

CLERK OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
20 IRVING STREET
WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS 01609

AGENDA #17

The School Committee will hold a regular meeting:

on: Thursday, July 19, 2018
at: 4:00 p.m. – Regular Session
5:00 p.m. - Executive Session
6:00 p.m. – Regular Session and Proposed Strategic Plan
in: Esther Howland South Chamber, City Hall

ORDER OF BUSINESS

ACTION

I. CALL TO ORDER

INVOCATION – Reverend Jonathan Slavinkas
St. Bernard's Church of Our Lady of Providence

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

NATIONAL ANTHEM

II. ROLL CALL

III. APPROVAL OF RECORDS -NONE

IV. MOTION FOR RECONSIDERATION - NONE

V. IMMEDIATE ACTION - NONE

VI. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

ROS #8-10 - Administration
(June 25, 2018)

SUPERINTENDENT'S MID-CYCLE REPORT BASED ON HER GOALS

The Worcester Public Schools is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer/Educational Institution and does not discriminate regardless of race, color, gender, age, religion, national origin, gender identity, 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 relating to Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action contact the Human Resource Manager, 20 Irving Street, Worcester, MA 01609, 508-799-3020.

VII. COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS - NONE

ACTION

VIII. REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

The Standing Committee on Teaching, Learning and Student Supports met at 3:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 19, 2018 in the Esther Howland South Chamber at City Hall.

IX. PERSONNEL

- 8-29 The Superintendent has provisionally APPOINTED the person named below to the position of Junior Custodian, permanent/fulltime at a salary of \$16.06 (minimum) to \$20.44 (maximum), per hour, effective as shown:

Sullivan, William 04/17/18

- 8-30 The Superintendent has approved the posting of the following non-represented positions:

School Bus Service Manager
School Bus Router
Acting Transportation Operations Supervisor
Transportation Liaison
School Bus Driver – Full Size School Bus

X. GENERAL BUSINESS

gb #8-153.2 - Administration/Administration
(June 11, 2018)

To discuss the proposed Strategic Plan.

gb #8-173.1 - Miss Biancheria/Mr. Monfredo
(July 11, 2018)

Response of the Administration to the request to provide a report on the number of employees in the Worcester Public Schools who are on administrative leave.

X. GENERAL BUSINESS (continued)

ACTION

gb #8-210 - Miss McCullough/Mr. Monfredo/Miss Biancheria/
Mr. Comparetto/Mr. Foley/Mr. O'Connell/Mayor Petty
(June 18, 2018)

To forward letters of recognition to:

- Simon Eber, Founder and Kid President of Simon Says Give, for providing fully stocked backpacks to 6th graders at Columbus Park Preparatory Academy, Goddard School of Science and Technology, Lincoln Street School and Woodland Academy. (Miss McCullough)
- Worcester Technical High School for being selected as one of 31 schools statewide to receive a grant of \$495,575 from a Skills Capital Grant to support its Robotics Automation Technology Program. (Mr. Monfredo)

gb #8-211 - Administration
(June 24, 2018)

To set a date to recognize Judy Freedman Fask and the Worcester Public Schools Transition Department for being awarded the American Alliance for Theatre & Education (AATE) 2018 Distinguished Book Award for the book entitled "Creative Collaborations through Inclusive Theatre and Community Based Learning."

gb #8-212 - Administration
(June 26, 2018)

To set a date to recognize Mark Brophy, Instructional Support Personnel Director, for his 32 years of dedicated service to the students and staff in the Worcester Public Schools.

gb #8-213 - Administration
(June 27, 2018)

To select a voting delegate and an alternate voting delegate for the Annual Business Meeting of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, scheduled for November 7, 2018.

X. GENERAL BUSINESS

ACTION

gb #8-214 - Mr. O'Connell/Miss Biancheria/Mr. Comparetto/
Mr. Foley/Miss McCullough/Mr. Monfredo
(June 27, 2018)

To discuss projected litigation as to the obligation of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to assure an "adequate education" to Massachusetts children, including potential plaintiffs, litigation funding sources, and a timeline.

gb #8-215 - Administration
(June 27, 2018)

To consider approval of the following MASC policies to be included in the Policy Manual:

- Online Fundraising and Solicitation-Crowdfunding Policy
-Section **GBEBD**
- Student Submission to Educational Surveys and Research
-Section **ILD**

gb #8-216 - Administration
(June 27, 2018)

To consider approval of the following amendments to the FY19 Budget:

1. Other Special Revenue Funds in the amount of \$7,411,563, as contained on page 142 of the Budget Book
2. the FY19 amended Budget in the amount of \$397,814,142
3. a reflection in the Minutes of the June 21st School Committee Meeting of the above mentioned amendments.

gb #8-217 - Administration
(June 27, 2018)

To consider the proposed policy regarding Appropriate School Response to Immigration Enforcement Activities to be included in the Policy Manual.

X. GENERAL BUSINESS

ACTION

gb #8-218 - Administration
(June 29, 2018)

To approve a prior fiscal year payment in the amount of \$685.00 made payable to the College Board for PSAT/NMSQT test fees.

gb #8-219 - Mr. O'Connell/Miss Biancheria/Mr. Comparetto/
Mr. Foley/Miss McCullough/Mr. Monfredo
(June 30, 2018)

Request that the Administration verify the compliance, by the Worcester Public Schools, with Section 54C (a) of Chapter 71 of the Massachusetts General Laws (Chapter 443 of the Acts of 2016).

gb #8-220 - Mr. O'Connell/Miss Biancheria/Mr. Comparetto/
Mr. Foley/Miss McCullough/Mr. Monfredo
(July 3, 2018)

To consider approval of the proposed text of the 2018-19 Student Handbook and to approve the policies set forth therein in time for printing of the handbook itself and its translations, prior to the beginning of the 2018-19 academic year.

gb #8-221 - Administration
(July 5, 2018)

To endorse the dissemination of the Policy Manual of the Worcester Public Schools.

gb #8-222 - Mr. O'Connell/Miss Biancheria/Mr. Comparetto/
Miss McCullough/Mr. Monfredo
(July 5, 2018)

To review the "indirect costs" assigned to the Worcester Public Schools by the City of Worcester for the FY19 year.

gb #8-223 - Administration
(July 9, 2018)

To approve a prior fiscal year payment in the amount of \$96.33 for in-state travel reimbursement for a Technology Focused Instructional Coach.

X. GENERAL BUSINESS

ACTION

gb #8-224 - Administration
(July 9, 2018)

To consider changing the title of the Standing Committee on Accountability and Student Achievement to the Standing Committee on School and Student Performance.

gb #8-225 - Administration
(July 11, 2018)

To consider approval of the following donations:

- \$8,000.00 from SME Education Foundation/General Motors to Worcester Technical High School Advanced Manufacturing Program
- \$250.00 from WEDF to Woodland Academy
- \$500.00 from Metso USA, Inc., to support the Exhilarate Worcester Initiative at Woodland Academy
- \$250.00 from WEDF to Tatnuck Magnet School
- \$250.00 from WEDF to Lake View School
- \$2,000.00 from Saint-Gobain to Lake View School
- \$738.82 from Lake View School PTO to Lake View School
- \$2,000.00 from Furniture Trust Organization, Inc. to Worcester Alternative School
- \$600.00 from Sunbelt Rentals Inc. to South High Community School Diesel Program
- \$250.00 from WEDF to Lincoln Street School
- \$250.00 from WEDF to New Citizen Center

gb #8-226 - Executive Session (Administration)
(July 11, 2018)

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining for Plumbers and Steamfitters - IUPE, if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the collective bargaining position of the School Committee and the chair so declares.

