at their **regular time (2:50 p.m.)**

Bancroft School
 Our Lady of the Angels School

Step 6 - Tier 6 Schools will be dismissed at **2:00 p.m.**

Chandler Magnet School
 Clark Street Developmental Learning School
 Elm Park Community School
 Flagg Street School
 Grafton Street School
 Heard Street School
 Lake View School
 May Street School
 McGrath Elementary School
 Midland Street School
 New Citizens Center Elementary
 Quinsigamond School
 Rice Square School
 Tatnuck Magnet School
 Thorndyke Road School
 Wawecus Road School
 Worcester Arts Magnet School

Step 7 - Tier 7 Schools will be dismissed at their **regular time (3:10 p.m.)**

Forest Grove Middle School
 Sullivan Middle School

Step 8 - Tier 8 Schools will be dismissed at their **regular time (3:10 p.m.)**

Alhuda Academy (**3:15 p.m.**)
 Gates Lane School of International Studies
 Nelson Place School
 St. Peter Central Catholic Elementary School
 Venerini Academy
 West Tatnuck School
 Yeshiva Academy

Special Schedule:

Burncoat Street Preparatory School	3:25 p.m. Regular Time
Chandler Elementary Community School	3:25 p.m. Regular Time
City View School	4:10 p.m. Regular Time
Head Start	11:45 a.m.
Jacob Hiatt Magnet School	3:35 p.m. Regular Time
New Citizens Center Secondary	1:30 p.m.
Seven Hills Charter School	4:15 p.m. Regular Time
Union Hill K-6	3:25 p.m. Regular Time

No School/Delayed School Opening/Early Dismissal Announcements

Announcements of no school, a delay in the opening of school, or early dismissal from school will be made on the following radio and television stations:

WTAG 580 AM	WORC 1310 AM	WBZ 1030 AM
WXLO 104.5 FM	WSRS 96.1 FM	WCUW 93.1 FM*
WHDH-TV Channel 7	WCVB-TV Channel 5	WBZ-TV Channel 4

*This announcement is broadcast in Spanish between the hours of 5:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. on WCUW FM 93.1.

Radio stations have requested that students and parents/guardians refrain from calling to make inquiries as to the status of school.

In addition, information about no school, a delay in the opening of school and early dismissal from school will be posted on the WPS Website and an automated phone message will be sent to parents/guardians.

Policy Statement and Procedural Guidelines for Recess

Policy Statement

Quality education requires a healthy learning environment that provides students (K-6) with minimally a total of 30 minutes of recess over the course of the day. The 30 minutes can be divided into shorter breaks and shall include a break at lunch. Recess is designed for the purpose of engaging students in developmentally appropriate activity which promotes learning, social development, and physical health. Structured/unstructured recess shall rarely be taken away from students as a form of punishment/consequences. Neither shall severe exercise be used as a form of punishment/consequences for students. This time shall not be a substitute for physical education.

The School Principal is responsible for communicating, applying, maintaining, and evaluating the Recess Policy. The School Principal shall review the Recess Policy with the members of the School Site Council annually and submit results of that review to the Chief Academic Officer in May of each year.

Procedural Guidelines

Recess shall occur outside, weather permitting, **or unless circumstances dictate otherwise for a limited period.** Students shall be supervised by adult, staff members, parents, or school learning community volunteers. The school principal shall insure that adults receive appropriate training to support students and intended outcomes. The school principal shall insure that students are provided with developmentally appropriate equipment. Public spaces in proximity to the school, such as parks and public playgrounds may be appropriate substitutions for play space at the school.

The School Committee shall equitably support budgetary requirements needed for recess equipment for all elementary schools. This allocation will be in addition to the per pupil allocation provided to each school. Each school principal shall have autonomy to expend allocations to support the needs of students for recess.

PARENTS AND COMMUNITY

Parent Advisory Councils

School Parent Advisory Council

The Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993, Section 59C, requires the establishment of school councils in all schools, comprised of parents/guardians of students attending the school who shall be selected by the parents/guardians of students attending the school, teachers, students and community representatives and co-chaired by school principals. The council should be broadly representative of the racial and ethnic diversity of the school building and community. The council will meet with the principal and assist in identifying the educational needs of students, reviewing the annual school budget and in formulating a school improvement plan. For additional information please contact your child's school principal.

Special Education Parent Advisory Council

Parents/guardians of special education students meet monthly to discuss programs, concerns and issues of the special needs children. For more information call (508) 799-3093.

Citywide Parent Planning Advisory Council (CPPAC)

Each school is represented by two (2) parent members selected by their parent group and principals. Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month. The objectives of the CPPAC are:

1. To involve parents/guardians in addressing relevant issues in the Worcester Public Schools including integration and changing (increasing/decreasing) enrollment.

2. To provide an open forum for discussion between parents/guardians and administrators regarding school issues and voted policies.
3. To give its members the responsibility of keeping their respective schools informed.

Title I Parent Advisory Council

The Title I Parent Advisory Council ensures effective involvement of all parents/guardians of Title I schools in the joint development of the school/family compact and in the planning and reviewing of supplemental supports and programs under Title I funds. Information regarding the Title I Parent Advisory Council will be posted on the Worcester Public Schools' website.

Opportunities for Parent/Guardian Support

- **Worcester Family Partnership**

Worcester families with children ages 0 – 8 years

Play groups, parent groups and workshops, Parent Child Home Visiting Program, Ages and Stages Child Screenings and Child Development information
130 Leeds Street

Old Greendale School

Worcester, MA 01606

Contact: Beth Vietze (508) 799-3136

- **PPAL Central MA Chapter (Parent/Professional Advocacy League)**

Support/information for families who have children with emotional, behavioral and mental health needs.

Contact: Meri Viano, Mary Lambert (508) 767-9PAL (9725)

- **Southeast Asian Coalition of Central Mass**

Educational and multi-service center for Asian families.

Southeast Asian Center of Worcester,

484 Main Street, Suite 400

Worcester, MA 01608

Contact: Anh V. Sawyer (508) 791-4373

- **Worcester Community Connections Coalition (WCCC)**

484 Main Street, Suite 200

Worcester, MA 01608

Contact: Ann Bureau: (508) 754-1176 X126

- **The Latino Education Institute**

Educational services for Latino students and their families.

Located at Worcester State University, 537 Chandler Street,

Worcester, MA 01602

Contact: Kathy Orenge (508) 798-6507

- **Parental Stress Line**

A 24-hour helpline for parents/guardians who want to talk about problems they are having with their children. Calls are anonymous and confidential.

1-800-632-8188

- **Community Healthlink** (formerly Worcester Youth Guidance Center)
Youth and Family Services
Counseling for youngsters and parents, as well as family therapy.
275 Belmont Street
Worcester, MA 01604
Phone: (508) 791-3261

Volunteer Staff Regulations

Application Process

All school volunteers must fill out a volunteer application. One copy must be kept in the school office and one copy must be sent to the Volunteer Office. This applies to any individual who volunteers in a building. All volunteers must go through a screening process prior to beginning service.

Screening Process

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has mandated that all school volunteers must complete the CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) screening process. This process must be completed before the volunteer begins in any school or program. As the CORI check can take several weeks, all volunteers are encouraged to complete the CORI form as soon as possible. Please be aware that CORI checks expire every three years and need to be resubmitted to the Human Resource Office.

Placement of Volunteers

When a volunteer contacts the Volunteer Office directly and wants to work as a school volunteer, he/she will be placed at a school that has submitted a formal **Request for Volunteers** form.

The Volunteer Office will contact the building principal or his/her designee to receive approval prior to placing any volunteer in the school.

Parent/guardian volunteers who want to volunteer in their child's school must follow the above guidelines.

Volunteer Organizations

There have been a number of initiatives in the community to strengthen school volunteer programs.

Some of these include:

- State Employees Voluntary Leave Services Program
- Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (R.S.V.P.)
- Transitional Assistance Program (Welfare Office)

These types of initiatives are very specific about requirements for participation. Volunteers that are part of these or similar programs need to contact the Volunteer Office to attend an orientation session and obtain additional paperwork before volunteering in any of the schools. The CORI check process is a routine part of their screening process.

Parent Volunteers who bring Children

Some parent/guardian volunteers have come to school to perform a volunteer assignment and have brought young children with them. Each principal is responsible for developing a building policy in conjunction with his/her School Council regarding this issue.

If your building does allow younger children to accompany parent/guardian volunteers, these parents/guardians must perform tasks that are safe and harmless to young children.

These volunteers must not operate machinery such as:

- paper cutters
- duplicating machines

Many parent groups, in the past, have set up Child Care Co-ops within the group for the purpose of allowing parents/guardians to volunteer without having to bring young children with them.

ALL volunteers must sign in at the office. Parent/guardian volunteers must sign in both themselves and any child that accompanies them.

Worcester Public School District Media Policy

Purpose: During the school year, your child may have opportunities to have their work or activities publicized. Examples include, but not limited to: student work published on the district website(s); feature stories about student performances or school-wide events in newspapers or on television (the district's Channel 11 WEA-TV or local/national coverage); and photographs and videos of students "in action" on the website(s) and in local and regional newspapers. Students first names and last initials (example: Paul F.) are used to identify pictures of three or fewer students and student work on the district website(s). When reporters visit the district, they often speak with students and use their full names in covering the story.

General Media Coverage: Throughout the year there may be in-school programs, events or meetings (such as a school-wide assembly or PTA event) that are open to the public and where large group photographs or videotapes will be taken by parents, the media, or school district staff. In these cases, students would not be identified by name. Your consent to these types of group photographs or videotapes is assumed. If you do not want your child photographed or video-taped at these public events, please speak with the principal or event coordinator to insure that your child is excluded from the coverage.

Procedure: Any parent who does not want their student's name, photograph, or work published on the district's website(s), or included in newspaper or television coverage must complete and return the form on the inside back cover of this handbook to the homeroom teacher.

TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

Burncoat	(508) 799-3300
Claremont Academy	(508) 799-3077
Doherty Memorial	(508) 799-3270
North	(508) 799-3370
South High Community	(508) 799-3325
The Gerald Creamer Center	(508) 799-3476
Worcester Technical High School	(508) 799-1940
Alternative	(508) 799-3245
School Age Mothers Program (SAMS)	(508) 856-7373
University Park Campus	(508) 799-3591
Fanning Learning Center	(508) 799-0077

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Burncoat	(508) 799-3390
Claremont Academy	(508) 799-3077
Forest Grove	(508) 799-3420
Sullivan Middle	(508) 799-3350
Worcester East Middle	(508) 799-3430
Fanning Learning Center.....	(508) 799-0077

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Belmont	(508) 799-3588	May	(508) 799-3520
Burncoat	(508) 799-3537	McGrath	(508) 799-3584
Canterbury	(508) 799-3484	Midland	(508) 799-3548
Chandler Elementary	(508) 799-3572	Nelson Place	(508) 799-3506
Chandler Magnet	(508) 799-3452	Norrback	(508) 799-3500
City View	(508) 799-3670	Quinsigamond	(508) 799-3502
Clark	(508) 799-3545	Rice Square	(508) 799-3556
Columbus Park	(508) 799-3490	Roosevelt	(508) 799-3482
Elm Park	(508) 799-3568	Tatnuck	(508) 799-3554
Flagg	(508) 799-3522	Thorndyke	(508) 799-3550
Gates Lane	(508) 799-3488	Union Hill	(508) 799-3600
Goddard School of Science and Technology	(508) 799-3594	University Park Campus School	(508) 799-3591
Grafton	(508) 799-3478	Vernon Hill	(508) 799-3630
Heard	(508) 799-3525	Wawecus	(508) 799-3527
Hiatt	(508) 799-3601	West Tatnuck	(508) 799-3596
Lake View	(508) 799-3536	Woodland Academy ...	(508) 799-3557
Lincoln	(508) 799-3504	Worcester Arts Magnet	(508) 799-3575

Dr. James L. Garvey Parent Information Center ... (508) 799-3299, (508) 799-3068,
..... (508) 799-3069, (508) 799-3450

Dr. James A. Caradonio New Citizen Center (508) 799-3494

MANAGERS' OFFICE

Burncoat/South	(508) 799-3264
Doherty/North	(508) 799-3221

Worcester Public School District Media Policy

Purpose: During the school year, your child may have opportunities to have their work or activities publicized. Examples include, but not limited to: student work published on the district website(s); feature stories about student performances or school-wide events in newspapers or on television (the district's Channel 11 WEA-TV or local/national coverage); and photographs and videos of students "in action" on the website(s) and in local and regional newspapers. Students first names and last initials (example: Paul F.) are used to identify pictures of three or fewer students and student work on the district website(s). When reporters visit the district, they often speak with students and use their full names in covering the story.

General Media Coverage: Throughout the year there may be in-school programs, events or meetings (such as a school-wide assembly or PTA event) that are open to the public and where large group photographs or videotapes will be taken by parents, the media, or school district staff. In these cases, students would not be identified by name. Your consent to these types of group photographs or videotapes is assumed. If you do not want your child photographed or video-taped at these public events, please speak with the principal or event coordinator to insure that your child is excluded from the coverage.

Opt Out Provisions for WPS District Media Policy

Please check only those items that you do not grant permission to.

Publication of Student Work on the Internet

I/We **do not grant** permission for this student's work to be published on the School District Website(s).

Publication of Student First Name, Last Initial and/or Photograph on the Internet

I/We **do not grant** permission for photographs that include this student to be published on the School District Website(s), using the student's first name and last initial to identify him/her.

Interviews and Photographs with Newspapers, Radio, and Television Reporters

I/We **do not grant** permission for this student to be photographed or interviewed by reporters who are covering events in the School District.

***If a box is unchecked and the parent/guardian signs the student handbook, your consent is granted for the full school year. This decision can be changed at any time by contacting your child's school in writing.**

To All Parents and Guardians:

The Worcester Public Schools and the School Committee consider the violation of the Weapons Policy found in this booklet to be a serious matter. Please review the Worcester Public Schools Media Policy on the opposite side of this page. Your signature below confirms that you have reviewed it. Please spend some time discussing these policies, as well as other policies located within this booklet with your children.

The policies in this handbook pertain to student actions both on or off school grounds during school and school-related situations (including transportation to and from school). In addition to the academic year, the policies set forth in the handbook apply to all after-school and summer programs including, but not limited to, Work for Worcester's Youth.

The School Committee requires that all parents/guardians of students in the Worcester Public Schools sign the statement below acknowledging receipt of this handbook and return it to their child's school.

As a parent/guardian of a student within the Worcester Public Schools, I acknowledge receipt of the 2014-15 Policies Handbook for the Worcester Public Schools. The Worcester Public Schools does participate in out-of-district School Choice, but students residing outside of the City can attend the Worcester Public Schools only if they are accepted for enrollment under this program. Unless accepted under this program, I pledge residency in the City of Worcester.

(Student's Name)	(School)

(Parent/Guardian Signature)	(Date)

Worcester Public Schools' students enrolled in secondary schools are also required to sign below, acknowledging receipt of this handbook and knowledge of the policies contained within this handbook.