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining for Tradesmen - IUPE, if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the collective bargaining position of the School Committee and the chair so declares.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Helen A. Friel, Ed.D.
Clerk of the School Committee

Mid-Cycle Goals Review

Report of the Superintendent

Superintendent Maureen Binienda | 7.19.18



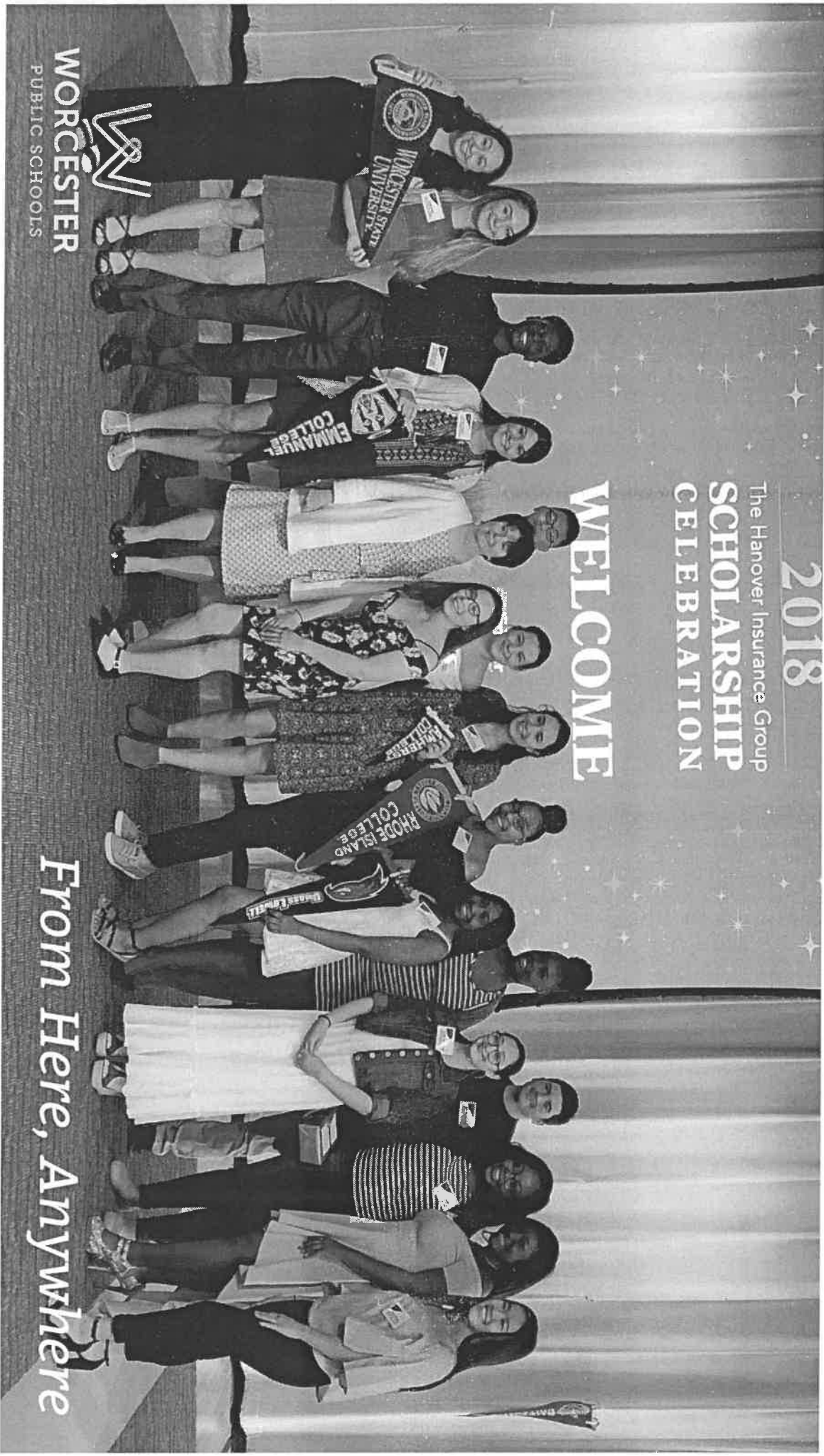
2018

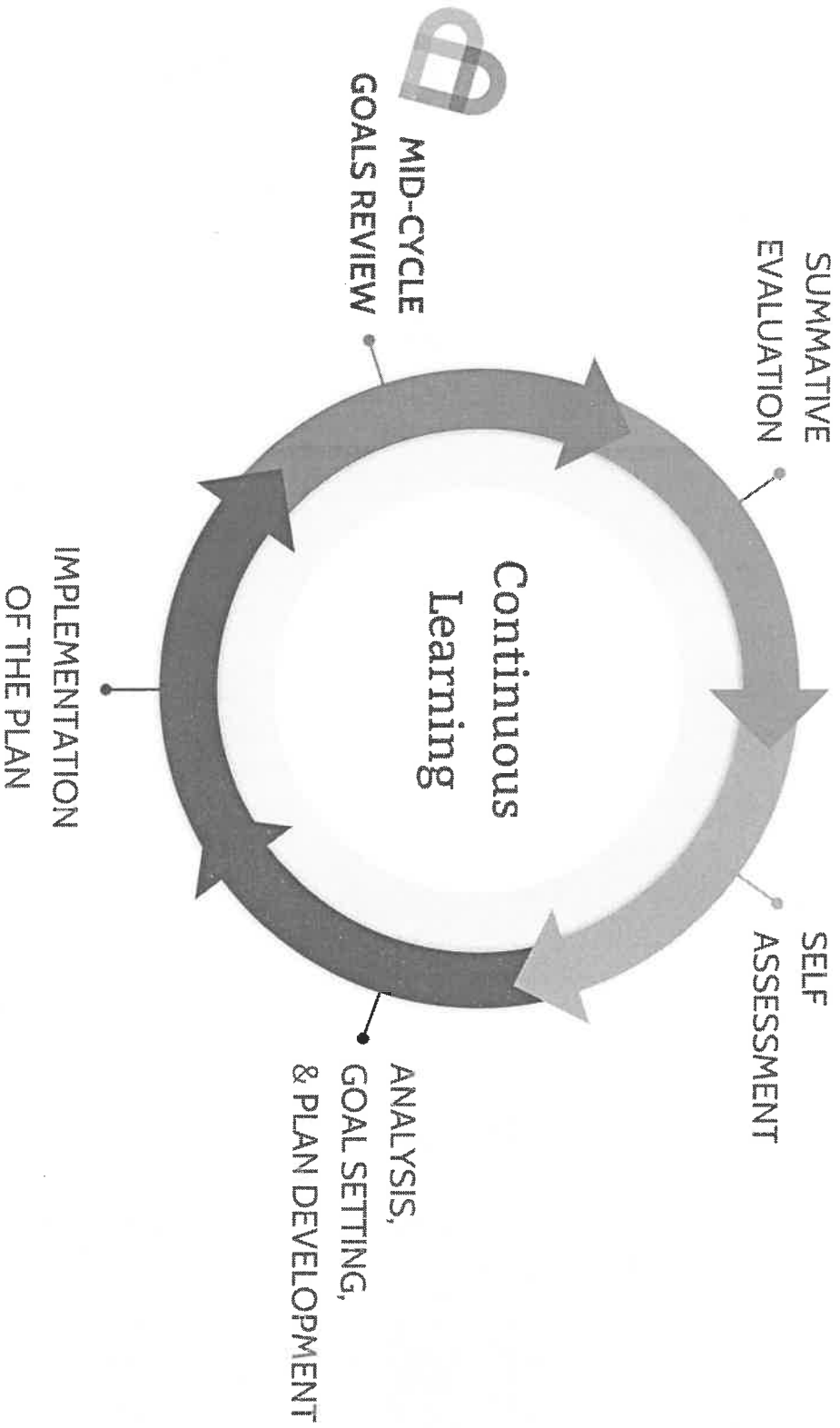
The Hanover Insurance Group
SCHOLARSHIP
CELEBRATION

WELCOME

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WORCESTER
PUBLIC SCHOOLS







Performance Ratings for Standards

Superintendent's Performance Rating for Standard I: Instructional Leadership



Check one box for each indicator and circle the overall standard rating.

	Unsatisfactory	Needs Improvement	Proficient	Exemplary
I-A. Curriculum: Ensures that all instructional staff design effective and rigorous standards-based units of instruction consisting of well-structured lessons with measurable outcomes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I-B. Instruction: Ensures that practices in all settings reflect high expectations regarding content and quality of effort and work, engage all students, and are personalized to accommodate diverse learning styles, needs, interests, and levels of readiness.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I-C. Assessment: Ensures that all principals and administrators facilitate practices that proper personnel to use a variety of formal and informal methods and assessments to measure student learning, growth, and understanding and make necessary adjustments to their practice when students are not learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I-D. Evaluation: Ensures effective and timely supervision and evaluation of all staff in alignment with state regulations and contract provisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I-E. Data-Informed Decision Making: Uses multiple sources of evidence related to student learning—including state, district, and school assessment results and growth data—to inform school and district goals and improve organizational performance, educator effectiveness, and student learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Overall Rating for Standard I (Circle one.) The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by cultivating a shared vision that makes powerful teaching and learning the central focus of schooling.