(Student Signature)	(Date)

2015 – 2016 PROPOSED CHANGES TO POLICY HANDBOOK

PAGE	CHANGE																		
Cover	Change 2014-15 TO 2015-16																		
Inside front cover	Insert 2015-16 calendar																		
i	<p>SCHOOL COMMITTEE</p> <p>Mayor Joseph M. Petty, Chair Dianna L. Biancheria, Vice Chair John L. Foley John F. Monfredo Tracy A. O’Connell Novick Brian A. O’Connell, Esquire Hilda Ramirez</p>																		
ii	<p>Superintendent’s Message First paragraph: change 2014-15 to 2015-16 Second paragraph: Best wishes for a successful 2015-16 school year</p> <p>Directory of Additional or Amended Policies for 2014-15 Change title to read 2015-16 and add additional or amended policies</p>																		
iii, iv	Table of Contents - Revise as necessary																		
2	<p>Immunization Requirements</p> <p>2nd box: change to read</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th align="center">Grades 1-6</th> <th align="center">Grades 7-12</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Hepatitis B</td> <td align="center">3 doses</td> <td align="center">3 doses</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DTaP/DTP/Td/Tdap</td> <td align="center">>4 doses DTaP/DTP or >3 doses TD</td> <td align="center">4 doses DTap/DTP or >3 doses TD; plus 1 dose Tdap</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Polio</td> <td align="center">>3 doses</td> <td align="center">1 dose Tdap >3 doses</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hib</td> <td align="center">NA</td> <td align="center">NA</td> </tr> <tr> <td>MMR</td> <td align="center">2 doses</td> <td align="center">2 doses</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Grades 1-6	Grades 7-12	Hepatitis B	3 doses	3 doses	DTaP/DTP/Td/Tdap	>4 doses DTaP/DTP or >3 doses TD	4 doses DTap/DTP or >3 doses TD; plus 1 dose Tdap	Polio	>3 doses	1 dose Tdap >3 doses	Hib	NA	NA	MMR	2 doses	2 doses
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Hib	NA	NA																	
MMR	2 doses	2 doses																	
2	<p>Registration Policy</p> <p>After (6) Worcester Arts Magnet School. Add: Elementary students residing in the North quadrant are eligible to attend the North quadrant magnet school, Roosevelt School, based on space availability.</p>																		
5	<p>Criteria for Attendance After 7th bullet, add new heading and paragraph:</p> <p>School Choice</p> <p>The Worcester Public Schools participates in the Massachusetts School Choice program. The school choice program allows parents to send their children to schools in communities other than the city or town in which they reside. Enrollment in the School Choice program is based on space availability and approved by the School Committee annually. The parent/guardian is responsible for transportation to the district school.</p> <p>To obtain information regarding the School Choice program, please contact the Parent Information Center (508) 799-3194 or the Quadrant Office (508) 799-3499.</p>																		

5 – 7

Legal Policies

Replace entire section with:

LEGAL POLICIES

DUE PROCESS

The Code of Conduct of the Worcester Public Schools is administered within the framework of the United States Constitution and federal and state laws and regulations with regard to due process for students. The Code of Conduct is intended to be administered for disciplinary infractions that occur on school grounds or at school-sponsored events (on and off school grounds) OR for disciplinary infractions that occur off school grounds but substantially disrupt the educational environment or create a hostile environment at school.

The Worcester Public Schools adheres to the Student Discipline Laws and Regulations as set forth in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 37H, 37 H1/2 and 37 H ¾ and 603 CMR 53.00 et seq.

Section I

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION DUE PROCESS PROCEDURES:

A student may be removed from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for up to ten (10) consecutive school days or up to ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. Students who are placed in in-school suspension shall have the opportunity to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the in-school suspension.

A student who is unable to consistently adhere to acceptable classroom standards in a particular class may be removed from the class permanently and assigned to a different class at the discretion of the principal and/or his/her designee.

Notice of In-School Suspension:

The principal or his/her designee shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student with an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal or his/her designee determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal or his/her designee shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed ten (10) days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal or his/her designee shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension.

On the day of the suspension, the principal or his/her designee shall send written notice (by hand-delivery, certified mail, first class mail or email) to the student and parent/guardian including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent/guardian to a meeting if the meeting has not already occurred. The notice shall be in English and the primary language of the home if another language is identified in the home language survey, or by other means, as appropriate.

Parent/Guardian Meeting:

The principal or his designee shall also invite the parent/guardian to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal or his/her designee is unable to reach the parent/guardian after making and documenting at least (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent/guardian of the in-school suspension.

No Right to Appeal:

The decision of the Principal or his/her designee is the final decision for in-school suspensions not exceeding ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year.

Section II
OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION DUE PROCESS PROCEDURES FOR OFFENSES
UNDER MGL c. 37H 3/4:

Due Process Procedures for Out-of-School Suspensions:

There are two types of out-of-school suspensions, Short-Term Suspensions and Long-Term Suspensions. The principal or his/her designee shall determine the extent of the rights to be afforded the student at a disciplinary hearing based on the anticipated consequences for the disciplinary offense. If the consequence may be long-term suspension from school, the principal or his/her designee shall afford the student, additional rights as described below, in addition to those rights afforded to students who may face a short-term suspension from school. All students facing out-of-school suspension shall have the right to oral and written notice, as described below.

Notice for Any Out-of-School Suspension:

Prior to suspending a student, the Principal or his/her designee will provide the student and the Parent/Guardian oral and written notice of the possible suspension, an opportunity for the student to have a hearing and the opportunity of the Parent/Guardian(s) to participate in the hearing. The notice will be in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English as identified in the home language survey, or by other means of communication where appropriate. The notice will set forth in plain language:

- (a) the disciplinary offense;
- (b) the basis for the charge;
- (c) the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
- (d) the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal or his designee concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent/guardian to attend the hearing;
- (e) the date, time, and location of the hearing;
- (f) the right of the student and the student's parent/guardian to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;
- (g) if the student may be placed on long-term suspension following the hearing with the principal:
 - 1. the rights set forth in 603 CMR 53.08(3)(b) ; and
 - 2. the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.

The principal or his/her designee shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. Prior to conducting a hearing without the parent/guardian present, the principal or his/her designee will document reasonable efforts to include the parent/guardian. The principal or his/her designee is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the principal or his/her designee has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent/guardian in the manner specified by the parent/guardian for emergency notification.

Written notice to the parent/guardian may be made by hand delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, email to an address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian.

Emergency Removal of Student:

Under certain emergency circumstances, it may not be practical for the principal or his/her designee to provide prior oral and written notice before removing a student from school. The principal or his/her designee may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's (or his/her designee's) judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The principal or his/her designee will immediately notify the superintendent in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the principal shall:

- (a) Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, the potential consequences, including potential length of suspension, the opportunity for a hearing including the date/time/location of the hearing, the right to interpreter services, and other rights permitted for students who may be placed on long-term suspension as set forth in 603 CMR. 53.08(3)(b);
- (b) Provide written notice to the student and parent/guardian, including the information described in 603 CMR 53.06(2);
- (c) Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal or his/her designee that complies with 603 CMR 53.08(2) or 53.08(3), as applicable, and the parent/guardian an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent/guardian.
- (d) Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(2)(c) and 53.08(2)(d) or 603 CMR 53.08(3)(c) and 53.08(3)(d), as applicable.

A principal will not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

SHORT-TERM SUSPENSION PROCEDURES UNDER MGL c37H 3/4:

A Short-Term Suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. Any student facing a potential short-term suspension is entitled to a hearing with the Principal or his/her designee with the following process:

Principal Hearing - Short-term Suspension:

- (a) The purpose of the hearing with the principal or his/her designee is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the principal or his/her designee shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts that the principal or his/her designee should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as alternatives to suspension. The principal or his/her designee shall provide the parent/guardian, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.
- (b) Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal or his/her designee shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.
- (c) The principal or his/her designee shall notify the student and parent/guardian of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in 603 CMR 53.13(1). The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.
- (d) If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

No Right to Appeal:

The decision of the Principal or his/her designee is the final decision for short-term out-of-school suspensions not exceeding ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year.

LONG-TERM SUSPENSION PROCEDURES UNDER MGL C. 37 3/4:

A Long-Term Suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, §37 H, or in Massachusetts General laws Chapter 71 § 37H ½, no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than ninety (90) school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed. Any student facing a potential long-term suspension is entitled to a hearing with the Principal or his/her designee with the following process:

Principal Hearing - Long-term Suspension:

(a) The purpose of the hearing with the principal or his/her designee is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the principal or his/her designee shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as alternatives to suspension. The principal or his/her designee shall provide the parent/guardian, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

(b) In addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following additional rights:

1. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
2. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's/guardian's expense;
3. the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so;
4. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
5. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent/guardian requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent/guardian upon request.

(c) The principal or his/her designee shall provide the parent/guardian, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

(d) Based on the evidence, the principal or his/her designee shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The principal or his/her designee shall send the written determination to the student and parent/guardian by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent/guardian. If the principal or his/her designee decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall:

1. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
2. Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
3. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
4. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school;
5. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or designee, but only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English as determined by the home language survey, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language:

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- a. the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent/guardian must file a written notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent/guardian may request and receive from the superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.
- b. If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the suspension takes effect.

Superintendent's Appeal Hearing:

- (1) A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the principal shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or his/her designee.
- (2) The student or parent/guardian shall file a notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent/guardian may request and receive from the superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days. If the appeal is not timely filed, the superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.
- (3) The superintendent or his/her designee shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent/guardian requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the superintendent shall grant the extension.
- (4) The superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent/guardian in the hearing. The superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent/guardian and superintendent to participate. The superintendent shall send written notice to the parent/guardian of the date, time, and location of the hearing.
- (5) The superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent/guardian upon request. The superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent/guardian upon request.
- (6) The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension.
- (7) The superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(3)(c)1 through 5. If the superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal's decision.
- (8) The decision of the superintendent shall be the final decision of the school district, with regard to the suspension.

A parent/guardian conference (re-entry meeting) with the Principal or his/her designee is strongly encouraged before students who are suspended return to school. This conference will be used to promote the engagement of the parents/guardians or guardians in discussions of the student's misconduct and to assist the student in re-engaging with the school community.

Section III

LONG-TERM SUSPENSION/EXPULSION FOR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER MGL c 37H:

The long-term suspension or expulsion of a student from school will be in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section, 37H. The grounds for long term suspension or expulsion include but are not limited to the following:

- I. any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun, a knife, or their facsimile, or anything used in the commission of assault and battery; or a controlled substance as defined in Chapter 94 C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to long-term suspension or expulsion from the school by the principal or his/her designee.

- II. Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to long-term suspension or expulsion from the school or school district by the principal or his/her designee.

- III. Due process for a student who is subject to an expulsion or a long-term suspension as a result of possessing drugs/weapons or assaulting school staff includes:
 - a. A student shall receive written notice before the expulsion or a long-term suspension takes place and written notice of the right to appeal.
 - b. The student shall be given an opportunity for a hearing and the opportunity to present witnesses and evidence. The student may have an attorney at their own expense.
 - c. Following the hearing, the principal or his/her designee may, in his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel the student.
 - d. The student may appeal the expulsion or long-term suspension to the Superintendent provided the appeal is requested in writing, within ten (10) calendar days following the long-term suspension or expulsion.
 - e. At the appeal hearing the student may be represented by an attorney and may present oral and written testimony.
 - f. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of MGL c. 71 Section 37H.
 - g. The Superintendent's decision is final.
 - h. Any student who is suspended or expelled for more than ten (10) consecutive days shall have the opportunity to receive education services and made academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS WITH FELONY COMPLAINT OR CONVICTION UNDER c.37H 1/2:

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71 (§37 H ½), principals have the authority to suspend students charged with a felony and expel or issue a long-term suspension to students convicted or adjudicated of committing a felony if the principal has determined that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Due process for a student who is subject to suspension as a result of a felony charge includes:

- a. The student shall receive written notice before the suspension takes effect and written notice of the right to appeal.
- b. The student shall be given an opportunity to respond to the charges before the suspension takes effect.
- c. The student may appeal the suspension to the Superintendent, provided the appeal is requested in writing within five (5) calendar days following the suspension.
- d. The Superintendent must hold the appeal hearing within three (3) calendar days of the request.
- e. At the appeal hearing the student may be represented by an attorney. The student has the right to present oral or written testimony on his/her behalf.
- f. The Superintendent must render a decision within five (5) calendar days.
- g. The Superintendent's decision is final.
- h. Any student who is suspended or expelled pursuant to this section shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his/her removal.
- i. Any student who is suspended or expelled for more than ten (10) consecutive days shall have the opportunity to receive education services and made academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

	<p>Due process for a student who is subject to an expulsion or a long-term suspension as a result of a felony conviction includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. A student shall receive written notice before the expulsion or a long-term suspension takes place and written notice of the right to appeal. b. The student shall be given an opportunity to respond to the charges. c. The student may appeal the expulsion or long-term suspension to the Superintendent provided the appeal is requested in writing, within five (5) calendar days following the expulsion. d. The Superintendent must hold the appeal hearing within three (3) calendar days of the request. e. At the appeal hearing the student may be represented by an attorney and may present oral and written testimony. f. The Superintendent must render a decision within five (5) calendar days. g. The Superintendent’s decision is final. h. Any student who is suspended or expelled for more than ten (10) consecutive days shall have the opportunity to receive education services and made academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan. <p>Section IV <u>EDUCATION SERVICES AND ACADEMIC PROGRESS UNDER SECTIONS 37H, 37H1/2 AND 37H3/4:</u> Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The principal shall inform the student and parent/guardian of this opportunity in writing when such suspension or expulsion is imposed. Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.</p>
<p>16</p>	<p>Weapons Possession First paragraph, change second to last sentence to read: ...shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars or by imprisonment for not more than two years, or both.</p>
<p>17-18</p>	<p>Education of Homeless Children Replace entire section with:</p> <p>The Worcester Public Schools complies with all requirements of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Subtitle B - Education for Homeless Children and Youth), reauthorized in January 2002. The Worcester Public Schools will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. establish safeguards that protect homeless students from harassment and/or discrimination on the basis of their homelessness; 2. ensure that all children and youth will receive a free appropriate public education and are given meaningful opportunities to succeed in our schools; 3. inform parents/guardians/students of their right to appeal the district’s enrollment or transportation decisions to the Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education or his/her designee, consistent with the Homeless Education Advisory 2003-7; McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Dispute Resolution process; and 4. follow the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act; <p>When a family is enrolling a student or students in school or changing an address, but is unable to provide the usual form of address verification, or is sharing housing with others or is temporarily sheltered in</p>

	<p>some other alternative arrangement, the family member will be asked to verify the current living situation on the Student Address Verification Form so as to determine whether the student(s) is/are eligible under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act for required supplementary supportive services and legally-mandated exemptions from certain enrollment requirements. All students residing in a situation that meets the statutory definition of homeless are eligible for free breakfast and lunch. A free meals application must be on file for each student, but income verification is not needed if the student is classified as "homeless" on the application. In keeping with these requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Homeless students have a right to either remain in their school of origin or to attend school where they are temporarily residing, assuming transportation arrangements are feasible and are in the best interest of the student; 2. Students who choose to remain in their school of origin have the right to remain there until the end of the school year in which they get permanent housing; 3. Students who choose to enroll in school where they are temporarily residing must be enrolled immediately, even if they do not bring the records usually required for enrollment with them; 4. If a homeless student arrives without records, the school district's designated Homeless Education Liaison must assist the family and contact the previously attended school system to obtain the required records; 5. To the extent feasible, transportation will be provided for students in order to maintain continuity of their attendance in a single school over the course of the school year; 6. When a student is residing outside of the city due to circumstances related to homelessness (in accordance with the statutory definition of "homeless") efforts will be coordinated with the district where the student is temporarily residing to provide transportation to the school of origin if this is the preference of the parent/guardian/caregivers and student; 7. Persons living in battered person's shelters or a safe house can give school officials the Post Office Box or mailing address of the shelter office, along with verification from the shelter director that the children are residing in that facility in lieu of the street address. Transportation arrangements will be made in a manner that seeks not to disclose such shelter addresses; 8. Questions or concerns regarding issues pertaining to homeless students should be referred to the Worcester Public Schools Homeless Liaison, Bertha Elena Rojas at (508) 799-3623.
<p align="center">19</p>	<p>Pledge of Allegiance and “Moment of Silence” Policy</p> <p>Remove “in the Worcester Public Schools”</p>
<p align="center">25</p>	<p>Policy on Parental Notification Relative to Sexuality Education</p> <p>#2 – change address of Health Education Office to 20 Irving Street, Worcester</p>
<p align="center">27 - 34</p>	<p>Code of Conduct</p> <p>Replace entire section with:</p> <p>Philosophy</p> <p>It is the policy of the Worcester Public Schools to ensure fair and effective disciplinary practices. Every student has a right to an education in a safe, secure and supportive environment, and every teacher has a right to expect respectful, prepared students in his/her classroom. A key aspect of a student's education is the acquisition of social and behavioral skills, since effective learning can only occur when students obey basic rules of conduct. This means that:</p>

- Students have a responsibility to conduct themselves in a manner that is in the best interest of the school and its students.
- Parents/guardians have a responsibility to develop positive attitudes toward study and behavior.
- Teachers have a responsibility to continue behavior development through teaching and discipline in the classroom.
- The Administration and the School Committee have a responsibility to support and maintain the enforcement of discipline within the school buildings.