Unsatisfactory

Needs Improvement

Proficient

Exemplary

Comments and analysis (recommended for any overall rating; required for overall rating of Exemplary, Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory):
 Provided support and assistance to administrators to learn and use effective strategies to model, monitor, assess and provide feedback to educators. Provided school administrators with instruction on effective strategies to instruct educators to develop well-structured lessons with challenging measurable objectives, student engagement, pacing, use of technology and student grouping.
 Joined principals, school and district leaders in observing educator practice and identified effective teaching practices for diverse learners, formal and informal methods of assessment, and appropriate interventions.

Superintendent's Performance Rating for Standard II: Management and Operations



Check one box for each indicator and circle the overall standard rating.

		Unsatisfactory	Needs Improvement	Proficient	Exemplary
II-A. Environment:	Develops and executes effective plans, procedures, routines, and operational systems to address a full range of safety, health, emotional, and social needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
II-B. Human Resources Management and Development:	Implements a cohesive approach to recruiting, hiring, induction, development, and career growth that promotes high-quality and effective practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
II-C. Scheduling and Management Information Systems:	Uses systems to ensure optimal use of data and time for teaching, learning, and collaboration, minimizing disruptions and distractions for school-level staff.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
II-D. Law, Ethics, and Policies:	Understands and complies with state and federal laws and mandates; school committee policies; collective bargaining agreements; and ethical guidelines.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
II-E. Fiscal Systems:	Develops a budget that supports the district's vision, mission, and goals; allocates and manages expenditures consistent with district- and school-level goals and available resources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Overall Rating for Standard II (Circle one.)	The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by ensuring a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment, using resources to implement appropriate curriculum, staffing, and scheduling.
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Unsatisfactory
 Needs Improvement
 Proficient
 Exemplary

Comments and analysis (recommended for any overall rating; required for overall rating of Exemplary, Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory):

Established systems, plans, procedures and routines for administrators, students and staff to implement orderly and efficient student entry, dismissal, class transitions, student assembly and safety.

Supported administrator teams to develop procedures for positive student behavior, high expectations for student behavior, and social and emotional well-being. Provided multiple opportunities for administrator and educator growth and learning.

Developed district wide support for new administrators and teachers, and provided high quality professional development aligned to district goals.

Provided resources and support for all school personnel to understand and comply with state and federal laws and mandates, school committee policies and collective bargaining.

Superintendent's Performance Rating for Standard III: Family and Community Engagement



Check one box for each indicator and circle the overall standard rating.

	Unsatisfactory	Needs Improvement	Proficient	Exemplary
III-A. Engagement: Actively ensures that all families are welcome members of the classroom and school community and can contribute to the effectiveness of the classroom, school, district, and community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
III-B. Sharing Responsibility: Continuously collaborates with families and community stakeholders to support student learning and development at home, school and in the community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
III-C. Communication: Engages in regular, two-way, culturally proficient communication with families and community stakeholders about student learning and performance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
III-D. Family Concerns: Addresses family and community concerns in an equitable, effective, and efficient manner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Overall Rating for Standard III
(Circle one.)

The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff through effective partnerships with families, community organizations, and other stakeholders that support the mission of the district and its schools.

Unsatisfactory

Needs Improvement

Proficient

Exemplary

Comments and analysis (recommended for any overall rating; required for overall rating of Exemplary, Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory):

Established strategic partnerships with community organizations, community members and businesses to improve district effectiveness.
 Continue to work to increase the number of organizations with whom the district partners.
 Work with administrators to identify and remove barriers to family involvement in schools by setting clear expectations for frequent communications, responding carefully and promptly to communications from families.
 Collaborated with administrators to support families to effectively address student needs and prevent further challenges, connecting students with a network of resources.

Superintendent's Performance Rating for Standard IV: Professional Culture



Check one box for each indicator and circle the overall standard rating.

	Unsatisfactory	Needs Improvement	Proficient	Exemplary
IV-A. Commitment to High Standards: Fosters a shared commitment to high standards of service, teaching, and learning with high expectations for achievement for all.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
IV-B. Cultural Proficiency: Ensures that policies and practices enable staff members and students to interact effectively in a culturally diverse environment in which students' backgrounds, identities, strengths, and challenges are respected.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
IV-C. Communication: Demonstrates strong interpersonal, written, and verbal communication skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
IV-D. Continuous Learning: Develops and nurtures a culture in which staff members are reflective about their practice and use student data, current research, best practices, and theory to continuously adapt practice and achieve improved results. Models these behaviors in his or her own practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
IV-E. Shared Vision: Successfully and continuously engages all stakeholders in the creation of a shared educational vision in which every student is prepared to succeed in postsecondary education and become a responsible citizen and global contributor.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
IV-F. Managing Conflict: Employs strategies for responding to disagreement and dissent, constructively resolving conflict and building consensus throughout a district or school community.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Overall Rating for Standard IV (Circle one.)	The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by nurturing and sustaining a districtwide culture of reflective practice, high expectations, and continuous learning for staff.			

Unsatisfactory

Needs Improvement

Proficient

Exemplary

Comments and analysis (recommended for any overall rating; required for overall rating of Exemplary, Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory):

Planned and facilitated engaging meetings in which administrators learned together and created solutions to instructional leadership issues. Demonstrated strong, audience specific interpersonal, written and verbal communication skills. Demonstrated openness and commitment to learning, reflected on personal practice, and reviewed student data to improve my own leadership skills. Modeled strategies to administrators for responding respectfully and effectively to disagreement. Developed a shared educational vision with administrators on student opportunities for college and career.

Professional Practice Goal 1



On Target

Off Target

Not Started

By June 2018,
Superintendent Binienda
will continue to develop
skills in instructional
leadership by completing all
requirements of the second
year of the New
Superintendent's Induction
Program (NSIP).

Goal 1

- Documented attendance and completed assignments from NSIP trainings
- Participated in Urban Superintendents' Meetings
- Documented coaching sessions with NSIP Advisor



New Superintendent Induction Program

Empowering new superintendents to accelerate student learning through strategic leadership

Student Learning Goal 2



On Target

Off Target

Not Started

By November 2018,
Superintendent Binienda
will provide high quality
learning opportunities and
resources to all students
through the development
and implementation of a
comprehensive curriculum.

Goal 2

Advanced Placement

- AP Research course added (August)
- Increase the number of students participating in AP courses (June)

PSAT/SAT

- Increase of the number of students linked to Khan Academy support for improvement by 5% (June)

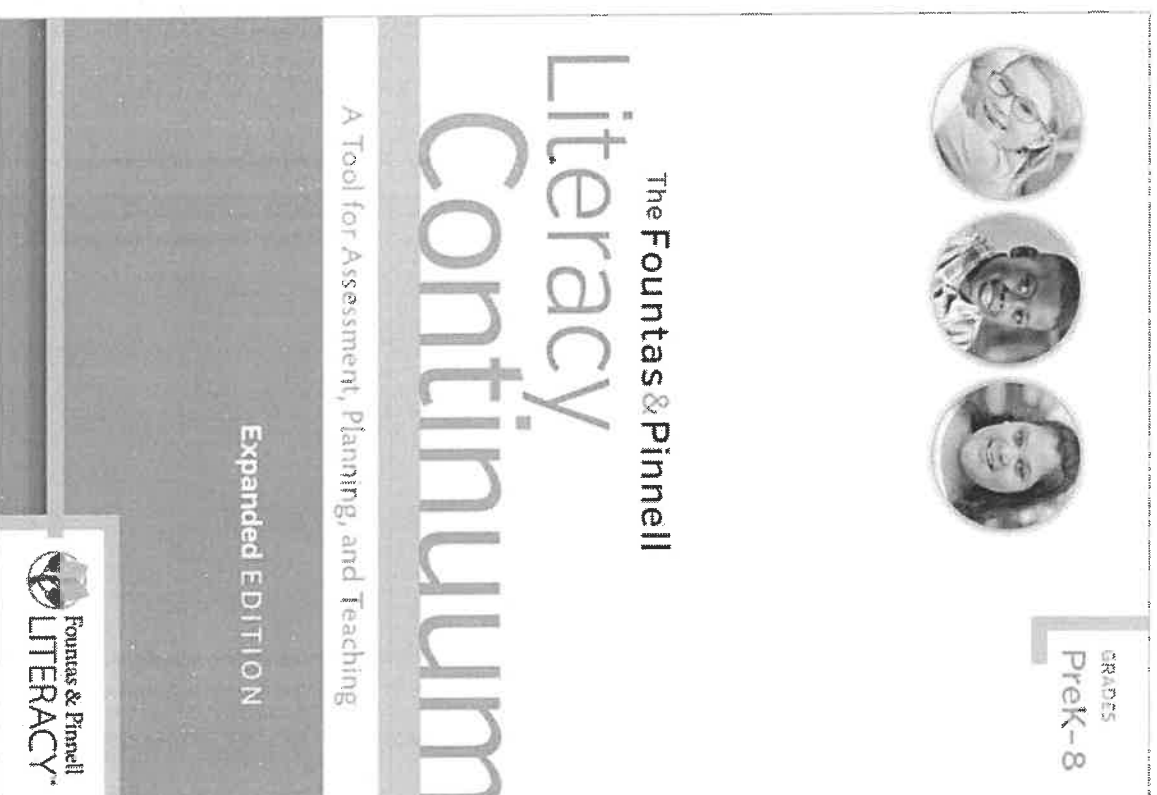
Guidance

- My CAP pilot at two middle schools (Challenge/Reach, Forest Grove)

Goal 2

Literacy

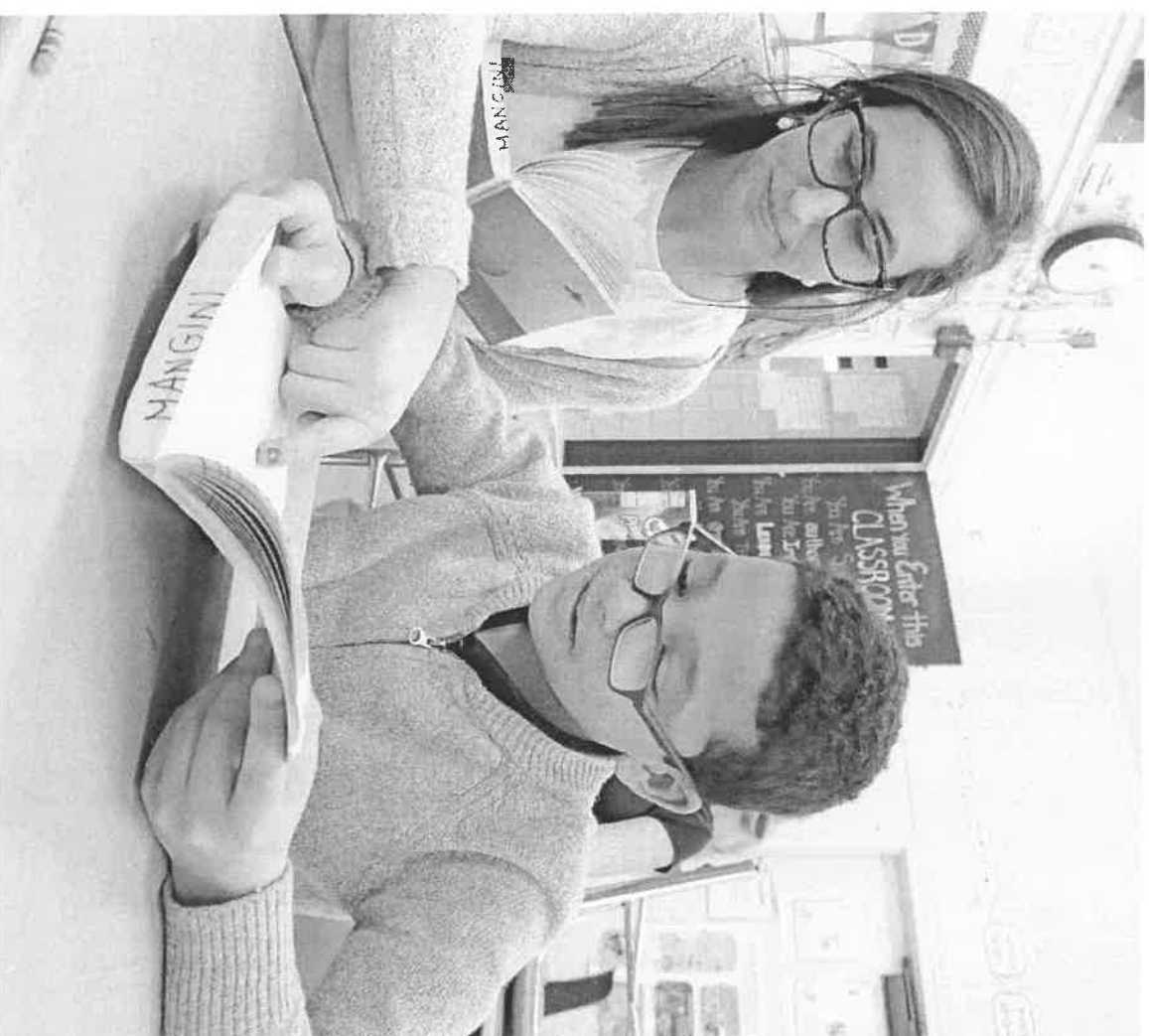
- Began training on Fountas and Pinnell Classroom (K-2) and CIA Read Side by Side reading program (3-6) in all district elementary schools (June)
- Expand the SRSB “Writing in Response to Reading” to all elementary schools
- Expand SRSB to Worcester East Middle School and North High School



Goal 2

Literacy

- Implement and monitor the Early Literacy Grant Initiative at Vernon Hill, Chandler Magnet, Union Hill, Woodland Academy, and Tatnuck Magnet schools.
- Implement Word Generation at Chandler Elementary, Chandler Magnet, Thorndyke Road, and Grafton Street schools.
- Enhance specialized tier 2 & tier 3 instruction in middle schools using Just Words and Wilson Reading Systems.



Goal 2...

Mathematics

- Continue to conduct and analyze quarterly, the standards based common assessments to guide instruction and the use of the enVision Math program in K-6, year 2 implementation.
- Obtained grant funding for the implementation of the STE Math Program at Union Hill (June)
- Continue to partner with Mass Insights on the Gateway to College Success Grant for the improvement of Secondary math outcomes at the following schools: Sullivan Middle, Worcester East Middle, North High and South High.

Goal 2...

Social Studies

- Developed a rollout plan for implementation of the new MA DESE History/Social Studies standards (June)

Health/Physical Education

- By August 2018, provide an updated Health Curriculum for grades 6 & 7, (pending approval)



Goal 2...

Science

- By August 2018, implement, monitor, and expand Project Lead the Way at Jacob Hiatt, Flagg Street and West Tatnuck schools. (pending grant approval)
- Purchased and planned for targeted Professional Development for the new grade 8 science texts (June-Aug)



Goal 2...

Foreign Language

- Extended the Dual Language Program to Grade 7 at Burncoat Middle School (June)
- Consult with DESE on piloting the Seal of Biliteracy