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. Chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws, known as Chapter 766, requires that additional provisions be made for students who have been found by an evaluation team to have special needs and whose program is described in an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). Such provisions will also be made, when appropriate, for students with a disability who are receiving accommodations or related services under a 504 plan.

The Code of Conduct is based on a system of progressive discipline with a goal of limiting the use of long-term suspension as a consequence for student misconduct until other consequences have been considered, as appropriate. The administrator will exercise discretion in determining disciplinary consequences. The administrator may utilize his/her discretion to significantly increase penalties in the cases of second and third offenses or for other factors. In determining the severity of the penalty or suspension, the appropriate administrator may consider all relevant facts, including but not limited to: 1) previous disciplinary record, 2) severity of disruption to the educational process, 3) degree of danger to self and/or others, 4) the degree to which the student is willing to change his/her inappropriate behavior and 5) whether alternative consequences are appropriate to re-engage the student in learning.

School-Imposed Discipline

Expulsion means the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently, as permitted under G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H½ for: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal or his/her designee determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H½

In-school suspension means removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. In-school suspension for ten (10) days or less, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, shall not be considered a short-term suspension under these regulations. If a student is placed in in-school suspension for more than ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, such suspension shall be deemed a long-term suspension for due process, appeal, and reporting purposes under 603 CMR 53.00.

Short-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days

Long-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in subsections (a) or (b) of G.L. c. 71, §37 H, or in section 37H ½ of G.L. c. 71, no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than ninety (90) school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension **under section 37H 3/4** shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.

Other Discipline: Demerits or detentions may be imposed for infractions of these rules at the school level. Alternative consequences may be used, as appropriate, and include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

Participation in clubs and activities at Worcester Public Schools and attending school-sponsored, school-related events is a privilege afforded to students who remain in good standing. To participate in school activities, events and clubs, students are expected to maintain good attendance and demonstrate good behavior and citizenship during school and at school-sponsored events. Eligibility for participation in activities, events, clubs, awards, scholarships and honorary positions at Worcester Public Schools is limited to students who are currently enrolled in and attending Worcester Public Schools in good standing. Students not meeting these expectations may be excluded at the discretion of the Principal or his/her designee. If a student is suspended from an extracurricular activity, at the determination of the principal, the student may be excluded from that specific type of event involving the student’s school of enrollment for the remainder of the school year. A student’s removal from extracurricular activities and attendance at school sponsored events is not subject to the procedural requirements of Massachusetts Laws Chapter 37H ¾ (Principal’s Hearing). The removal is not a suspension for the purpose of counting the school days that a student is suspended. Parents/Guardians will be notified when a student is removed or excluded from extracurricular activities.

School discipline shall not include the right to inflict corporal punishment except that reasonable force may be used as necessary to protect other students or other persons from assault or the imminent threat of bodily injury.

School Officials may legally search a student and confiscate property provided:

- a. There are reasonable grounds to suspect a search will turn up evidence tending to show that the student has violated or is violating the law or the school’s rules; and
- b. The search as conducted is reasonably related in scope to the circumstances that justified the search in the first place.

Disruptive Conduct

Violation of any of the following rules is grounds for discipline as defined above and pertains to actions both on or off school grounds during school or school-related situations.

Rule 1. – Damage or Destruction of School Property

A student shall not steal or cause damage to school property, nor make such attempts. The Administration intends to file criminal complaints against, and seek restitution from, any student who violates this rule.

Rule 2. – Damage or Destruction of Private Property, Cheating, Forgery, Plagiarism

A student shall not steal or cause damage to private property nor make such attempts during school situations on or off school grounds or at any school-related situations including, but not limited to, travel to and from the situation. A student shall not cheat, forge or plagiarize any work submitted for academic credit or documentation.

Rule 3. – Physical Assault on a School Employee

A student shall not cause or attempt to cause physical injury to a school employee on or off the school grounds or during school situations or school-related situations including, but not limited to, travel to and from the situation.

Any student who assaults any school employee or any student who assaults a principal, teacher, instructional assistant, or other educational staff on school premises or at school sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion or a long-term suspension from the school by the school principal.

Rule 4. – Physical Assault on a Student or Other Person not Employed by the School

A student shall not cause or attempt physical injury to another student or any other person on or off school grounds at any school-related situation including, but not limited to, travel to and from the situation.

Rule 5. – Verbal Assault on a School Employee

A student shall not assault verbally any school employee on or off school grounds at any school-related situation including, but not limited to, travel to and from the situation. Verbal assault means defiance, insolence, rudeness, obscenity, bullying or abusive language. Abusive language shall include but not be limited to derogatory statements concerning race, sexual orientation, color, gender, age, religion, gender identity, national origin or disability.

Rule 5A. – Threatening a School Employee

A student shall not threaten any teacher, administrator, or other school employee or volunteer with physical harm so as to place such person in reasonable apprehension that force will be used to inflict such physical harm.

Rule 6. – Verbal Assault on, or Threat to, a Student or Non-employee of School

A student shall not assault verbally any person on or off school grounds at any school-related situation including, but not limited to, travel to and from the situation. Verbal assault means defiance, insolence, rudeness, obscenity, bullying or abusive language. Abusive language shall include but not be limited to derogatory statements concerning race, sexual orientation, color, gender, age, religion, gender identity, national origin or disability.

Rule 6A. - Written Assault or Threat on a Student or Non-employee of School

A student shall not threaten, intimidate or bully in writing, any person on or off school grounds at any school-related situation including, but not limited to, travel to and from the situation. Written threats mean any messages including e-mail, text messaging or any other cyber-related forms of communication; e.g. chat rooms.

Rule 7. - Policy on Possession or Use of Weapons

If any device which may be considered a weapon under this policy is distributed by a teacher, for use in the classroom, then no student receiving such a device shall be charged with an offense under Rule 7 provided the device remains in the classroom and provided the device is only used for the classroom purpose.

A student shall not possess, use, or attempt to use, any weapon on school premises or at a school-related situation, including but not limited to travel to and from the situation.

In order to protect the students of the Worcester Public Schools, any student who is found on school premises or at school sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including but not limited to, a gun or a knife may be subject to expulsion or a long-term suspension from the school by the principal regardless of the size of the knife.

For purposes of this policy, a dangerous “weapon” includes but is not limited to a gun (including a B.B., pellet or other replica device), knife, sling shot, blowgun, blackjack, metallic knuckles including a ring intended to be worn on more than one finger (“fused rings”) or knuckles or any substance which could be put to the same use with the same or similar effect as metallic knuckles, nunchaku, zoobow, also known as klackers or kung fu sticks, or any similar weapon consisting of two sticks of wood, plastic or metal connected at one end by a length of rope, chain, wire or leather, a shuriken or any similar pointed star-like object intended to injure a person when thrown, or any armband, made with leather which has metallic spikes, points or studs or any similar material weighted with metal or other substance and worn on the hand, or a manrikigusari or similar length of chain having weighted ends. Any other device or object used or attempted to be used to inflict bodily harm on a person may be considered a weapon.

This policy will be implemented according to the due process provisions of the Worcester Public Schools Discipline Code applicable to Regular and Special Education students.

Rule 8. - Policy on Possession or Use of Drugs or Alcohol

- a. Any student who distributes or possesses, with intent to distribute, any controlled substance as defined in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 94C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, or heroin, on school premises or at a school sponsored activity, may be expelled or have a long-term suspension imposed from the Worcester Public Schools by the school principal.
- b. Any student who uses or possesses any controlled substance as defined in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 94C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine or heroin, or is under the influence of such a substance on school premises or at a school sponsored activity may be subject to expulsion or a long-term suspension from school by the school principal.
- c. Possession or use of alcohol on the premises of the Worcester Public Schools is forbidden. Any student who uses or possesses alcohol on school premises, or at a school sponsored activity, or is under the influence of alcohol on school premises, or a school sponsored situation, may be expelled or have a long-term suspension imposed from the Worcester Public Schools.
- d. This policy will be implemented subject to the due process provision of the Worcester Public Schools Discipline Code applicable to Regular and Special Education students. Any student charged with a violation of Rule 8 shall have the due process rights outlined in Due Process, Section III.
- e. Possession or use of drugs or controlled substances which are medically prescribed is not a violation of this Policy (However, all prescribed medications will be administered to students by authorized personnel and will be kept in a secure location).

Rule 9. – Repeated School Violations

A student shall not repeatedly fail to comply with directions and reasonable requests of any authorized school personnel during any period of time he/she is under school supervision.

Rule 10. - Hazing (Ch. 536 - Acts of 1986)

A student shall not organize or participate in hazing. A student with knowledge of any hazing activity must report the incident to the school administrator.

Rule 11. - Sounding False Alarms

A student shall not, without reasonable cause, by outcry, bells, or otherwise cause a false alarm of fire (Such action shall be reported under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 269, Section 13). No student shall set a fire in a school building or at a school-sponsored site or situation.

Rule 12. - Smoking and Tobacco Products

Smoking, possession, use, or distribution of tobacco or tobacco products within school buildings, school facilities, school grounds, on school buses or at a school sponsored activity by any person are prohibited. Any student who violates this rule may be suspended.

Rule 13. - Cellular Telephones, Beepers, iPods/MP3 Players and Laser Pointing Devices

A student shall not use a beeper, pager, film/digital camera or any device with a digital camera, other mobile telecommunications or two-way radio communications device of any type, iPods/MP3 player, Bluetooth and other wireless devices, and any potentially disruptive electronic device on school premises or at a school-sponsored situation without expressed permission of appropriate school personnel. Any such device found in a locker may be considered to be in the possession of the student assigned to the locker for purposes of disciplinary action. However, cell phones and iPods/MP3 players may be brought to school but must be secured in the student’s locker. The Worcester Public Schools is not responsible for lost or stolen property.

A student shall not possess a laser pointing device of any type on school premises or at a school sponsored situation, unless such device is distributed by a teacher or its use is authorized by a teacher in connection with school work. Use of a laser pointing device against the face, eyes, or head of another person on school premises or at a school sponsored situation may be considered use of a weapon for disciplinary purposes including the possibility of expulsion.

Rule 14. - Policy on Gangs and Obscene Clothing

- a. No student on school property or at any school sponsored function shall wear any article of clothing (including hats, bandanas, scarves and sweatbands), jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol or sign which has wording, or designs that are reasonably deemed by the School Administration to be obscene, lewd or vulgar.
- b. No student on school property or at any school sponsored function shall wear any article of clothing (including hats), jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol or sign, which displays, evidences or advertises alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, illegal drugs, or other controlled substances illegal under Massachusetts law.
- c. No student on school property or at any school sponsored function shall wear any article of clothing (including hats), jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol or sign which the School Administration reasonably deems to be evidence of membership or affiliation in any gang. As defined in this policy a “gang” is any group of two or more persons affiliated together, either formally or informally, whose purposes include the commission of illegal acts or who in concert commit illegal acts.

Rule 15. - Students Charged with or Convicted of a Felony

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71 (37 H ½) principals have the authority to suspend students charged with a felony and expel or impose a long-term suspension for students convicted or adjudicated of committing a felony if the principal or his/her designee has determined that the student’s continued presence would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Any student charged with a violation of Rules 3, 7, 8 and 18 shall have the due process rights outlined in Due Process, Section III.

Rule 16. - Disruption of School

- a. In addition to complying with Rules 1 through 18 stated above, a student shall not use violence, force, threat, fear, passive resistance or any other conduct in order to cause the disruption or obstruction of any lawful mission, process, or function in school.
- b. Students are not permitted in any area of the school building/grounds without supervision by a staff person of the Worcester Public Schools before, during and after normal school hours. Students are not permitted access to the school building/grounds until 30 minutes before the official start of the school day or when personnel of the Worcester Public Schools are available for supervision.

Rule 17. - Bomb Threats

- a. No student shall communicate or cause to be communicated any information in any form whatsoever that a bomb or any type of explosive device is located in or on any building or property under the control of the Worcester Public Schools or is at any school sponsored situation, including but not limited to transportation provided by the Worcester Public Schools, either directly or by contracted services.

Rule 18. - Extracurricular Activity

A student may be excluded from extracurricular activities where his/her conduct has a harmful effect on the safety of the student or other persons or property or where his/her conduct has adverse effects on the reputation of the Worcester Public Schools.

The Worcester Public Schools recognizes that the safety and welfare of individual students and teams are a priority. Therefore, students will not engage in any acts of criminal activity such as, but not limited to, vandalism, assault and battery, sexual misconduct, hazing, plagiarism, theft or other disruptive conduct.

Students are expected to behave appropriately during all school-related activities. Detrimental actions prohibited hereunder include, but are not limited to, insubordination, fighting, taunting, negative attitude, unsportsmanlike conduct, lying, inappropriate language or gestures and all other infractions and violations of rules set forth in the Worcester Public Schools’ Policies Handbook and school handbooks.

Rule 19. - Fighting

A student shall not engage in physical altercation with another student on or off school grounds at any school-related situation including, but not limited to, travel to and from the situation.

Rule 20. - Inciting a Disturbance

A student shall not incite a disturbance on or off school grounds at any school-related activity. A student shall not organize, encourage, or participate in a disturbance of school. It can apply to one who urges or instigates others to disturb the school setting or related activity.

Rule 21. - Leaving School without Permission

A student shall not leave the school grounds or school-related activity without permission from the school administration.

Rule 22. - Lab and Shop Safety

A student shall comply with all standards of safety in a lab or shop setting. Students are expected to behave appropriately in these settings without causing any unsafe situation that may cause harm to self or others.

Bullying

The Worcester Public Schools prohibits any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation, in Worcester Public School buildings, on school grounds, property adjacent to school grounds, and school-sponsored or school-related activities. Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c.71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students or school staff members of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that:

- i. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the victim’s property;
 - ii. places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
 - iii. creates a hostile environment at school for the victim;
 - iv. infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or
 - v. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.
- Bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

Worcester Public Schools recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to become a target of bullying and harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including “race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have 1 or more of these characteristics.” The civil rights of all school community members are guaranteed by law. The protection of those rights is of utmost importance and priority to our school district. Worcester Public Schools also prohibits bullying of school community members for reasons unrelated to their race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age or disability.

Cyber-bullying is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

2015 – 2016 PROPOSED CHANGES TO POLICY HANDBOOK

The Worcester Public Schools certifies that its schools have adopted and are enforcing a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. An Anonymous Bullying Reporting Line has been established at (508) 799-3472. The entire plan can be viewed at: <http://preventbullying.worcesterschools.org>

Consistent with the requirements of SB 2404, An Act Relative to Bullying (Section 1, Ch. 71, 37 O) in Schools, all students will receive prevention activities that are designed to create and maintain safe, disciplined and drug-free environments which would include bullying prevention.

Based on information reported to the school administrator, the administrator will investigate all reports and complaints of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation, and take immediate action to end bullying behavior and restore the target’s sense of safety and will engage support staff to determine subsequent steps which may include, but not be limited to, disciplinary action, a strategy for providing support services or referral to appropriate services for aggressors and targets and for appropriate family members of said students, and criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

Acts of bullying can result in any one, or combination of, the following legal charges:

- Assault (GL c. 265, § 13A). The act or an instance of unlawfully threatening or attempting to injure another.
- Assault & Battery (GL c. 265, § 13A). An assault upon a victim that is carried out by striking the victim, knocking the victim down, or otherwise doing violence to the victim.
- Criminal Harassment (GL c. 265, § 43A). Whoever willfully and maliciously engages in a knowing pattern of conduct or series of acts over a period of time directed at a specific person, which seriously alarms that person and would cause a reasonable person to suffer substantial emotional distress.
- Harassing/Annoying Phone Calls. (GL c. 269, § 43A). Whoever telephones another person, or causes any person to be telephoned, repeatedly, for the sole purpose of harassing, annoying or molesting such person or his family, whether or not conversation ensues, or whoever telephones a person repeatedly, and uses indecent or obscene language to such a person.
- Threats (GL c. 275, § 4) (GL c. 209A, § 7). An expression of intention and an ability in circumstances that would justify apprehension on the part of the recipient.
- Disruption of School Assembly (GL c. 272, § 40). Whoever willfully interrupts or disturbs a school or other assembly of people met for a lawful purpose.
- Civil Rights Violation (GL c. 265, §§ 37, 38). No person, whether or not acting under color of law, shall by force or threat of force, willfully injure, intimidate or interfere with, or attempt to injure, intimidate or interfere with, or oppress or threaten any other person in the free exercise or enjoyment of any right or privilege secured to him by the constitution or laws of the Commonwealth or by the constitution or laws of the United States.
- Malicious Destruction of Property (GL c. 266, § 127). Whoever destroys or injures the personal property, dwelling house or building of another.