CVTE

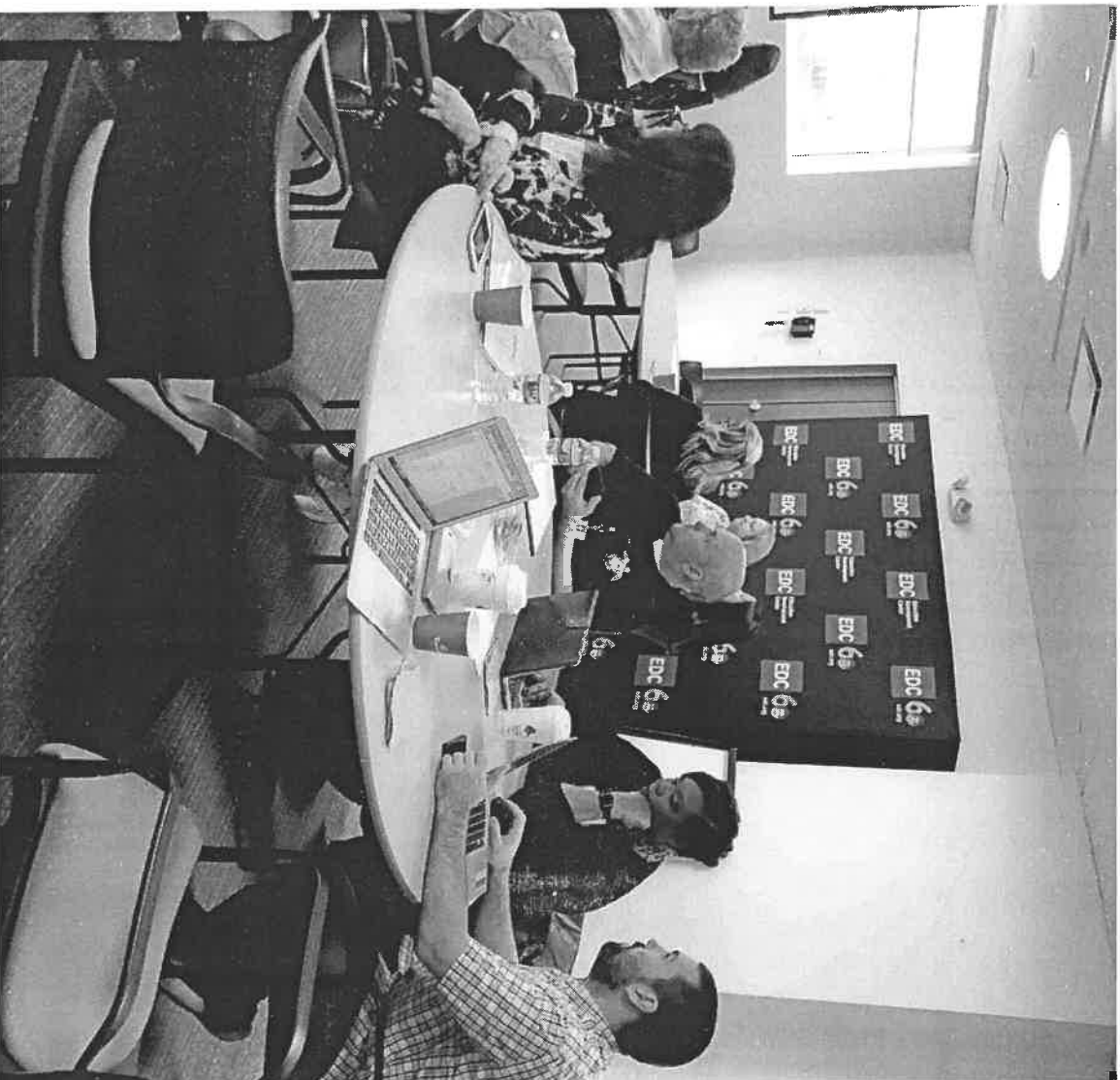
- By August 2018, implement the Innovative Pathways Grant at Burncoat and Doherty High Schools
- In June 2018 DESE approved three new Chapter 74 programs for South High School - Early Childhood, Diesel Technology and Culinary Arts



Goal 2...

Computer Science & Digital Literacy

- Assembled a district team for participation in the Massachusetts PACE (Programming the Acceleration of Computing and Equity), participated in 1st meeting (April)
- Evaluating K-6, 7-8 Digital Literacy and Computer Science Standards, planning recommendations for implementation



Goal 2...

Visual and Performing Arts

- Continue to expand opportunities in the arts by increasing community partnerships through grants.



Goal 2

Interventions/Supports

- After School Tutoring for ELs (Middle and High School)
- After School MCAS Tutoring for all High School students- ELA, Math and Biology
- After School Tutoring for low achieving CTVE students (9-12)
- Camp Explore (K-5), July 9-27
- All Middle School Summer School,15 days with credit buyback option
- All High School Summer School, 15 day credit buyback program
- 21st Century Summer Program at Burncoat Middle, Claremont Academy, UPCS, and Sullivan Middle schools
- EL summer school for elementary, middle and high school students
- Increase targeted intervention math and literacy classes at the secondary level
- Provide behavioral/therapeutic services for students in specialized programs

District Improvement

Goal 3



On Target

Off Target

Not Started

By November 2018, Superintendent Binienda will develop a district technology plan that prioritizes and supports student learning and achievement through increasing the digital literacy skills of students, staff, and district administration.

Goal 3

- Created a districtwide Digital Learning and Technology Committee comprised of stakeholder groups (January-June)
 - Advisory Committee
 - Student Information Systems
 - Professional Learning
 - Digital Migration
- By November 2018, provide a written technology plan created with stakeholder input and published on the school website
 - in progress, will be informed by sub-committees and strategic plan



Goal 3

- By November 2018, provide an “Innovative Teacher Leader” in each school and 6 districtwide who will be responsible for supporting school, district staff and administration in order to increase their digital literacy skills. (Title IVA grant)
 - Cohort 1 completed (22 teachers)
 - 7 Google Certified Trainers so far!
 - Cohort 2 began (29 teachers)
 - Cohort 3 in progress (to begin October pending Title IVA funding - another 30 teachers)



Goal 3

- Assembled a district team for participation in the Massachusetts PACE (Programming the Acceleration of Computing and Equity), participated in 1st meeting (April) (MASS Superintendents/MASSSCAN)
- By November 2018, provide a plan to develop K-5 Digital Literacy and Computer Science curriculum scope and sequence, based on the MA standards
 - Committee to be formed in August



Goal 3

- By May 2018, recommend a course of action for modernizing information technology systems.
 - Jan-June Student Information System district committee met 6+ times, will present findings to cabinet in July
 - Migration to Google Apps for Education (June-August)
 - Integrating Clever for Single Sign On for staff and students
 - New web filter
 - Doubled speed of Internet connection for the entire district (5Gbps to 10Gbps)



Goal 3

- New brand and website that increases family and community engagement
 - Design and development complete
 - Currently bringing content over, plan to launch by back to school



 Schools in the District	 Attendance Rate	 Achievement for the District	 Student/Teacher Ratio	 Spend of total state funding per student per year	 Enrollment gap rate in our schools
45	94%	100%	14.2 to 1	24	74



Our dedication to ethics work, necessary to ensure that every student is supported.

LEARN MORE



Worcester's diverse offerings help ensure every student's pathway to success.

EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES



From hands-on opportunities to programming with YPS offers a library set of enrichment activities.

VISIT ACTIVITIES

Goal 3

- FY 19 school year, a team from each secondary school in WPS will participate in the Massachusetts Innovative School Leadership Network to enhance administrative and leadership competencies regarding personalized learning.
 - District leadership team to participate in Future Ready Conference 7.9.18
 - 3 day conference 7.31, 8.1, & 8.2 at BC (44 people including 10 HS principals and assistant principals)
 - Working on problem of practice throughout FY19 school year



Goal 3

- By September 2018, provide ongoing, expanded and diversified professional development offerings by district technology coaches to support teaching and learning.

- Added 1 Focused Instructional Technology Coach (Aug) - total 3 for district
- Offerings targeted pd for support for ELs, Diverse Learners
- Various PD offerings for administrative assistants, leadership, coaches, educators, and support staff
- Workshops - average rating of 3.7/4

**SUMMER 2018
TECHNOLOGY
WORKSHOPS**

Using Google Tools to Support Diverse Learners

Workshop Overview
 District Learning Assistants in Worcester Middle Schools will receive new Google Apps for Education to support diverse learners in their classrooms. Coaches will facilitate methods to use Google Apps to enhance and support diverse learners.

Facilitator
 Barbara Emery, Certified Google Trainer
 Laura Cifali, Certified Google Trainer
 Lisa DeRubeo, Certified Google Trainer

Location
 Worcester Technical High School Conference Room

Dates/Time
 Instructor-Led Sessions:
 August 7, 9 am-12 noon
 August 23, 1:30-4:30 pm
 District work 8 hours

Details
 • Bring a Chromebook or laptop (no tablets or tablets)
 • Beginner - 15 PDH's
 • Cost/fee: \$0

Workshop Overview
 Using Google Apps - Admin, teachers, librarians and all other staff students by using Google Apps for Education for students with all types of learning styles to reach all learners.
 *Sessions will be provided to Google

**OFFICE OF INSTRUCTIONAL
WORCESTER
TECHNOLOGY & DIGITAL LEARNING
MIDDLE SCHOOLS**

Google Certified Educator Level 1 2 Day Bootcamp

Workshop Overview
 We are offering 2 different levels of bootcamps. This is an intensive 2 day bootcamp to help prepare you for the Google Educator Level 1 Exam. Level 1 focuses on engaging in professional growth and leadership, increasing efficiency and saving time, and facilitating and modeling student learning and creativity & the ability to support these goals. If you wish to take the exam, it is \$100 on your own.