36	<p>Academic Requirements</p> <p>Change #3 to read: To be eligible for the fall marking period, students are required to have passed four yearlong classes with a 65 or above. In addition, a student’s overall average of all yearlong courses must be a C or above. Students in grades 10, 11 or 12 are eligible for a <u>one-time-only</u> waiver during their high school years. The waiver is applicable if the student does not meet the C average (minimum of 70) on all yearlong courses in the previous academic year. Incoming 9th graders are exempt from academic requirement for the first quarter only.</p>
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<p>39</p>	<p>Students with Disabilities Receiving Special Education Services</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Principal (or designee) will notify the Special Education Office of the suspendable offense of a student with a disability and a record will be kept in our SAGE student management system. 2. When the suspension of a student with a disability accumulates to more than ten (10) days during the school year, or there appears to be a pattern of suspensions, a Manifestation Determination meeting will be held.
<p>40</p>	<p>Students with Disabilities Receiving Special Education Services (continued)</p> <p>Change first sentence of “b” to read:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. If the student’s violation of the discipline code is not related directly and substantially to his/her disability or to an IEP...
<p>45</p>	<p>VI. School Health/Nursing Services</p> <p>Change last sentence to read: The program will include communicable disease prevention and reporting, immunizations, health education and wellness promotion, health assessments and screenings, chronic condition management, counseling, community health referrals, first aid and emergency care.</p>
<p>46</p>	<p>VI. School Health/Nursing Services (continued)</p> <p>First paragraph, second sentence, change primary physician provider to Primary Care Provider</p> <p>Second paragraph, first sentence: change Individual Care Plan to Individual Health Care Plan</p>
<p>47</p>	<p>VI. School Health/Nursing Services (continued)</p> <p>Diabetes After fourth bullet, add sentence:</p> <p>The school nurse will work collaboratively with the student, family, PCP and specialist to assist in diabetes management and will educate and reinforce teaching of students for self-management as appropriate.</p> <p>ADHD Change heading to read:</p> <p>Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD)</p>
<p>48</p>	<p>VIII. Monitoring</p> <p>Third paragraph: The School Health Advisory Council will provide...</p> <p>Second bullet: change head of School Nursing to Coordinator of School Nursing</p>
<p>49</p>	<p>Department of Public Health Regulations</p> <p>Change #3 to read:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Physical Examinations – required for students in grades K, 4, 7 and 9. It is recommended that this examination be done by the primary care provider or medical home. 4. Screening Programs – add: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> d. Parents may request a copy of their child’s BMI report from the school nurse.

<p>50</p>	<p>Administration of Medication</p> <p>Second paragraph: First bullet – change to read: The student’s PCP must complete the Medication Administration PCP Order and Parent Consent Form</p> <p>Fourth bullet – add sentence at end: Only a 30 day supply is requested</p> <p>Sixth bullet – change to read: The school nurse will record all medications administered in the student’s EHR.</p> <p>Remove last bullet</p> <p>Third paragraph: add additional bullet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If a student has diabetes, the school nurse will ask a parent to go on the field trip, if not able, the school nurse will go on the field trip.
<p>53</p>	<p>Transportation</p> <p>5th paragraph, 2nd sentence change to read:</p> <p>Students not releases from the school bus because no parent/guardian is present will be taken to the Fanning Building, 24 Chatham Street (508) 799-3090</p>
<p>54</p>	<p>Homeless Students</p> <p>Refer to transportation services described on page 17 under Education of Homeless Children (make sure correct page is referenced)</p>
<p>56- 57</p>	<p>Security Measures Physical Restraint</p> <p>Change first paragraph to read:</p> <p>The Board of Education adopted new regulations on the use of physical restraint in public education programs. The regulations (603 CMR 46.00) are meant to promote safety for all students. Physical restraint, including prone restraint where permitted, shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited in public education programs except when a student’s behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to self or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions, or such interventions are deemed to be inappropriate under the circumstances. Mechanical restraints, medications and seclusion are prohibited in all public education programs.</p> <p>The amended regulations were approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education on December 16, 2014, and take effect on January 1, 2016. 603 CMR 46.00 may be found at http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr46.html</p> <p>Delete second paragraph.</p> <p>Delete Policy section.</p>
<p>61</p>	<p>Section 504: Update 504 Coordinators</p>

<p>62</p>	<p>Special Education</p> <p>Change first paragraph to read: A full continuum of Special Education services is provided for students with disabilities ages 3-22 (who have not graduated with a high school diploma) and who have been found eligible with a disability that requires specialized instruction.</p> <p>Change second paragraph to read: The student’s rights to a “Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment” with “full access to the general curriculum” guide all team decisions.</p> <p>Third paragraph, first sentence, change to read: If an IEP Team determines that a student’s placement is in a “substantially separate program” (Life Skills, Structured Therapeutic Educational Program (STEP), Specialized Approaches to Individualizes Learning (SAIL), Creative Options for Adolescents of the Secondary Tier (COAST), Intensive Learning Disabilities) the student will be...</p> <p>Sixth paragraph, first sentence: eliminate “special” before transportation. Second sentence: eliminate “without additional resources being required”. At end of paragraph add: If a student is entering his/her final year at the current school and requires specialized transportation due to his/her disability in accordance with the IEP, the IEP team must consider placement options and the need to continue specialized transportation.</p> <p>Eighth paragraph, last sentence, change to read: Assignments made under this policy should not be considered as a special education placement.</p>
<p>63</p>	<p>Home and Hospital Instruction</p> <p>Change entire section to read:</p> <p>Any student who will be confined to a hospital or a home by an attending physician for fourteen (14) school days or longer due to a medical condition is eligible for this service. Note that for chronically ill students, the fourteen days need not be concurrent, but must result from the stated diagnosis.</p> <p>Home and Hospital instruction is a service of the Worcester Public Schools and is requested by a physician in accordance with state regulations. A Physician’s Statement Form must be completed by the attending physician and must include, at a minimum, the following information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The date the student was admitted to a hospital or confined to home 2. The medical reason for the confinement 3. The expected duration of the confinement 4. The medical needs of the student that should be considered in planning the home or hospital educational services <p>Parents/guardians must notify their child’s school principal, guidance counselor or school nurse as soon as possible if Home and Hospital instruction is necessary. The program begins as soon as the physician requests Home and Hospital instruction on the state-mandated Physician’s Statement form. Once the Home and hospital Department receives the completed Physician’s Statement, a teacher will be assigned to instruct the student and the teacher will contact the family to schedule lessons. The Home and Hospital teacher will also contact the guidance counselor for assignments and texts for students in the middle and secondary schools, and principals and classroom teachers for assignments and texts for students in elementary schools.</p>
<p>63</p>	<p>Home Schooling</p> <p>First sentence: Eliminate the words “and accepted” Sentence should read: Parents/guardians who choose to educate their children at home, as allowed under Massachusetts law, can fulfill the requirements of the compulsory attendance statue by having their educational program reviewed by the Worcester Public Schools.</p>

	<p>As in previous years, MCAS tests will continue to be administered in Science and Technology/Engineering (Grades 5, 8, 9-12) in 2015-16. High school tests administered in grades 9-12 include biology, chemistry, introductory physics, and technology/engineering.</p> <p>In addition, a small number of students “with the most significant disabilities who are unable to take the standard MCAS (or PARCC) tests even with accommodations” may participate in the MCAS Alternative Assessment (Grades 3-10) in lieu of regular MCAS or PARCC assessments. The MCAS Alternative Assessment consists of a portfolio of materials collected by the teacher and student, including work samples, instructional data, videotapes and other supporting information.</p>
75	<p>ACCESS for ELLs</p> <p>Remove first sentence: Students with limited English language proficiency will also be administered the Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners assessment (ACCESS for ELLs; Grades K-12).</p>
76	<p>Additional High School Tests</p> <p>First paragraph, first sentence, change to read: <i>Advanced Placement (AP) Exams (AP exams – Grades 9-12) are end-of-year assessments...</i></p> <p>Second paragraph, first sentence, change to read: Preliminary SAT (PSAT – Grades 10-11) is offered to all grade 10 and 11 students...</p>
77	<p>For Information on Testing</p> <p>First paragraph, first sentence: remove comma after newsletters</p> <p>Second paragraph, second sentence: replace “David Perda” and “perdad@worc.k12.ma.us” with “Amanda Kershaw” and “kershawAE@worc.k12.ma.us”</p> <p>Change last sentence to read: Information from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education concerning state assessments can also be found online at http://www.doe.mass.edu/Assess/ or by contacting the State Office of Student Assessment at (781) 338-3625.</p>
79	<p>Graduation Course Requirements Add:</p> <p>5. Exception Allowances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. English Language Learners (ELL) identified through the Massachusetts’ state standardized test (ACCESS) as English Proficiency Level (EPL) 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 may substitute two college preparatory elective courses for the two required foreign language courses. Students who reach EPL level 6 while in grades 9 or 10 are required to take the two foreign language courses to meet graduation requirements. b. Students with disabilities whose psycho-educational evaluation provides a specific diagnosis of a learning disability that precludes the student’s successful completion of a foreign language course may substitute two college preparatory elective courses for the two required foreign language courses.
80	<p>Advanced Placement Exams</p> <p>Change second sentence to read: The cost for one Advanced Placement Exam is \$90.00</p>

2015 – 2016 PROPOSED CHANGES TO POLICY HANDBOOK

82	<p>Step 6</p> <p>Remove Elm Park Community School</p>
83	<p>Special Schedule:</p> <p>Add Elm Park Community School 3:45 p.m. Regular Time</p> <p>Union Hill: change time to 2:55 p.m.</p>
84	<p>Parents and Community Special Education Parent Advisory Council</p> <p>Change to read: Parents/guardians of students with disabilities meet monthly to engage in special education workshops. These meetings provide opportunities for parents to share and collaborate as they deepen their understanding of various resources that are available for students with disabilities. For more information, call (508) 799-3093.</p>
85	<p>Title I Parent Advisory Council</p> <p>Change title to: Title I Parent Involvement</p> <p>Replace section with:</p> <p>It is the policy of the Worcester Public Schools to comply with the No Child Left Behind Parental Involvement Non-Regulatory Guidance (Title I, Part A, U.S. Department of Education, 2004) to promote the participation of parents and guardians in meaningful communication with schools to support students' academic learning. The office of English Language Learners and Supplemental Supports works with schools, parents and community partners in a variety of ways to facilitate events and resources for parental engagement in the education of their children.</p>
85	<p>PPAL Central MA Chapter</p> <p>Change contact: Meri Viano, Lisa Lambert</p> <p>Worcester Community Connections Coalition</p> <p>Change phone number to (508) 796-1411</p>
87 and 89	<p>Worcester Public Schools District Media Policy</p> <p>First paragraph: change Channel 11 WEA-TV to Charter Channel 191 WEA-TV</p>
88	<p>Telephone Directory</p> <p>Senior High Schools</p> <p>Change "Alternative" to Alternative St. Casimir</p> <p>Delete: School Age Mothers Program (SAMS)</p>
Back cover	<p>Fourth paragraph: change 2014-15 to 2015-16</p>

ITEM: gb #4-208.1
Page 2

PRIOR ACTION (continued)

- 8-21-14 - Considered with gb #4-209.1.
Ms. Novick made the following motion:
Request that the approved wording for the Code of Conduct and Due Process policies be referred to the Standing Committee on Governance and Employee Issues and that the Administration provide quarterly reports.
On a voice vote, the motion was approved.
Ms. Novick requested that the Administration include “parent/guardian” throughout the document rather than parent alone.
Mr. O’Connell made the following motion:
Request that the following wording not be deleted from the Code of Conduct:
Annex B, page 1
The Worcester Public Schools embraces zero tolerance for language or acts of hate and intolerance.
Annex B, page 4
Rule 9. Excessive Tardiness
A student shall not be repeatedly tardy from school or to class without legitimate cause (See Attendance/Truancy Policy).
Annex B, page 4
Rule 10. Repeated School Violations
A student shall not repeatedly fail to comply with directions and reasonable requests of any authorized school personnel during any period of time he/she is under such authority.
On a roll call of 2-5 (yeas-Miss Biancheria, Mr. O’Connell), the motion was defeated.
Miss Ramirez stated her concerns regarding:
- the negative word “obey” rather than “follow” in the following sentence in Annex B, page 1:
A key aspect of a student’s education is the acquisition of social and behavioral skills, since effective learning can only occur when students obey basic rules of conduct.
- the 48 hour rule to have a meeting with parents/guardians for suspensions and not use students as translators
- the educational options for suspended students
Miss Biancheria made the following motion:
Request that when the item is discussed at the Standing Committee level, that the Administration invite the principals to attend the meeting.
On a voice vote, the motion was approved.

ITEM: gb #4-208.1
Page 3

PRIOR ACTION (continued)

8-21-14 - Ms. Novick made the following motion:
(continued) Request that the School Committee approve the updated Code of Conduct and Due Process policies to be included in the 2014-15 Policies Handbook.
On a roll call of 6-1 (nay-Mr. O'Connell), the motion was approved.
It was moved to suspend rules to reconsider the motion to approve the updated Code of Conduct and Due Process policies to be included in the 2014-15 Policies Handbook.
On a roll call of 6-1 (nay-Mr. O'Connell), the motion was approved.
It was moved to reconsider the motion to approve the updated Code of Conduct and Due Process policies to be included in the 2014-15 Policies Handbook.
On a roll call of 2-5 (yeas-Miss Biancheria, Mr. O'Connell), the motion was defeated.



Worcester Public Schools

Worcester, Massachusetts



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TO: Members of the Worcester School Committee

FROM: Superintendent Melinda J. Boone, Ed.D.

DATE: August 12, 2014

SUBJECT: **New Student Discipline Regulations**

The materials attached reflect the revision of the Worcester Public Schools' policy regarding student discipline and due process. The revision is aligned with the new State regulations on student discipline effective July 1, 2014. Guidelines from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Counsel are forthcoming.

Attorney Paige Tobin assisted the administration in revising the new policy language and developing additional materials associated with student discipline protocols and parent notification.

In order to respond to item gb# 4-209 (request that the administration indicate the role of the School Committee as a result of the passage of the policy voted into law regarding long-term suspension hearings), we consulted with the City Solicitor, Mr. David Moore, who responded the following:

"After researching the General Laws and the new regulations, the statutes and regulations provide that the initial decision on the discipline of students rests with the school principal with an appeal to the superintendent. The School Committee no longer has a role in student discipline decisions. The statutes emphasize this point by saying that the decision of the superintendent "shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension or expulsion" G.L. c. 71 § 37H1/2 (1) and G.L. c. 71 § 37H3/4 (e). The statutes provide a fairly complicated, but uniform, procedural due process protections, which conclude by making the superintendent's decision final (and thereby appealable to court).

In addition to the inclusion of new language to the Code of Conduct and Due Process sections of the policy handbook, the administration recommends the following changes:

1. Eliminate Rule 9 – Excessive Tardiness: A student shall not be repeatedly tardy from school or to class without legitimate cause.