Facilitators
 Susan Wynne, Manager of IT, DL, and Certified Google Trainer
 Chris Biron, Google Educator Level 1 & 2 Certified

Location
 Worcester Innovation Lab at
 Memorial Hall

Dates/Time
 July 25 one day 24
 8:30-5:00

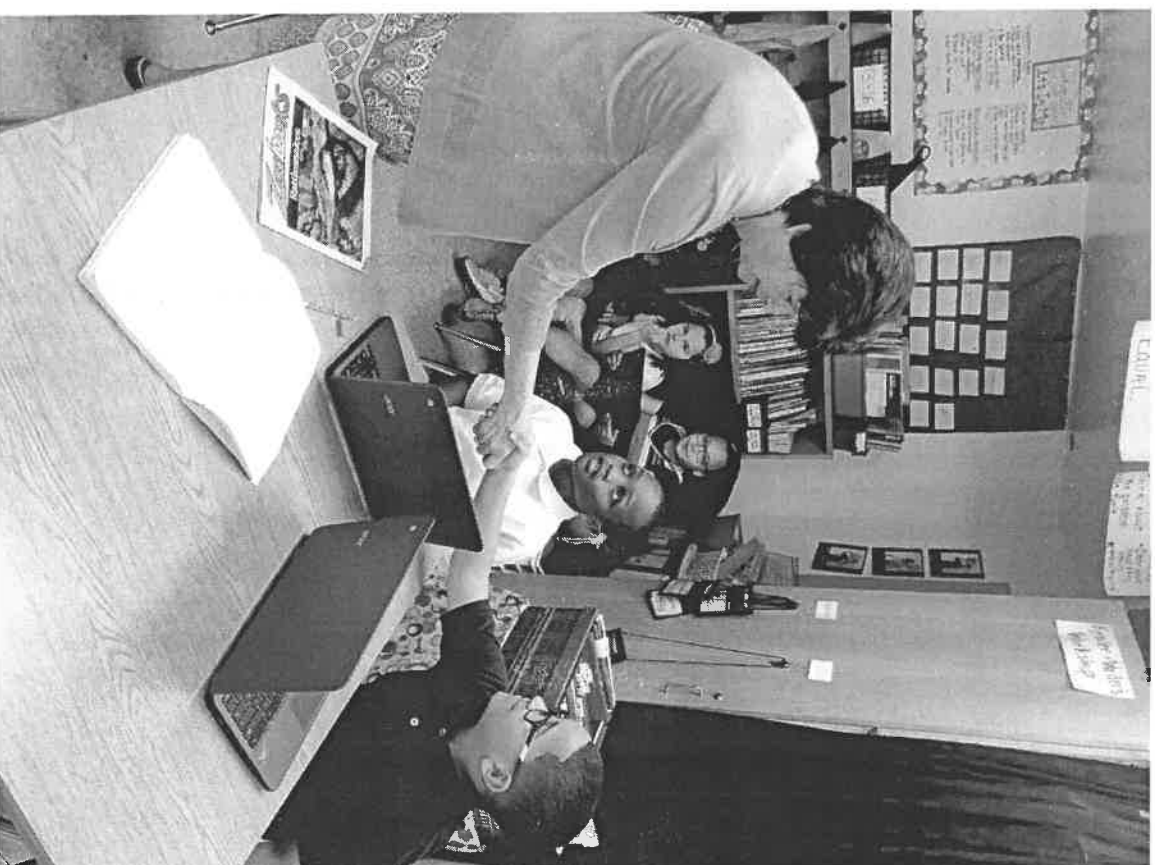
Details
 • Lunch is on your own
 • Beginner - 18 PDH's
 • Cost/fee: \$0

Workshop Overview
 Learn to use Google apps and other online tools to improve outcomes for English learners of all proficiency levels. Participants will receive an e.g. of Google tools for teaching/learning, learn about Chrome extensions to support student organization, and learn how to use Google apps and extensions to better support all students. Participants will use Google Docs, Forms, Sites, Slides, and YouTube. Each teacher will receive a Google Drive folder of materials designed for use in a lesson on the specific teaching tool, as well as a plan for using resources and information learned with three or more colleagues via reciprocal video chat or mini-workshops. This course is a prerequisite for all students of English learners of all ages and proficiency levels, including both ESL and SEI teachers.

Facilitators
 Michele Austin, Certified Google Trainer
 Paul Savoie, Level 1 & 2 Certified Educator

Goal 3

- By November 2018, provide all schools access to mobile devices on an equitable basis
 - 5507 Chromebooks deployed in March
 - Teachers grades 3-8
 - Students grades 4-8, 2:1 ratio
 - High schools, 3 carts each
 - Adding 5000 more chromebooks by November
 - Teachers grades K-2, 9-12
 - Students grades 3, 9-12 2:1 ratio*



Goal 3

- Worcester Public Schools, one of 31 districts invited to Google for Education, North American Customer Advisory Board (3 years)
 - attended first convening in Chicago



District Improvement Goal 4



On Target

Off Target

Not Started

By November 2018, Superintendent Binienda will strengthen educator and administrator capacity by providing effective professional development, monitoring of practice and use of the MA DESE evaluation system.

Goal 4

Targeted Professional Development

- High Quality Professional Learning guidelines released for district
- Monitor curriculum liaison visits to schools and workshops provided to individual teachers, faculty, small group PLC and other types of meetings.
- Provide targeted PD in content areas:
 - ATLAS curriculum platform and its use
 - specific needs assessed by school leaders
 - data driven areas of focus
 - classroom management & teaching strategies
 - UDL, SEL, second language acquisition and inclusive practices in special education

HIGH QUALITY PROFESSIONAL LEARNING (HQPL)

Worcester Public Schools

DESIGN

Leadership Vision

- Vision of the future of the district
- Strategic plan
- Professional Learning Plan
- Curriculum Framework
- Instructional Framework
- Assessment Framework
- Data Framework
- Technology Framework
- Safety Framework
- Facilities Framework
- Transportation Framework
- Nutrition Framework
- Health Framework
- Community Framework
- Environmental Framework
- Financial Framework
- Human Resources Framework
- Information Technology Framework
- Legal Framework
- Risk Management Framework
- Communications Framework
- Public Relations Framework
- Intergovernmental Framework
- External Affairs Framework
- Special Services Framework
- Title I Framework
- Title II Framework
- Title III Framework
- Title IV Framework
- Title V Framework
- Title VI Framework
- Title VII Framework
- Title VIII Framework
- Title IX Framework
- Title X Framework
- Title XI Framework
- Title XII Framework
- Title XIII Framework
- Title XIV Framework
- Title XV Framework
- Title XVI Framework
- Title XVII Framework
- Title XVIII Framework
- Title XIX Framework
- Title XX Framework
- Title XXI Framework
- Title XXII Framework
- Title XXIII Framework
- Title XXIV Framework
- Title XXV Framework
- Title XXVI Framework
- Title XXVII Framework
- Title XXVIII Framework
- Title XXIX Framework
- Title XXX Framework