Rationale: Under Pupil Notification Law: MGL c. 76, § 1B, the student attendance law requires that the establishment of a pupil absence notification. In addition to notifying parents/guardians of unexcused absences, the law requires schools to notify parents/guardians of a student who has at least 5 days in which the student has missed 2 or more periods unexcused during the school year. Schools must develop action steps with parents, students, and input from state agencies.

2. Eliminate Rule 10 – Repeated School Violations: A student shall not repeatedly fail to comply with directions and reasonable requests of any authorized school personnel during any period of time he/she is under such authority.

Rationale: The new language under Code of Conduct states that "the administrator will exercise discretion in determining disciplinary consequences. The administrator may utilize his/her discretion to significantly increase penalties in the case of second or third offences or for other factors. In determining the severity of the penalty or suspension, the appropriate administrator may consider all relevant facts, including but not limited to: 1) previous disciplinary record, 2) severity of disruption to the educational process, 3) degree of danger to self and/or others, 4) the degree to which the student is willing to change his/her inappropriate behavior and 5) whether alternative consequences are appropriate to re-engage the student learning."

3. Eliminate Section (b) of Rule 19 – Bomb Threats: (b) Before readmission to the Worcester Public Schools of any student suspended or expelled for violation of this rule, such student shall perform ten (10) days of supervised community service, which has been approved by the School Administration, for each day which school has been disrupted by such threat. Such community service shall be performed at a time when the Worcester Public Schools is not scheduled to be in session (e.g., summer vacation, February or April vacations, etc.)

Rationale: Principals may use community service as an alternative to suspension when addressing student discipline and it should not be limited to Rule 19.

In preparation to the start of the school year, the following professional development training has been scheduled:

- All Principals – August 13th
- All Assistant Principals – August 25th

Principals will address the new student discipline regulation with their staff on August 25th or August 26th.

Additional professional development for Assistant Principals will be scheduled in September, and as needed during the school year.

Attachments:

1. Code of Conduct
2. Legal Policies
3. Initial Notice of Potential Discipline Letter
4. Notice of In-School Suspension
5. Notice of Short-term Suspension
6. Notice of Long-term Suspension
7. Emergency Removal Letter
8. Notice to Superintendent of Possible Suspension – Pre-K to Grade 3
9. Copy of New Student Regulations

CODE OF CONDUCT

Deleted

New-Added

Original Language

Philosophy

It is the policy of the Worcester Public Schools to ensure fair and effective disciplinary practices. Every student has a right to an education in a safe, secure and supportive environment, and every teacher has a right to expect respectful, prepared students in his/her classroom.

The Worcester Public Schools embraces zero tolerance for language or acts of hate and intolerance. A key aspect of a student's education is the acquisition of social and behavioral skills, since effective learning can only occur when students obey basic rules of conduct. This means that:

- Students have a responsibility to conduct themselves in a manner that is in the best interest of the school and its students.
- Parents/guardians have a responsibility to develop positive attitudes toward study and behavior.
- Teachers have a responsibility to continue behavior development through teaching and discipline in the classroom.
- The Administration and the School Committee have a responsibility to support and maintain the enforcement of discipline within the school buildings.

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. Chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws, known as Chapter 766, requires that additional provisions be made for students who have been found by an evaluation team to have special needs and whose program is described in an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). Such provisions will also be made, when appropriate, for students with a disability who are receiving accommodations or related services under a 504 plan.

The Code of Conduct is based on a system of progressive discipline with a goal of limiting the use of long-term suspension as a consequence for student misconduct until other consequences have been considered, as appropriate. The administrator will exercise discretion in determining disciplinary consequences. The administrator may utilize his/her discretion to significantly increase penalties in the cases of second and third offenses or for other factors. In determining the severity of the penalty or suspension, the appropriate administrator may consider all relevant facts, including but not limited to: 1) previous disciplinary record, 2) severity of disruption to the educational process, 3) degree of danger to self and/or others, 4) the degree to which the student is willing to change his/her inappropriate behavior and 5) whether alternative consequences are appropriate to re-engage the student in learning.

School-Imposed Discipline

Expulsion means the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently, as permitted under G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H½ for: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal or his/her designee determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H½

Expulsion is an action by the School Committee to exclude a student from school and school functions permanently. While the School Committee has specifically provided for a penalty of expulsion in certain cases, a student may also be expelled for conduct such as assault, vandalism, hazing, or any other conduct disruptive to the education of students in the Worcester Public Schools or which threatens the safety of students, staff or visitors.

In-school suspension means removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. In-school suspension for ten (10) days or less, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, shall not be considered a short-term suspension under these regulations. If a student is placed in in-school suspension for more than ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, such suspension shall be deemed a long-term suspension for due process, appeal, and reporting purposes under 603 CMR 53.00.

Short-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days

Long-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in subsections (a) or (b) of G.L. c. 71, §37 H, or in section 37H ½ of G.L. c. 71, no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than ninety (90) school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.

Suspension is a denial to a student of the right to attend school and to take part in any school function for a specified period of time, up to one year, by his/her school administrator, the Superintendent or his designee, or the School Committee.

A student shall not assault verbally any person on or off school grounds at any school-related situation including, but not limited to, travel to and from the situation. Verbal assault means defiance, insolence, rudeness, obscenity, bullying or abusive language. Abusive language shall include but not be limited to derogatory statements concerning race, sexual orientation, color, gender, age, religion, gender identity, national origin or disability.

Other Discipline: Demerits or detentions may be imposed for infractions of these rules at the school level. Alternative consequences may be used, as appropriate, and include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

Participation in clubs and activities at Worcester Public Schools and attending school-sponsored, school-related events is a privilege afforded to students who remain in good standing. To participate in school activities, events and clubs, students are expected to maintain good attendance and demonstrate good behavior and citizenship during school and at school-sponsored events. Eligibility for participation in activities, events, clubs, awards, scholarships and honorary positions at Worcester Public Schools is limited to students who are currently enrolled in and attending Worcester Public Schools in good standing. Students not meeting these expectations may be excluded at the discretion of the Principal or his/her designee. If a student is suspended from an extracurricular activity, at the determination of the principal, the student may be excluded from that specific type of event involving the student's school of enrollment for the remainder of the school year. A student's removal from extracurricular activities and attendance at school sponsored events is not subject to the procedural requirements of Massachusetts Laws Chapter 37H ¾ (Principal's Hearing). The removal is not a suspension for the purpose of counting the school days that a student is suspended. Parents will be notified when a student is removed or excluded from extracurricular activities.

School discipline shall not include the right to inflict corporal punishment except that reasonable force may be used as necessary to protect other students or other persons from assault or the imminent threat of bodily injury.

Disruptive Conduct

Violation of any of the following rules is grounds for discipline as defined above and pertains to actions both on or off school grounds during school or school-related situations.

Rule 1. – Damage or Destruction of School Property

A student shall not steal or cause damage to school property, nor make such attempts. The Administration intends to file criminal complaints against, and seek restitution from, any student who violates this rule.

Rule 2. – Damage or Destruction of Private Property, Cheating, Forgery, Plagiarism

A student shall not steal or cause damage to private property nor make such attempts during school situations on or off school grounds or at any school-related situations including, but not limited to, travel to and from the situation. A student shall not cheat, forge or plagiarize any work submitted for academic credit or documentation.

Rule 3. – Physical Assault on a School Employee

A student shall not cause or attempt to cause physical injury to a school employee on or off the school grounds or during school situations or school-related situations including, but not limited to, travel to and from the situation.

Any student who assaults any school employee or any student who assaults a principal, teacher, instructional assistant, or other educational staff on school premises or at school sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion or a long-term suspension from the school by the school principal.

Rule 4. – Physical Assault on a Student or Other Person not Employed by the School

A student shall not cause or attempt physical injury to another student or any other person on or off school grounds at any school-related situation including, but not limited to, travel to and from the situation.

Rule 5. – Verbal Assault on a School Employee

A student shall not assault verbally any school employee on or off school grounds at any school-related situation including, but not limited to, travel to and from the situation. Verbal assault means defiance, insolence, rudeness, obscenity, **bullying** or abusive language. Abusive language shall include but not be limited to derogatory statements concerning race, sexual orientation, color, gender, age, religion, gender identity, national origin or disability.

Rule 5A. – Threatening a School Employee

A student shall not threaten any teacher, administrator, or other school employee or volunteer with physical harm so as to place such person in reasonable apprehension that force will be used to inflict such physical harm.

A student shall not threaten on school grounds or at a school sponsored event any teacher, administrator or other school employee with physical harm so as to place such teacher, administrator or other school employee in reasonable apprehension that force will be used to inflict such physical harm. The principal of the school shall investigate any allegation that a student has threatened a teacher, administrator or other school employee with physical harm and shall make an initial determination whether or not the matter should be recommended to the School Committee. The School Committee may expel or may impose a long term suspension on any student found to have threatened a teacher, administrator or other school employee with such physical harm after affording such student all due process rights specified in “Legal Policies – Due Process” – herein. In determining the response of the Worcester Public Schools, any fact-finder, or reviewing authority will have discussions with the student and the school employee(s) involved in the incident. This shall include the employee that is the subject of the alleged threat, others who may have witnessed it, as well as guidance counselors and administrators of the school. In determining whether an apprehension of anticipated physical force is reasonable, any fact-finder or reviewing authority will look to the actions and words of the student in light of the attendant circumstances.

Rule 6. – Verbal Assault on, or Threat to, a Student or Non-employee of School

A student shall not assault verbally any person on or off school grounds at any school-related situation including, but not limited to, travel to and from the situation. Verbal assault means defiance, insolence, rudeness, obscenity, bullying or abusive language. Abusive language shall include but not be limited to derogatory statements concerning race, sexual orientation, color, gender, age, religion, gender identity, national origin or disability.

Rule 6A. - Written Assault or Threat on a Student or Non-employee of School

A student shall not threaten, intimidate or bully in writing, any person on or off school grounds at any school-related situation including, but not limited to, travel to and from the situation. Written threats mean any messages including e-mail, text messaging or any other cyber-related forms of communication; e.g. chat rooms.

Rule 7. - Policy on Possession or Use of Weapons

If any device which may be considered a weapon under this policy is distributed by a teacher, for use in the classroom, then no student receiving such a device shall be charged with an offense under Rule 7 provided the device remains in the classroom and provided the device is only used for the classroom purpose.

A student shall not possess, use, or attempt to use, any weapon on school premises or at a school-related situation, including but not limited to travel to and from the situation.

In order to protect the students of the Worcester Public Schools, any student who is found on school premises or at school sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including but not limited to, a gun or a knife may be subject to expulsion or a long-term suspension from the school by the principal regardless of the size of the knife.

For purposes of this policy, a dangerous “weapon” includes but is not limited to a gun (including a B.B., pellet or other replica device), knife, sling shot, blowgun, blackjack, metallic knuckles including a ring intended to be worn on more than one finger (“fused rings”) or knuckles or any substance which could be put to the same use with the same or similar effect as metallic knuckles, nunchaku, zoobow, also known as klackers or kung fu sticks, or any similar weapon consisting of two sticks of wood, plastic or metal connected at one end by a length of rope, chain, wire or leather, a shuriken or any similar

pointed star-like object intended to injure a person when thrown, or any armband, made with leather which has metallic spikes, points or studs or any similar material weighted with metal or other substance and worn on the hand, or a manrikigusari or similar length of chain having weighted ends. Any other device or object used or attempted to be used to inflict bodily harm on a person may be considered a weapon.

This policy will be implemented according to the due process provisions of the Worcester Public Schools Discipline Code applicable to Regular and Special Education students.

Rule 8. - Policy on Possession or Use of Drugs or Alcohol

- a. Any student who distributes or possesses, with intent to distribute, any controlled substance as defined in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 94C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, or heroin, on school premises or at a school sponsored activity, may be expelled or have a long-term suspension imposed from the Worcester Public Schools by the school principal.
- b. Any student who uses or possesses any controlled substance as defined in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 94C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine or heroin, or is under the influence of such a substance on school premises or at a school sponsored activity may be subject to expulsion or a long-term suspension from school by the school principal.
- c. Possession or use of alcohol on the premises of the Worcester Public Schools is forbidden. Any student who uses or possesses alcohol on school premises, or at a school sponsored activity, or is under the influence of alcohol on school premises, or a school sponsored situation, may be expelled or have a long-term suspension imposed from the Worcester Public Schools.
- d. This policy will be implemented subject to the due process provision of the Worcester Public Schools Discipline Code applicable to Regular and Special Education students. Any student charged with a violation of Rule 8 **shall have the due process rights outlined in Due Process, Section III.** shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with an opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at the hearing before the principal.
- e. Possession or use of drugs or controlled substances which are medically prescribed is not a violation of this Policy (However, all prescribed medications will be administered to students by authorized personnel and will be kept in a secure location).

Rule 9. - Excessive Tardiness

A student shall not be repeatedly tardy from school or to class without legitimate cause (See Attendance/Truancy Policy).

Rule 10. - Repeated School Violations

A student shall not repeatedly fail to comply with directions and reasonable requests of any authorized school personnel during any period of time he/she is under such authority.

Rule 11. - Search and Seizure

School Officials may legally search a student and confiscate property provided:

- a. There are reasonable grounds to suspect a search will turn up evidence tending to show that the student has violated or is violating the law or the school's rules.
- b. The search as conducted is reasonably related in scope to the circumstances that justified the search in the first place.

Rule 12. - Hazing (Ch. 536 - Acts of 1986)

A student shall not organize or participate in hazing. A student with knowledge of any hazing activity must report the incident to the school administrator.

Rule 13. - Sounding False Alarms

A student shall not, without reasonable cause, by outcry, bells, or otherwise cause a false alarm of fire (Such action shall be reported under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 269, Section 13). No student shall set a fire in a school building or at a school-sponsored site or situation.

Rule 14. - Smoking and Tobacco Products

Smoking, possession, use, or distribution of tobacco or tobacco products within school buildings, school facilities, school grounds, on school buses or at a school sponsored activity by any person are prohibited. Any student who violates this rule may be suspended.

Rule 15. - Cellular Telephones, Beepers, iPods/MP3 Players and Laser Pointing Devices

A student shall not use a beeper, pager, film/digital camera or any device with a digital camera, other mobile telecommunications or two-way radio communications device of any type, iPods/MP3 player, Bluetooth and other wireless devices, and any potentially disruptive electronic device on school premises or at a school-sponsored situation without expressed permission of appropriate school personnel. Any such device found in a locker may be considered to be in the possession of the student assigned to the locker for purposes of disciplinary action. **However, cell phones and iPods/MP3 players may be brought to school but must be secured in the student's locker.** The Worcester Public Schools is not responsible for lost or stolen property.

A student shall not possess a laser pointing device of any type on school premises or at a school sponsored situation, unless such device is distributed by a teacher or its use is authorized by a teacher in connection with school work. Use of a laser pointing device against the face, eyes, or head of another person on school premises or at a school sponsored situation may be considered use of a weapon for disciplinary purposes including the possibility of expulsion.

Rule 16. - Policy on Gangs and Obscene Clothing

- a. No student on school property or at any school sponsored function shall wear any article of clothing (including hats, bandanas, scarves and sweatbands), jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol or sign which has wording, or designs that are reasonably deemed by the School Administration to be obscene, lewd or vulgar.
- b. No student on school property or at any school sponsored function shall wear any article of clothing (including hats), jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol or sign, which displays, evidences or advertises alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, illegal drugs, or other controlled substances illegal under Massachusetts law.
- c. No student on school property or at any school sponsored function shall wear any article of clothing (including hats), jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol or sign which the School Administration reasonably deems to be evidence of membership or affiliation in any gang. As defined in this policy a "gang" is any group of two or more persons affiliated together, either formally or informally, whose purposes include the commission of illegal acts or who in concert commit illegal acts.

Rule 17. - Students Charged with or Convicted of a Felony

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71 (37 H ½) principals have the authority to suspend students charged with a felony and expel or impose a long-term suspension for students convicted or adjudicated of committing a felony if the principal has determined that the student's continued presence would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Any student charged with a violation of Rules 3, 7, 8 and 18 shall **have the due process rights outlined in Due Process, Section III.** be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at the hearing before the principal.