ENVIRONMENT

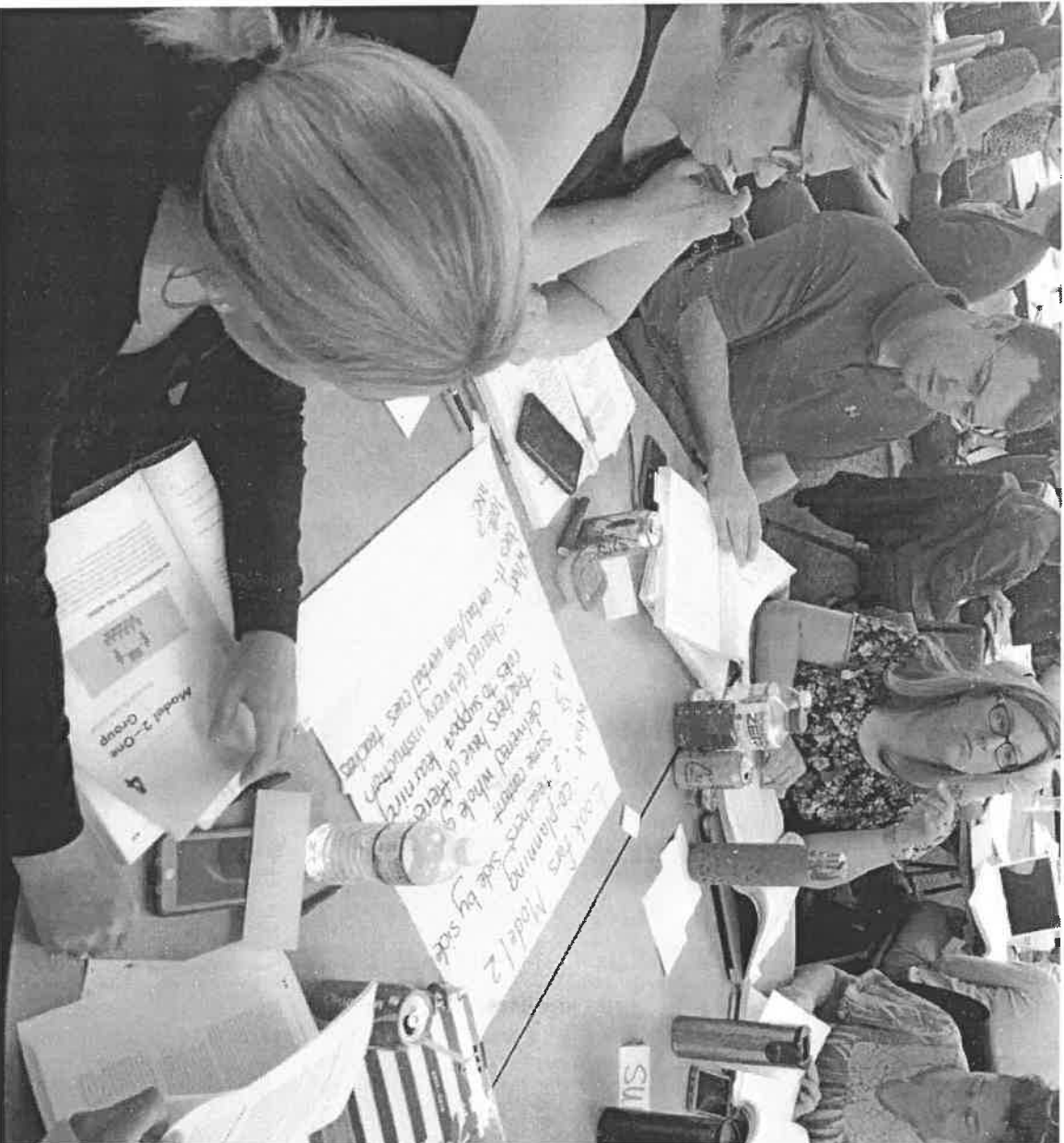
Leadership Vision

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- Title XXX Framework

ANNEX A
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Goal 4

- Two day professional development, Co-Teaching with English Learners and Students with Disabilities (June)
 - 2 staff from each school will bring the research based models back
 - Title III Grant



Goal 4

- Implemented Cohort 2 of the New Principals' Institute.
- Provide a Special Education Professional Development Series on Diverse Learners and Differentiated Instruction, Co-Teaching/Inclusion, UDL, Classroom Management and De-escalation.
- Provide PD opportunity for STEP Principals to attend Harvard Graduate School of Education School Climate Consulting Services - Social Emotional Conference.
- September, expand elementary coaching trios' instructional rounds with managers/mentors to middle and high schools.



Goal 4

Monitoring Site Visits

- **Elementary Schools**
 - Goddard and Elm Park with AIR
 - Grafton St., Quinsigamond, Lincoln St., Clark St. schools
- **Middle Schools**
 - WEMS, Sullivan Middle
- **High Schools**
 - North

Goal 4

- Provide updated evaluation calibration training to Assistant Principals.
- By August 2018, complete feedback to DESE on the piloting of the new evaluation rubric at three district schools.
- By August 2018, monitor and review the evaluations of all district personnel.



District Improvement Goal 5



On Target

Off Target

Not Started

Through November 2018, Superintendent Binienda will continually analyze district data to increase rigorous learning opportunities for all students through advanced and specialized courses, implementation of career pathways and supportive interventions.

Goal 5

By November 2018, increase the number of high school students enrolled in Higher

Education initiatives:

- Early College Career Pathway
- Worcester Future Teachers Pathway
- Innovative Career Pathways
- 100 Males to College Pathway



Goal 5

- By November 2018, implement and monitor a districtwide tiered system of support to improve students' academic, social and emotional development.
- August 2018 training for K/1 teachers at 7 sites in Open Circle Second Step at HEARS schools. Individual/family interventions and staff PD for to support SEL



Goal 5

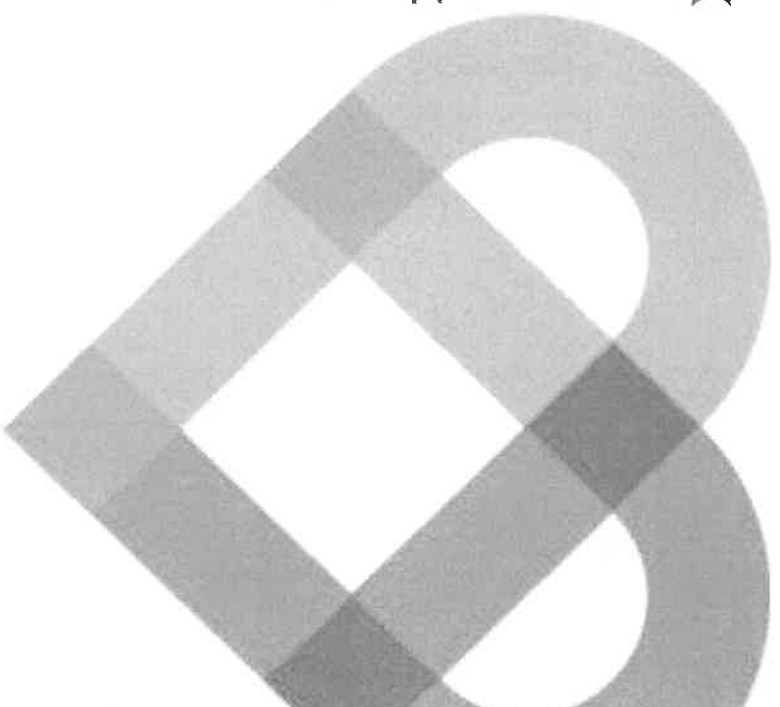
- By November 2018, develop and implement experiential learning opportunities that foster academic and workforce skill development.
- By November 2018, expand the programs for gifted students within the WPS.



Goal 5

Social Emotional Learning Framework

- By November 2018, provide safe, and supportive schools by completing and implementing a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) and an accompanying data collection strategy to monitor and target student support interventions and resources aligned to improve academic and behavioral outcomes. Tiered interventions at all sites.



Other Goal 6

On Target

Off Target

Not Started

Through November 2018, Mrs. Binienda will continually support the development of a positive school climate in all schools by monitoring intensified research tiered interventions of social and emotional learning and by consistent enforcement of appropriate disciplinary rules and procedures.

Goal 6

- In August 2018, provide a Leadership Institute to all district and school administrators by Peter Dewitt on “School Climate and Efficacy.”
- By August 2018, communicate with Principals to identify Universal SEL programs, initiatives, and activities. Presentation at New Principals Institute June 2018, all Principals June/August 2018
- Evaluate student and staff attendance to identify individuals in need of improved attendance.

Goal 6

- By August 2018, collaborate with Special Education Administrator, Child Study Department, and district team to open 4 Transitional Kindergartens. Due to budget limitations 2 classes will be opened, other schools will receive increased training and Child Study support to stabilize and assess students as needed.
- Support and lead ongoing initiatives that promote universal good attendance and target students with chronic absenteeism.





WORCESTER
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR EDUCATION IN WORCESTER

AN OVERVIEW

2018-2023

Mission of Worcester Public Schools

Provide all students the opportunity to advance their scholarship with a rigorous core curriculum and high-quality instruction. This enables students to discover the expanse of their academic talents, shape the quality of their character, and develop the confidence to become conscientious, reflective citizens who are empowered to better our community and our world.

Our Vision for 2023

Worcester Public Schools will be a national leader in education, offering high-quality learning experiences, ensuring that all young people are prepared to thrive, and equipping them to become engaged citizens in their community.

Theory of Change

IF we embrace a student-centered approach that:

- fosters innovation in schools;
- provides vital supports for teaching and learning;
- ensures access to modern technology;
- develops the critical thinking and technical skills of all students; and
- leverages the input of families and community;

THEN we will build a system of diverse, high-performing schools that can equip all students with the academic, social, and technical skills necessary to thrive.

Worcester Public Schools in 2023

The Worcester community will transform its public school system into one which ensures all students receive a high-quality education and are prepared for the challenges of tomorrow.

Where We're Headed

WPS STUDENTS WILL

Current 2023

31% ➔ 47%

MEET/EXCEED EXPECTATIONS
ON 3RD GRADE ELA MCAS

65% ➔ 76%

ENROLL IN POSTSECONDARY
OPPORTUNITIES^B

17% ➔ 14%

REDUCE CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

1:4 ➔ 1:1

ACCESS TECHNOLOGY
(STUDENT TO DEVICE RATIO)

WPS WILL

INCREASE PER PUPIL EXPENDITURE BY

▲ 8%

INCREASE NUMBER OF HIGH
PERFORMING SCHOOLS BY

▲ 20%

INCREASE DIVERSITY OF NEW HIRES BY

▲ 25%



Culture of Innovation

All students will have access to high quality learning experiences which leverage effective approaches

Worcester will foster a districtwide culture of innovation by testing and spreading evidence-based practices and supporting school leaders in making improvements. Worcester will develop an incubation hub to provide a structured approach to piloting and scaling effective practice in the district.