Rule 18. - Disruption of School

- a. In addition to complying with Rules 1 through 18 stated above, a student shall not use violence, force, threat, fear, passive resistance or any other conduct in order to cause the disruption or obstruction of any lawful mission, process, or function in school.
- b. Students are not permitted in any area of the school building/grounds without supervision by a staff person of the Worcester Public Schools before, during and after normal school hours. Students are not permitted access to the school building/grounds until 30 minutes before the official start of the school day or when personnel of the Worcester Public Schools are available for supervision.

Rule 19. - Bomb Threats

- a. No student shall communicate or cause to be communicated any information in any form whatsoever that a bomb or any type of explosive device is located in or on any building or property under the control of the Worcester Public Schools or is at any school sponsored situation, including but not limited to transportation provided by the Worcester Public Schools, either directly or by contracted services. Any student found in violation of the provisions of this rule may be expelled by the School Committee after all appropriate due process proceedings as specified in the Legal Policies – Due Process section of the Policies Handbook for the Worcester Public School.
- b. Before the readmission to the Worcester Public Schools of any student suspended or expelled for violation of this rule, such student shall perform ten (10) days of supervised community service, which has been approved by the School Administration, for each day which school has been disrupted by such threat. Such community service shall be performed at a time when the Worcester Public Schools is not scheduled to be in session (e.g., summer vacation, February or April vacation, etc.).

Rule 20. - Extracurricular Activity

A student may be suspended from extracurricular activities where his/her conduct has a harmful effect on the safety of the student or other persons or property or where his/her conduct has adverse effects on the reputation of the Worcester Public Schools.

The Worcester Public Schools recognizes that the safety and welfare of individual students and teams are a priority. Therefore, students will not engage in any acts of criminal activity such as, but not limited to, vandalism, assault and battery, sexual misconduct, hazing, plagiarism, theft or other disruptive conduct.

Students are expected to behave appropriately during all school-related activities. Detrimental actions prohibited hereunder include, but are not limited to, insubordination, fighting, taunting, negative attitude, unsportsmanlike conduct, lying, inappropriate language or gestures and all other infractions and violations of rules set forth in the Worcester Public Schools' Policies Handbook and school handbooks.

Bullying

The Worcester Public Schools prohibits any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation, in Worcester Public School buildings, on school grounds, property adjacent to school grounds, and school-sponsored or school-related activities. Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c.71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that:

- i. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the victim's property;
- ii. places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- iii. creates a hostile environment at school for the victim;
- iv. infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

Cyber-bullying is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

The Worcester Public Schools certifies that its schools have adopted and are enforcing a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. An Anonymous Bullying Reporting Line has been established at (508) 799-3472. The entire plan can be viewed at: <http://preventbullying.worcesterschools.org>

Consistent with the requirements of SB 2404, An Act Relative to Bullying (Section 1, Ch. 71, 37 O) in Schools, all students will receive prevention activities that are designed to create and maintain safe, disciplined and drug-free environments which would include bullying prevention.

Based on information reported to the school administrator, the administrator will investigate all reports and complaints of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation, and take immediate action to end bullying behavior and restore the target's sense of safety and will engage support staff to determine subsequent steps which may include, but not be limited to, disciplinary action, a strategy for providing support services or referral to appropriate services for aggressors and targets and for appropriate family members of said students, and criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

Acts of bullying can result in any one, or combination of, the following legal charges:

- Assault (GL c. 265, § 13A). The act or an instance of unlawfully threatening or attempting to injure another.
- Assault & Battery (GL c. 265, § 13A). An assault upon a victim that is carried out by striking the victim, knocking the victim down, or otherwise doing violence to the victim.
- Criminal Harassment (GL c. 265, § 43A). Whoever willfully and maliciously engages in a knowing pattern of conduct or series of acts over a period of time directed at a specific person, which seriously alarms that person and would cause a reasonable person to suffer substantial emotional distress.
- Harassing/Annoying Phone Calls. (GL c. 269, § 43A). Whoever telephones another person, or causes any person to be telephoned, repeatedly, for the sole purpose of harassing, annoying or molesting such person or his family, whether or not conversation ensues, or whoever telephones a person repeatedly, and uses indecent or obscene language to such a person.

- Threats (GL c. 275, § 4) (GL c. 209A, § 7). An expression of intention and an ability in circumstances that would justify apprehension on the part of the recipient.
- Disruption of School Assembly (GL c. 272, § 40). Whoever willfully interrupts or disturbs a school or other assembly of people met for a lawful purpose.
- Civil Rights Violation (GL c. 265, §§ 37, 38). No person, whether or not acting under color of law, shall by force or threat of force, willfully injure, intimidate or interfere with, or attempt to injure, intimidate or interfere with, or oppress or threaten any other person in the free exercise or enjoyment of any right or privilege secured to him by the constitution or laws of the Commonwealth or by the constitution or laws of the United States.
- Malicious Destruction of Property (GL c. 266, § 127). Whoever destroys or injures the personal property, dwelling house or building of another.

Athletes and Participants in School-Related Activities

General

Athletes and participants in school-related activities shall be governed by local and state law, MIAA regulations, the Policies Handbook of the Worcester Public Schools, and rules included in the Worcester Public Schools Code of Conduct for Athletes and Participants in School-Related Activities.

Academic Requirements

1. A student must secure during the last marking period preceding the contest (e.g. second quarter marks determine third quarter eligibility) a passing grade in the equivalent of four traditional year long major courses. In addition, students need a minimum GPA of 2.0.

Deleted

New-Added

Original Language

LEGAL POLICIES

DUE PROCESS

The Code of Conduct of the Worcester Public Schools is administered within the framework of the United States Constitution and federal and state laws and regulations with regard to due process for students. The Code of Conduct is intended to be administered for disciplinary infractions that occur on school grounds or at school-sponsored events (on and off school grounds) OR for disciplinary infractions that occur off school grounds but substantially disrupt the educational environment or create a hostile environment at school.

The Worcester Public Schools adheres to the Student Discipline Laws and Regulations as set forth in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 37H, 37 H1/2 and 37 H ¾ and 603 CMR 53.00 et seq.

All students have the constitutional right (Goss v. Lopez) to receive due process procedures including notice and the right to a hearing where required in matters of suspension, transfer and expulsion.

Section I

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION DUE PROCESS PROCEDURES:

A student may be removed from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for up to ten (10) consecutive school days or up to ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. Students who are placed in in-school suspension shall have the opportunity to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the in-school suspension.

A student who is unable to consistently adhere to acceptable classroom standards in a particular class may be removed from the class permanently and assigned to a different class at the discretion of the principal and/or his/her designee.

Notice of In-School Suspension:

The principal or his/her designee shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student with an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal or his/her designee determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal or his/her designee shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed ten (10) days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal or his/her designee shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension.

On the day of the suspension, the principal or his/her designee shall send written notice (by hand-delivery, certified mail, first class mail or email) to the student and parent including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting if the meeting has not already occurred. The notice shall be in English and the primary language of the home if another language is identified in the home language survey, or by other means, as appropriate.

Parent Meeting:

The principal or his designee shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal or his/her designee is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

No Right to Appeal:

The decision of the Principal or his/her designee is the final decision for in-school suspensions not exceeding ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year.

Due process for a student who is subject to suspension for ten days or less includes:

- a. oral or written notice of the charges against him/her;
- b. an explanation of the basis of the accusation; and

c. the opportunity to present his/her side of the story to an impartial decision-maker (who may be a school administrator). Notice of the suspension and hearing will occur before a student is asked to leave school, except when a student presents an immediate threat to school officials, other students, or him/herself, or clearly endangers the school environment. In this case, the hearing may be delayed, but will be held within a reasonable period of time.

Section II

OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION DUE PROCESS PROCEDURES:

Due Process Procedures for Out-of-School Suspensions:

There are two types of out-of-school suspensions, Short-Term Suspensions and Long-Term Suspensions. The principal or his/her designee shall determine the extent of the rights to be afforded the student at a disciplinary hearing based on the anticipated consequences for the disciplinary offense. If the consequence may be long-term suspension from school, the principal or his/her designee shall afford the student, additional rights as described below, in addition to those rights afforded to students who may face a short-term suspension from school. All students facing out-of-school suspension shall have the right to oral and written notice, as described below.

Notice for Any Out-of-School Suspension:

Prior to suspending a student, the Principal or his/her designee will provide the student and the Parent oral and written notice of the possible suspension, an opportunity for the student to have a hearing and the opportunity of the Parent(s) to participate in the hearing. The notice will be in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English as identified in the home language survey, or by other means of communication where appropriate. The notice will set forth in plain language:

- (a) the disciplinary offense;
 - (b) the basis for the charge;
 - (c) the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
 - (d) the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal or his designee concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing;
 - (e) the date, time, and location of the hearing;
 - (f) the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;
 - (g) if the student may be placed on long-term suspension following the hearing with the principal:
1. the rights set forth in 603 CMR 53.08(3)(b) ; and
 2. the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.

The principal or his/her designee shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. Prior to conducting a hearing without the parent present, the principal or his/her designee will document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The principal or his/her designee is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the principal or his/her designee has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

Written notice to the parent may be made by hand delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and parent.

Emergency Removal of Student:

Under certain emergency circumstances, it may not be practical for the principal or his/her designee to provide prior oral and written notice before removing a student from school. The principal or his/her designee may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's (or his/her designee's) judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The principal or his/her designee will immediately notify the superintendent in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the principal shall:

- (a) Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, the potential consequences, including potential length of suspension, the opportunity for a hearing including the date/time/location of the hearing, the right to interpreter services, and other rights permitted for students who may be placed on long-term suspension as set forth in 603 CMR. 53.08(3)(b);
- (b) Provide written notice to the student and parent, including the information described in 603 CMR 53.06(2);

- (c) Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal or his/her designee that complies with 603 CMR 53.08(2) or 53.08(3), as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent.
- (d) Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(2)(c) and 53.08(2)(d) or 603 CMR 53.08(3)(c) and 53.08(3)(d), as applicable.

A principal will not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

SHORT-TERM SUSPENSION PROCEDURES:

A Short-Term Suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. Any student facing a potential short-term suspension is entitled to a hearing with the Principal or his/her designee with the following process:

Principal Hearing - Short-term Suspension:

- (a) The purpose of the hearing with the principal or his/her designee is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the principal or his/her designee shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts that the principal or his/her designee should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as alternatives to suspension. The principal or his/her designee shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.
- (b) Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal or his/her designee shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.
- (c) The principal or his/her designee shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in 603 CMR 53.13(1). The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.
- (d) If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

No Right to Appeal:

The decision of the Principal or his/her designee is the final decision for short-term out-of-school suspensions not exceeding ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year.

LONG-TERM SUSPENSION PROCEDURES:

A Long-Term Suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, §37 H, or in Massachusetts General laws Chapter 71 § 37H ½, no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than ninety (90) school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed. Any student facing a potential long-term suspension is entitled to a hearing with the Principal or his/her designee with the following process

Principal Hearing - Long-term Suspension:

- (a) The purpose of the hearing with the principal or his/her designee is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the principal or his/her designee shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal should consider in determining whether

other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as alternatives to suspension. The principal or his/her designee shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

(b) In addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following additional rights:

1. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
2. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;
3. the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so;
4. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
5. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

(c) The principal or his/her designee shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

(d) Based on the evidence, the principal or his/her designee shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The principal or his/her designee shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent. If the principal or his/her designee decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall:

1. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
2. Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
3. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
4. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school;
5. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or designee, but only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English as determined by the home language survey, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language:
 - a) the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.
 - (d) If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the suspension takes effect.

Superintendent's Appeal Hearing:

- (1) A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the principal shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or his/her designee.
- (2) The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days. If the appeal is not timely filed, the superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.
- (3) The superintendent or his/her designee shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the superintendent shall grant the extension.
- (4) The superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would

allow the parent and superintendent to participate. The superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

(5) The superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request. The superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

(6) The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension.

(7) The superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(3)(c)1 through 5. If the superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal's decision.

(8) The decision of the superintendent shall be the final decision of the school district, with regard to the suspension.

A parent conference (re-entry meeting) with the Principal or his/her designee is strongly encouraged before students who are suspended return to school. This conference will be used to promote the engagement of the parents or guardians in discussions of the student's misconduct and to assist the student in re-engaging with the school community.

Where a student has been charged with a violation of either Rule 3, 7, 8 (except Rule 8c) or 18 and expulsion or a long-term suspension by a school principal is a possibility, then the student shall be notified, in writing, of an opportunity for a hearing before the school principal.

- a. The student shall be given written notice of the charges.
- b. At the hearing before the school principal, the student has the right to be represented by counsel or an advocate. The student also has the right to present witnesses and to cross-examine witnesses. In advance of the hearing, the student and his/her parent/guardian has the right to obtain copies of any and all witness statements, including statements by the student him/herself as well as copies of any statements given by witnesses (unless withheld for the witnesses' own protection from reprisal), along with access to any and all physical evidence which the school intends to present at the hearing.
- c. Any student who has been expelled or issued a long-term suspension by the school principal for a violation of either Rule 3, 7 or 8 (except 8c) may appeal to the Superintendent. The appeal must be filed within ten (10) days of the expulsion or a long-term suspension. The student has a right to be represented by counsel or an advocate at a hearing before the Superintendent.

Section III

LONG-TERM SUSPENSION/EXPULSION FOR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES:

The long-term suspension or expulsion of a student from school will be in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section, 37H. The grounds for long term suspension or expulsion include but are not limited to the following:

- I. any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun, a knife, or their facsimile, or anything used in the commission of assault and battery; or a controlled substance as defined in Chapter 94 C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to long-term suspension or expulsion from the school by the principal or his/her designee.
- II. Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to long-term suspension or expulsion from the school or school district by the principal or his/her designee.
- III. Due process for a student who is subject to an expulsion or a long-term suspension as a result of possessing drugs/weapons or assaulting school staff includes:
 - a. A student shall receive written notice before the expulsion or a long-term suspension takes place and written notice of the right to appeal.
 - b. The student shall be given an opportunity for a hearing and the opportunity to present witnesses and evidence. The student may have an attorney at their own expense.
 - c. Following the hearing, the principal or his/her designee may, in his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel the student.
 - d. The student may appeal the expulsion or long-term suspension to the Superintendent provided the appeal is requested in writing, within ten (10) calendar days following the long-term suspension or expulsion.
 - e. At the appeal hearing the student may be represented by an attorney and may present oral and written testimony.
 - f. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of MGL c. 71 Section 37H.

- g. The Superintendent's decision is final.
- h. Any student who is suspended or expelled for more than ten (10) consecutive days shall have the opportunity to receive education services and made academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS WITH FELONY COMPLAINT OR CONVICTION:

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71 (§37 H ½), principals have the authority to suspend students charged with a felony and expel or issue a long-term suspension to students convicted or adjudicated of committing a felony if the principal has determined that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Due process for a student who is subject to suspension as a result of a felony charge includes:

- a. The student shall receive written notice before the suspension takes effect and written notice of the right to appeal.
- b. The student shall be given an opportunity to respond to the charges before the suspension takes effect.
- c. The student may appeal the suspension to the Superintendent, provided the appeal is requested in writing within five (5) calendar days following the suspension.
- d. The Superintendent must hold the appeal hearing within three (3) calendar days of the request.
- e. At the appeal hearing the student may be represented by an attorney. The student has the right to present oral or written testimony on his/her behalf.
- f. The Superintendent must render a decision within five (5) calendar days.
- g. The Superintendent's decision is final.
- h. Any student who is suspended or expelled pursuant to this section shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his/her removal.
- i. Any student who is suspended or expelled for more than ten (10) consecutive days shall have the opportunity to receive education services and made academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

Due process for a student who is subject to an expulsion or a long-term suspension as a result of a felony conviction includes:

- a. A student shall receive written notice before the expulsion or a long-term suspension takes place and written notice of the right to appeal.
- b. The student shall be given an opportunity to respond to the charges.
- c. The student may appeal the expulsion or long-term suspension to the Superintendent provided the appeal is requested in writing, within five (5) calendar days following the expulsion.
- d. The Superintendent must hold the appeal hearing within three (3) calendar days of the request.
- e. At the appeal hearing the student may be represented by an attorney and may present oral and written testimony.
- f. The Superintendent must render a decision within five (5) calendar days.
- g. The Superintendent's decision is final.
- h. Any student who is suspended or expelled for more than ten (10) consecutive days shall have the opportunity to receive education services and made academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

Where the injury to another person or property or the effect of the student's conduct on the school community is so severe as to warrant more than a ten-day suspension, or where expulsion or a long-term suspension by the School Committee is a possible penalty, the matter shall be referred to the Superintendent or his designee within two (2) school days of the initial suspension. The student shall be informed of the discipline referral by the school administrator.

- a. No later than the expiration of the period of initial suspension, the Superintendent or his designee shall schedule a full evidentiary hearing to determine whether:
 - 1. The student's conduct warrants an extension of the suspension for a period not to exceed 10 days;
 - 2. The student should return to school pending a referral to the School Committee for further disciplinary action; or
 - 3. If the Superintendent or his designee finds that the student's presence in school presents a danger to himself or others, the student's suspension should be extended for a period not to exceed 10 days pending an exclusion or a long-term suspension hearing before the School Committee.

The student will be given written notice of the charges. At the hearing before the Superintendent or his designee (all witnesses will be sworn), the student shall have the right to be represented by counsel or an advocate of his choice. The student shall have

the right to present witnesses on his/her own behalf and to cross-examine witnesses. In advance of the hearing and upon request, the student shall have the right to obtain any documentary evidence which is to be presented before the Superintendent or his designee. Following the hearing, the student or his designee shall be issued a copy of the decision containing the specific findings of fact.

b. If the Superintendent or his designee refers the matter to the School Committee, the student will be notified in writing of the date, time and place of the hearing. The School Committee hearing shall be limited to a review of the findings and conclusions of the Superintendent's or his designee's written decision and a consideration of the Superintendent's recommendations regarding:

1. adoption of the decision; and
2. imposing the proposed disciplinary action.

The student and/or his/her advocate shall be entitled to appear before the School Committee and speak on the student's behalf. No evidence shall be presented at this hearing unless the evidence was unknown or unavailable at the time of the evidentiary hearing before the Superintendent or his designee.

The School Committee shall have the option to accept the findings and conclusions of the Superintendent or his designee or it shall remand the matter back to the Superintendent or his designee for further consideration. The School Committee shall have the option to affirm, modify, or reject the Superintendent's recommendation regarding disciplinary action.

The School Committee shall provide its written decision within a reasonable period after the hearing.

Section IV

EDUCATION SERVICES AND ACADEMIC PROGRESS UNDER SECTIONS 37H, 37H1/2 AND 37H3/4:

Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71 (§37 H ½), principals have the authority to suspend students charged with a felony and expel or issue a long-term suspension to students convicted or adjudicated of committing a felony if the principal has determined that the student's continued presence would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Due process for a student who is subject to suspension as a result of a felony charge includes:

- a. The student shall receive written notice before the suspension takes effect.
- b. The student shall be given an opportunity to respond to the charges before the suspension takes effect.
- c. The student may appeal the suspension to the Superintendent, provided the appeal is requested in writing within five (5) calendar days following the suspension.
- d. The Superintendent must hold the appeal hearing within three (3) calendar days of the request.
- e. At the appeal hearing the student may be represented by an attorney. The student has the right to present oral or written testimony on his/her behalf.
- f. The Superintendent must render a decision within five (5) calendar days.

Due process for a student who is subject to an expulsion or a long-term suspension as a result of a felony conviction includes:

- a. A student shall receive written notice before the expulsion or a long-term suspension takes place.
- b. The student shall be given an opportunity to respond to the charges.
- c. The student may appeal the expulsion or long-term suspension to the Superintendent provided the appeal is requested in writing, within five (5) calendar days following the expulsion.
- d. The Superintendent must hold the appeal hearing within three (3) calendar days of the request.
- e. At the appeal hearing the student may be represented by an attorney.
- f. The Superintendent must render a decision within five (5) calendar days.

Nondiscrimination

Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action/Title IX

ADA Title I Section 504/Chapter 622 Grievance Procedure

The Worcester Public Schools is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer/Educational Institution and does not discriminate regardless of race, color, gender, age, religion, gender identity, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or homelessness. The Worcester Public Schools provides equal access to employment and the full range of general, occupational and vocational education programs. For more information related to Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action, contact Stacey DeBoise Luster, Human Resource Manager, 20 Irving Street, Worcester, MA 01609 (508) 799-3020.

INITIAL NOTICE OF POTENTIAL DISCIPLINE LETTER

VIA (Method of Delivery)

Date

Name of Student and Parents

Student's Address

RE: (full name of student) - Notice of Alleged Violation and Potential Consequences

Dear Mr. and Mrs. _____:

I write to inform you that your child, (full name of student), is alleged to have violated a school rule as set forth in the Worcester Public School Code of Conduct and policies. In particular, on (date), your child, (full name of student) was involved in (describe incident _____), which is an infraction of the Code of Conduct, Rule ___ at page __. A copy of the handbook and the state disciplinary regulations are available at the school district website at www.worcesterschools.org and are also available at the Principal's Office. The Worcester Public School District and state laws/regulations require that I exercise discretion in determining disciplinary consequences for the student, and I will do so in this matter.

The factual basis for the alleged violation of the above cited rule is: (be specific and detailed _____). Please be advised that the investigation into this matter is ongoing and the school district reserves the right to amend this notice and to adjust the charges as appropriate.

I invite you, as parents/legal guardians, and the student to a hearing on (date) at (time) in the (location), which will be your and the student's opportunity to provide his/her side of the story and to dispute the allegations. If you or the student needs an interpreter or chooses to have counsel attend the hearing, please let us know at least 48 hours before the hearing so that we can arrange for an interpreter and/or the presence of district counsel.

At this hearing, I will hear and consider the disciplinary offense and pertinent information about the incident and the factual basis for the charges. You and the student may dispute the charges, present information, including mitigating facts and may discuss with me the student's conduct and any mitigating circumstances that I should consider in determining consequences for the student.

The range of consequences under the Code of Conduct and school policies for this offense includes:

- written warning
- in-school suspension
- short-term suspension
- long-term suspension
- termination of extra-curricular or other activities, including sports
- restorative justice (restitution, fines, community service)
- other (**specify**)

By checking a box below, I have indicated the potential consequences for the offense on which we are proceeding to hearing.

A. In-School Suspension: This is a removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or nor more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. In-school suspension is also available as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.

There is no appeal to the Superintendent for an in-school suspension.

B. Short Term Suspension: This is a removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. I may, in my discretion, allow the student to serve a short-term suspension in school.

There is no appeal to the Superintendent for a short-term suspension.

C. Long-Term Suspension: This is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year.

If the offense may result in the student's suspension for more than ten (10) consecutive days or cumulatively in a year, the parent/guardian and student have the following rights:

1. the right to review the student's record and the documents upon which I may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
2. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of your choice, at your expense;
3. the right to produce witnesses on your behalf and present your explanation of the alleged incident, but you may not be compelled to do so;
4. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
5. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request.

You have the right to appeal to the Superintendent any decision made to impose a long-term school suspension.

After hearing the evidence I will determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension as set forth in 603 CMR 53.05, what remedy or consequence will be imposed. I will issue a decision to you in writing. My decision will state my reasons therefore and the type and duration of any suspension or other consequences, including any conditions for the student's re-entry to a school setting. In the case of a long-term suspension, I will notify you of the student's appeal rights. During any suspension, the student is entitled to maintain his/her academic standing by continuing to complete his/her assignments and make academic progress.

Please contact my office at _____ to confirm this hearing date and time and to inform me whether you intend to be represented by counsel so that we might arrange to have school counsel present.

If this box is checked, your child is a student who receives educational services pursuant to an IEP or 504 Plan and the Special Education Department will contact you to arrange for a manifestation determination meeting.

Very truly yours,

School Principal

Cc: Dr. Marco Rodrigues, Chief Academic Officer
_____, Quadrant Manager
Robert F. Pezzella, School Safety Liasion
_____, Team Chair or 504 Coordinator

NOTICE OF IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Via Hand Delivery and Regular Mail

Date

Student's Address

RE: *(full name of student)* -In-School Suspension/Determination Letter

Dear Mr. and Mrs. _____,

Today *(full name of student)* was suspended on an in-school basis for violations of the Worcester Public Schools Code of Conduct. The suspension was imposed after it was determined that you or your child did *[be specific]* _____].

This in-school suspension shall be for the duration of _____ days, beginning on _____ and ending on _____, 2014. During the in-school suspension, your child will have the opportunity to make up assignments and other school work as needed to make academic progress.

The Massachusetts Student Discipline regulations, 603 CMR 53.00, defines an "in-school suspension" as "removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year." There is no right to appeal this decision.

If you would like to meet to discuss this in-house suspension, please contact me at _____ at your earliest convenience so that we can discuss the behavior and your child's academic performance, along with options for responding to this behavior going forward.

Very truly yours,

School Principal

cc: _____, Quadrant Manager

NOTICE OF SHORT-TERM SUSPENSION

Via Hand Delivery and Regular Mail

Date

Student's Address

RE: *(full name of student)* - Short-Term Suspension/Determination Letter

Dear Mr. and Mrs. ,

I am updating my written notice dated _____, which outlines the allegations that *(full name of student)* violated the Worcester Public Schools Code of Conduct, Rule _____. I have determined that there is sufficient and credible evidence to determine that the student did violate Rule _____.

In making my decision, I have carefully weighed the following information and evidence:

- _____
- _____

I have based my decision on the following facts and information and any mitigating circumstances:

- _____
- _____

As a result, I have decided that a short-term suspension is warranted. Pursuant to the Massachusetts Student Discipline regulations, 603 CMR 53.02, a "short-term suspension" is defined as "removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less." During the suspension, the student may not be on school property or attend school events or activities.

Accordingly, _____ will be suspended on a short-term basis for _____ school days. The suspension will begin on *(date)* and end on *(date)*. During this period of suspension the student has the opportunity to make-up assignments or other schoolwork as needed to maintain his/her academic standing and progress.

There is no appeal to the Superintendent for a short-term suspension. If you have any questions about access academic opportunities during this short- term suspension please contact _____.

Very truly yours,

School Principal

cc: _____, Quadrant Manager

NOTICE OF LONG-TERM SUSPENSION

Via Hand Delivery and Regular Mail

Date

Student's Address

RE: *(full name of student)* -Long-Term Suspension/Determination Letter

Dear Mr. and Mrs. _____,

I am writing to advise you of my determination regarding the allegations that *(full name of student)* violated the Worcester Public Schools Code of Conduct as set out in my written notice dated _____. A hearing on this matter took place on _____, 2014 at _____. In attendance were the following persons: _____, *[identify school personnel/parent/students/counsel/witnesses]*.

After presenting you and the student with information leading to the charges, I considered all of the information presented and concluded, based upon documents, if any, and the following information that the student violated the Worcester Public Schools Code of Conduct, specifically *[identify section of Code violated _____]*:

In making my decision, I have carefully weighed the following information and evidence:

- _____
- _____

I have based my decision on the following facts and information and any mitigating circumstances:

- _____
- _____

As I have concluded that the student violated the Code of Conduct, I am suspending _____ from school for _____ days, beginning on _____. You may return on _____, 2014. During the suspension, the student may not be on school property or attend school events or activities. During the suspension, the student may make up assignments or other schoolwork as needed to make academic progress. This opportunity includes access to the school-wide education plan which addresses state and local academic standards and curriculum frameworks under Massachusetts law.

Because this is a long-term suspension, the student may file an appeal to the superintendent or her designee. You may exercise the student's right to file an appeal in writing by submitting a written appeal to the Superintendent's Office within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the suspension. You may also, within five (5) calendar days of the principal's imposition of the suspension, request from the Superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice of appeal for up to seven (7) additional calendar days. The long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Superintendent or her designee decides to reverse my determination.

If you do not file a timely appeal, the Superintendent may choose not to hear the case. If you file a timely appeal, or if the Superintendent decides to hear your late appeal, a hearing shall be held within three (3) school days of your request unless you and the student requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days for a hearing with the Superintendent. The Superintendent will make a good faith effort to include the student and parents/guardians in the hearing by making efforts to find a date and time for a hearing which would allow you and the student to attend and participate. You will receive a written notification from the Superintendent of the date, time, and location of the appeal.

The Superintendent or her designee will conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense in question and if so, what shall be an appropriate consequence.

At the appeal hearing with the Superintendent, the student shall have the following rights:

- the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal relied upon in making a determination to suspend the student;
- the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;
- the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so;
- the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
- the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the Superintendent, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the Superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

The Superintendent will issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. If the Superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, she may impose the same or lesser consequence imposed by me, but will not impose a suspension greater than what is stated in this letter. The decision of the Superintendent shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension.

A copy of the school-wide educational services plan is enclosed. You should review the plan and choose the educational services that you seek from the list. I will then arrange for you to receive these services. If you have any questions about access to the school-wide educational plan or academic opportunities during this long- term suspension please contact _____.

Very truly yours,

School Principal

Enclosure – Educational Services Plan

cc: Dr. Melinda Boone, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Marco Rodrigues, Chief Academic Officer
_____, Quadrant Manager
Robert Pezzella, School Safety Liaison

EMERGENCY REMOVAL LETTER

Via Hand Delivery and Regular Mail

Date

Student's Address

RE: (full name of student) -Emergency Removal/Determination Letter

Dear Mr. and Mrs.,

Your child, _____ was charged with a disciplinary offense alleging a violation of a provision of the Worcester Public Schools Code of Conduct, Rule _____.
The specific facts leading to this allegation were as follows: _____
_____.

Please be advised that the investigation into this matter is ongoing and the school district reserves the right to amend this notice and to adjust the charges as appropriate.

Consistent with Massachusetts Student Discipline regulations, 603 CMR 53.07 and M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H^{3/4}, I have decided to impose an emergency temporary removal of the student from school for two (2) school days as I have concluded that the continued presence of the student at school poses a danger to persons and property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school. In my judgment, there is no alternative to temporary emergency removal which alleviates this danger or disruption. During this temporary removal, the student may not be on school property or attend school events or activities.

I am notifying the Superintendent in writing of this removal which shall not exceed two (2) school days following the date of the incident.

You and the student have the opportunity for a hearing with me before the expiration of the two (2) school day emergency temporary removal unless we reach an otherwise agreeable time to meet. I will render a decision orally on the day of the hearing and in writing no later than the following school day outlining the basis for this action and appeal rights if applicable. I will send you another notice with the hearing date and time. If you have any questions, please contact me at _____.

Very truly yours,

School Principal

cc: Dr. Marco Rodrigues, Chief Academic Officer
_____, Quadrant Manager
Robert Pezzella, School Safety Liaison

**NOTICE TO SUPERINTENDENT OF POSSIBLE SUSPENSION:
PREKINDERGARTEN THROUGH THIRD GRADE STUDENT**

TO: Superintendent or her Designee

FROM: Principal

DATE:

Please be advised that on (*date*) _____ I held a hearing to determine whether to impose a suspension on (*name of student*) _____, who is in grade _____.

After considering all of the information and documentation, I have decided to impose an out-of-school suspension upon the student for _____ days. The reason for this suspension is set forth in the Notice of Suspension Determination attached to this letter.

Very truly yours,

School Principal

Enclosures – Notice of Suspension

DATE RECEIVED BY SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE: _____

cc: Quadrant Office
Robert Pezzella, School Safety Liaison

Education Laws and Regulations

603 CMR 53.00

Student Discipline - Effective July 1, 2014

Section:

- 53.01: Authority, Purpose, and Scope
 - 53.02: Definitions
 - 53.03: Policies and Procedures
 - 53.04: Investigation of Disciplinary Incidents
 - 53.05: Alternatives to Suspension under Section 37H $\frac{3}{4}$
 - 53.06: Notice of Suspension and Hearing under Section 37H $\frac{3}{4}$
 - 53.07: Emergency Removal under Section 37H $\frac{3}{4}$
 - 53.08: Principal's Hearing under Section 37H $\frac{3}{4}$
 - 53.09: Superintendent's Hearing under Section 37H $\frac{3}{4}$
 - 53.10: In-School Suspension under Section 37H $\frac{3}{4}$
 - 53.11: Exclusion from Extracurricular Activities and School-Sponsored Events
 - 53.12: Disciplinary Offenses under Section 37H or 37H $\frac{1}{2}$
 - 53.13: Education Services and Academic Progress under Sections 37H, 37H $\frac{1}{2}$, 37H $\frac{3}{4}$
 - 53.14: Student Suspension and Expulsion Data Collection and Reporting
- View All Sections

The Student Discipline Regulations were approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education on April 29, 2014. They are effective July 1, 2014.

53.01: Authority, Scope, and Purpose

- (1) 603 CMR 53.00 is promulgated pursuant to the authority of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education under G.L. c. 69, §§ 1A and 1B, G.L. c. 71, §37H, and G.L. c. 71, § 37H $\frac{3}{4}$
- (2) The purpose of 603 CMR 53.00 is:

- (a) for those discipline offenses subject to G.L. 71, § 37H $\frac{3}{4}$, as set forth in 603 CMR 53.01(3)(a), to limit the use of long-term suspension as a consequence for student misconduct until other consequences have been considered and tried as appropriate;
- (b) to promote engagement of a student's parent in discussion of the student's misconduct, and options for responding to it;
- (c) to assure that every student who is expelled or suspended, regardless of the reason for suspension or expulsion, has the opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of suspension or expulsion; and,
- (d) to keep schools safe and supportive for all students while ensuring fair and effective disciplinary practices.

- (3) 603 CMR 53.00 sets forth, for all public preschool, elementary, and secondary schools and programs in Massachusetts, including charter and virtual schools:

- (a) at 603 CMR 53.03 through 53.11, the minimum procedural requirements applicable to the suspension of a student for a disciplinary offense *other than*: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H $\frac{1}{2}$;
- (b) the minimum requirements and procedures necessary to ensure that all students who have been suspended, in-school or out-of-school, or expelled, regardless of the type of offense, have an opportunity to make academic progress during their period of suspension, expulsion, or removal from regular classroom activities; and
- (c) the requirements pertaining to school discipline data reporting and analysis.

53.02: Definitions

- (1) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education appointed in accordance with G.L. c. 15, §1F, or his or her designee.
- (2) "Department" means the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
- (3) "Disciplinary offense" means any alleged or determined disciplinary infraction by a student, *except for*: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H $\frac{1}{2}$. A disciplinary offense, as defined, is subject to the provisions of G.L. c. 71, § 37H $\frac{3}{4}$ and these regulations.
- (4) "Disciplinary offense under G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H $\frac{1}{2}$ " means one or more of the following alleged or determined disciplinary infractions: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; and d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H $\frac{1}{2}$.
- (5) "Expulsion" means the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently, as permitted under G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H $\frac{1}{2}$ for: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H $\frac{1}{2}$.
- (6) "In-school suspension" means removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. In-school suspension for ten (10) days or less, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, shall not be considered a short-term suspension under these regulations. If a student is placed in in-school suspension for more than ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, such suspension shall be deemed a long-term suspension for due process, appeal, and reporting purposes under 603 CMR 53.00.
- (7) "Long-term suspension" means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. A principal may, in his or her discretion, allow a student to serve a long-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or

school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in subsections (a) or (b) of G.L. c. 71, §37 H, or in section 37H ½ of G.L. c. 71, no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than ninety (90) school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.

(8) "Parent" means a student's father, mother, or legal guardian, or person or agency legally authorized to act on behalf of the student in place of or in conjunction with the father, mother, or legal guardian.

(9) "Principal" means the instructional leader or headmaster of a public school or his or her designee for purposes of school disciplinary matters. The board of trustees of a charter school or virtual school shall designate in the school discipline code who will serve as the principal for purposes of 603 CMR 53.00.

(10) "School-wide education service plan" means the document developed by a principal, in accordance with G.L. c. 76, §21, that includes a list of education services available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than 10 consecutive days.

(11) "Short-term suspension" means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. A principal may, in his or her discretion, allow a student to serve a short-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

(12) "Superintendent" means the chief executive officer employed by a school committee or board of trustees to administer a school system, charter school, or virtual school pursuant to G.L. c. 71, §§59, 59A, 89, or 94, or his or her designee appointed for purposes of conducting a student disciplinary hearing. The board of trustees of a charter school or virtual school shall designate in the school's discipline code who will serve as the superintendent for the purposes of 603 CMR 53.00.

(13) "Suspension" means short-term suspension and long-term suspension unless otherwise stated.

53.03: Policies and Procedures

Each school committee and board of trustees shall ensure that policies and procedures are in place in public preschool, elementary, and secondary schools and programs under its jurisdiction that meet, at a minimum, the requirements of G.L. c.71, §37H¾, G.L. c. 76, §21, and 603 CMR 53.00.

53.04: Investigation of Disciplinary Incidents

Nothing in these regulations shall prevent a school administrator from conducting an investigation, including student interviews, of a school-related disciplinary incident.

53.05: Alternatives to Suspension under Section 37H¾

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, a principal shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense; consider ways to re-engage the student in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

53.06: Notice of Suspension and Hearing under Section §37H¾

(1) Except as provided in 603 CMR 53.07 and 603 CMR 53.10, a principal may not impose a suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent oral and written notice, and providing the student an opportunity for a hearing on the charge and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing.

(2) The principal shall provide oral and written notice to the student and the parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall set forth in plain language:

- (a) the disciplinary offense;
- (b) the basis for the charge;
- (c) the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
- (d) the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing;
- (e) the date, time, and location of the hearing;
- (f) the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;
- (g) if the student may be placed on long-term suspension following the hearing with the principal:
 1. the rights set forth in 603 CMR 53.08 (3)(b); and
 2. the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.

(3) The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The principal is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the principal has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

(4) Written notice to the parent may be made by hand delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and parent.

53.07: Emergency Removal under Section 37H^{3/4}

(1) Nothing in these regulations shall prevent a principal from removing a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The principal shall immediately notify the superintendent in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the principal shall:

- (a) Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the other matters set forth in 603 CMR 53.06(2);
 - (b) Provide written notice to the student and parent as provided in 603 CMR 53.06(2);
 - (c) Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal that complies with 603 CMR 53.08(2) or 53.08(3), as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent.
 - (d) Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(2)(c) and 53.08(2)(d) or 603 CMR 53.08(3)(c) and 53.08(3)(d), as applicable.
- (2) A principal may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

53.08: Principal's Hearing under Section 37H^{3/4}

(1) The principal shall determine the extent of the rights to be afforded the student at a disciplinary hearing based on the anticipated consequences for the disciplinary offense. If the consequence may be long-term suspension from school, the principal shall afford the student, at a minimum, all the rights set forth in 603 CMR 53.08(3) in addition to those rights afforded to students who may face a short-term suspension from school.

(2) Principal Hearing - Short-term Suspension

Page 4

- (a) The purpose of the hearing with the principal is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the principal shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as set forth in 603 CMR 53.05. The principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.
 - (b) Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.
 - (c) The principal shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in 603 CMR 53.13(1). The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.
 - (d) If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.
- (3) Principal Hearing - Long-term Suspension

(a) The purpose of the hearing is the same as the purpose of a short-term suspension hearing.

(b) At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights:

1. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
2. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;
3. the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so;
4. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
5. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

(c) The principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

(d) Based on the evidence, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension as set forth in 603 CMR 53.05, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent. If the principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall:

1. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
2. Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
3. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
4. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as provided in 603 CMR 53.13(4)(a);
5. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or designee, but only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language:

- a) the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that
- b) the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.
- (e) If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long-term, before the suspension takes effect.

53.09: Superintendent's Hearing under Section 37H^{3/4}

- (1) A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the principal shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.
- (2) The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the superintendent within the time period set forth 603 CMR 53.08 (3) (c) 5.a). If the appeal is not timely filed, the superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.
- (3) The superintendent shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the superintendent shall grant the extension.
- (4) The superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and superintendent to participate. The superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.
- (5) The superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request. The superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.
- (6) The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension under 603 CMR 53.08(3)(b).
- (7) The superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(3)(c)1 through 5. If the superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal's decision.
- (8) The decision of the superintendent shall be the final decision of the school district, charter school, or virtual school, with regard to the suspension.

53.10: In-School Suspension under Section 37H^{3/4}

- (1) The principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.
- (2) The principal may impose an in-school suspension for a disciplinary offense under this provision, provided that the principal follows the process set forth in 603 CMR 53.10(3) through 603 CMR 53.10(5) and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress as set forth in 603 CMR 53.13(1).
- (3) The principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed 10 days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.
- (4) On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.
- (5) The principal shall send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the principal for the purpose set forth in 603 CMR 53.10(4), if such meeting has not already occurred. The principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

53.11: Emergency Removal under Section 37H^{3/4}

The principal may remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct. Such a removal is not subject to the procedures in G.L. c. 71, § 37H^{3/4} or 603 CMR 53.00.

53.12: Disciplinary Offenses under Section 37H or 37H^{1/2}

- (1) School districts shall adopt disciplinary policies and procedures applicable to a student who is accused of a disciplinary offense under G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H^{1/2}. Such policies and procedures shall be consistent with the applicable statute and provide due process of law.
- (2) The principal may remove a student who has committed a disciplinary offense under G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H^{1/2} from school for more than ninety (90) days in a school year.
- (3) Any student who is removed from school for a disciplinary offense under G.L. c. 71, §37H or §37H^{1/2} shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in 603 CMR 53.13.

53.13: Education Services and Academic Progress under Sections 37H, 37H^{1/2}, and 37H^{3/4}

- (1) Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

(2) Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

(3) The principal shall develop a school-wide education service plan describing the education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days. The plan shall include the process for notifying such students and their parents of the services and arranging such services. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under G.L. c 69, §§ 1D and 1F.

(4) Notice of Education Services for Students in Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion; Enrollment Reporting.

(a) The principal shall notify the parent and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

(b) For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in-school or out-of-school, the school district shall document the student's enrollment in education services. For data reporting purposes, the school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department.

53.14: Student Suspension and Expulsion Data Collection and Reporting

(1) Every school district, charter school, and virtual school shall collect and annually report data to the Department regarding in-school suspensions, short- and long-term suspensions, expulsions, emergency removals under 603 CMR 53.07, access to education services under 603 CMR 53.13, and such other information as may be required by the Department. Such data shall be reported in a manner and form directed by the Department.

(2) The principal of each school shall periodically review discipline data by selected student populations, including but not limited to race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, English language learner status, and student with a disability status. In reviewing the data, the principal shall assess the extent of in-school suspensions, short- and long-term suspensions, expulsions, and emergency removals under 603 CMR 53.07, and the impact of such disciplinary action on selected student populations. The principal shall further determine whether it is necessary or appropriate to modify disciplinary practices due to over-reliance on expulsion, in-school or out-of-school suspension, or emergency removals, or the impact of such suspensions, removals, and expulsions on selected student populations compared with other students.

(3) In the fall of each year, the Department shall publish an analysis and report of student discipline data disaggregated by district and school, and by selected student populations, included but not limited to race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, English language learner status, and student with a disability status. The data shall be reported in a manner that protects the identity of each student and shall be made available to the public online in a machine readable format.

(4) The Department shall annually determine the schools with the highest percentage of students expelled or placed on long-term suspension for more than ten (10) cumulative days in a school year. After review of the discipline data described in 603 CMR 53.14(3) and other relevant school and district information, including but not limited to student demographics, student performance, promotion, attendance, attrition, graduation, and dropout rates, the Commissioner shall identify schools that need assistance to reduce over-reliance on long-term suspension or expulsion as a consequence for student misconduct. The Department shall identify models that such schools may use to incorporate intermediate steps before long-term suspension and expulsion and to foster positive school climate.

Through use of statistical analysis, the Commissioner shall identify schools and districts with data that reflect significant disparities in the rate of suspension and expulsion by race and ethnicity, or disability. Such schools and districts shall develop and implement a plan approved by the Department to address such significant disparities.

Regulatory Authority:

M.G.L. c. 71 § 38R and Chapter 77 of the Acts of 2013

Disclaimer:

For an official copy of these regulations, please contact the State House Bookstore, at 617-727-2834 or visit <http://www.state.ma.us/sec/spr/sprinf/infocode.htm>

X. GENERAL BUSINESS
Administration
(September 18, 2014)

ITEM - gb #4-253
S.C. MEETING - 9-18-14

ITEM:

To consider approval of an amendment to the policy relative to the Athletes and Participants in School Related Activities section on page 36 of the Policies Handbook.

PRIOR ACTION:

- 9-18-14 - Miss Biancheria made the following motion:
Request that the guidance counselors be notified regarding the amendment to the policy relative to the Athletes and Participants in School Related Activities section on page 36 of the Policies Handbook.
On a voice vote, the motion was approved.
Mr. Monfredo made the following motion:
Request that the Administration review the amended policy in May 2015.
On a voice vote, the motion was approved.
(continued on page 2).

BACKUP:

Annex A (1 page) contains a copy of the proposed amendment to the policy relative to the Athletes and Participants in School Related Activities section on page 36 of the Policies Handbook.

RECOMMENDATION OF MAKER:

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION:

Approve on a roll call.

PRIOR ACTION (continued)

9-18-14 - Mr. O'Connell made the following motion:
(continued) Request that the principals, coaches and guidance counselors provide a status report prior to the School Committee's review of the 2015-16 Policies Handbook.
On a voice vote, the motion was approved.
It was moved to approve the amendment to the policy relative to the Athletes and Participants in School Related Activities section on page 36 of the Policies Handbook.
On a roll call of 6-1 (nay-Ms. Novick), the motion was approved.
It was moved to reconsider the vote to approve the amendment to the policy relative to the Athletes and Participants in School Related Activities section on page 36 of the Policies Handbook.
On a roll call of 1-6 (yea-Ms. Novick), the motion to reconsider was defeated.

The Administration requests the approval of the following amendment to the policy relative to Athletes and Participants in School-Related Activities located on page 36 of the 2014-15 policies handbook.

Academic Requirements

1. A student must secure during the last marking period preceding the contest (e.g., second quarter marks determine third quarter eligibility) a grade of 65 or above in four traditional yearlong major courses. In addition, a student's overall average of all yearlong courses must be a C or above.
2. A student cannot at any time represent a school unless that student is taking courses that would be the equivalent of four traditional yearlong major courses.
3. To be eligible for the fall marking period, students are required to have passed four yearlong classes with a 65 or above. In addition, a student's overall average of all yearlong courses must be a C or above. **Students in grades 10, 11, or 12 are eligible for a one-time-only waiver during their high school years. The waiver is applicable if the student does not meet the C average (minimum of 70) on all yearlong courses in the previous academic year. The one-time-only waiver applies to students whose yearlong course average ranged from 65 to 69 in the previous year.** Incoming 9th graders are exempt from academic requirement in the first quarter only.
4. Academic eligibility of all students shall be considered as official and determining only on the published date when the report cards for that ranking period are to be issued to the parents/guardians of all students.
5. Incomplete grades may not count towards eligibility.
6. A student who repeats work upon which he/she once received credit cannot count that subject a second time for eligibility.
7. A student cannot count for eligibility any subject taken during the summer, unless that subject has been previously pursued and failed.

Rationale:

The district recognizes that the revised policy on Athletes and Participants in School-Related Activities for the 2014-15 represents a shift in the calculation process and that some athlete students may benefit from a one-time-only waiver.

The waiver will assist students in adjusting to the new process and allowing them the opportunity to play sports if their overall average of all yearlong courses last year fell below the C average. We expect that this waiver will serve as a "reminder" for all athlete students, who are serious about participating in school-sponsored sports, that their academic status is the key to sports eligibility.

To be clear, this waiver is a one-time opportunity for eligible students during their high school years and not a yearly waiver opportunity. It is also important to highlight that the waiver eligibility is for students whose overall averages range from 65 and 69, all within MIAA and WPS passing grades.