Academic Excellence

All students will have access to rigorous and personalized learning supported by technology

Worcester will improve early education experiences to ensure all students have the knowledge and skills to become lifelong learners. The district will also create a range of stimulating educational experiences in all grades which challenge the intellectual demands of students; develop technological and career skills; and provide students with choices in their academic preparation.



Welcoming Schools

All students will gain a holistic set of skills and be supported by a network—inclusive of their families and the community—to realize their personal, academic, and professional goals

Worcester will cultivate welcoming environments in all schools by supporting students' social and emotional health and fostering collaboration and participation from families and the community. Schools will proactively monitor students' wellbeing and academic needs to more equitably allocate resources and provide holistic support.



Investing in Educators

All students will be supported by effective educators who demonstrate leadership and commitment to enhancing student learning and development

Worcester will enhance its educator workforce by recruiting top candidates from diverse backgrounds and supporting current educators through training and instructional support in social-emotional learning, integrated instruction with technology, and cultural competence.



Technology & Operations

All students will learn in an efficient and fiscally sound district

Worcester will come together as a city, community, and school district to prioritize and support success for all students. This includes more public participation in school policy discussions and new strategies to advocate for state funding.

Defining our Path



A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR EDUCATION IN WORCESTER

2018-2023

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A LETTER TO THE WORCESTER COMMUNITY

Dear Worcester Students, Families, and Community,

It is with great pleasure that we share *Defining Our Path: A Strategic Plan for Education in Worcester*. Worcester Public Schools (WPS) is well-known for many of its successful practices, which foster real-world skills and student achievement. While we celebrate our district's progress, we also recognize that there is a continuous need for improvement in our schools and in the outcomes for all our students. We understand that the continued success of the district's mission can only be accomplished through a community-wide vision coupled with a commitment to action and sustained engagement.

The strategic planning process was a unique experience. In many strategic plans, the school district is the singular driving force. However, our community seized the opportunity to assemble a diverse group of community leaders—with invaluable support from the school district—to consider ways to address the needs of Worcester students. Our approach recognizes the central role of the schools in the life of our community. It acknowledges the vital need for all sectors of the city to fully support WPS, as well as the shared work required to achieve educational excellence in all schools for all students.

Conversations among community leaders, families, educators, and students during the process forged new relationships and deepened existing networks. We also expanded our community's capacity to consider a broad range of perspectives, data, and outstanding educational practices. Through subcommittees, representative of multiple stakeholder groups, we explored critical areas of need identified by the community and developed recommendations for improvement. We engaged state and national education leaders to highlight a range of education best practices that could be replicated. Our work was effective, but not without challenges. We delved into the nuances of quantitative data; considered the experiences, hopes, and concerns of stakeholders; and wrestled with very real financial and contractual constraints. We worked beyond mere accommodation to deep consensus. Our most important takeaways were that policies, practices, and initiatives should drive toward the district's student-centered goals and that substantive changes in the finances of the district are essential for high-quality, system-wide improvements.

Our plan is aspirational, inspirational, and innovative. In some cases, it is admittedly but intentionally ambitious. It considers new approaches to school and district design, teaching and learning, and finances. The plan recognizes that the work of schools is about both the transfer of knowledge, skills, and information and the fostering of safe and nurturing learning environments that support social and emotional skills critical for student well-being.

Defining Our Path: A Strategic Plan for Education in Worcester articulates a commitment to continue Worcester's renaissance by placing the city's children, and the future that they represent, at the center of our shared work. It calls for the resources of a community, not just a school district, to fulfill that mission. Achieving the goals of the plan will demand hard work and unflinching support from each sector of the city. It will also require the dedicated involvement of the state. We must ensure state funding levels realize the vision of the 1993 Education Reform Act and guarantee equitable outcomes in both high-wealth and low-wealth communities. The result of these actions will be well worth the effort—a system of schools focused on and able to educate every child for sound futures as positive contributors to our community and beyond.

Toward a Brighter Future,

Jennifer Davis Carey & Timothy J. McGourthy
Strategic Plan Co-Chairs

In Collaboration with
Maureen Binienda
Superintendent, Worcester Public Schools



Worcester, the *Heart of the Commonwealth*, is the second-largest city in Massachusetts. It is a community with a history of innovation and progress. Modern-day Worcester is rich in assets, home to leaders in education, healthcare, and technology, with more than 5,000 local businesses, 70 cultural institutions, nine colleges/universities, and the third-largest public-school system in the Commonwealth.¹ A forward-looking community, Worcester seeks to cultivate the success of the next generation to ensure that it continues to thrive for years to come.

Worcester is a growing global community. Since 1990, the population has increased 8%, bringing shifts in the racial, ethnic, age, gender, and household composition of the city.^{2,3} The city's international community has grown more than 200%, enhancing both the linguistic and cultural vibrancy of the city.⁴ The growth of Worcester's racial and ethnic communities also exceed national trends. The number of residents of Latino, African American, and Asian descent has grown by more than 150% since 1990, while the number of residents of European descent has declined 13%.⁵

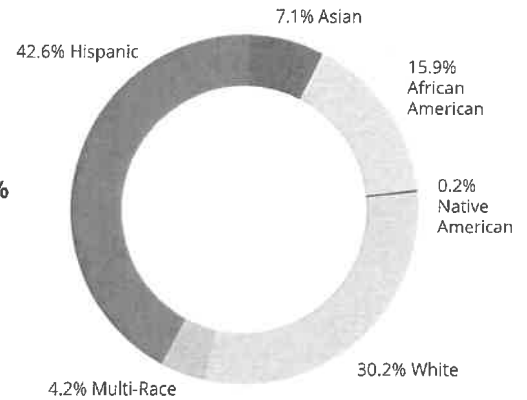
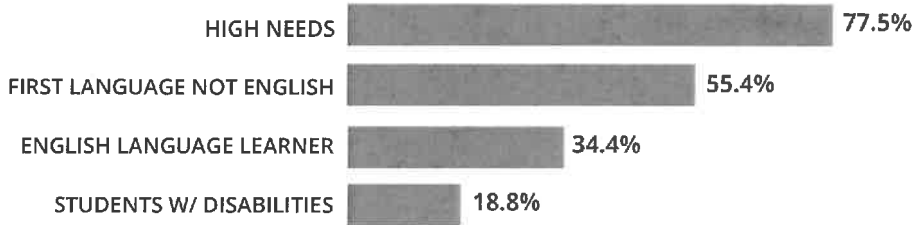
With growth in the population, Worcester has experienced new challenges. Nearly one-third of the city's youth are living in poverty.⁶ In addition, the student population is frequently changing. In 2017, the percent of students moving in and out of the school district during the year was 17.8%, which indicates a highly transitional learning population and impacts funding designations.⁷ The effects of youth experiencing significant trauma have also become more apparent. Educators report a high frequency of student exposure to childhood adversity, ranging from housing instability to the statewide opioid crisis.⁸ Worcester is also a leading resettlement community for refugees, serving populations particularly vulnerable to increased hardships as they adapt to their new community.⁹ Worcester's growth and the presence of new challenges demands consideration of new ways to

support and educate an increasingly diverse and global population.

Through the first strategic plan in 26 years, district and community leaders are looking to set a new vision for the education of the city's youth. Worcester Public Schools (WPS) sits at the center of these community-level changes and strives to play a positive and important role in cultivating the city's future creators, reformers, healers, and leaders. The success of WPS is critical to the economic vitality of the city. By 2024, 75% of jobs in the region's fastest growing industries (health, technology, management, and services) will require a postsecondary credential (professional certificate, bachelor's degree, or graduate degree).¹⁰ While 84% of Worcester residents over 25 have a high school diploma or equivalent, only 37% hold a postsecondary credential (associate degree or higher).¹¹ Ensuring student success in public schools—and a pathway to and through a postsecondary credential—will help meet regional labor needs while creating a highly skilled and educated workforce that enhances the vitality of the city.

However, the complex workplace that our students will face in years ahead cannot be addressed by WPS alone. Both the depth of need and the absence of necessary financial resources to operate the school district demands the collective action of the entire community. This strategic plan, collaboratively designed and with a commitment to collaborative implementation, addresses persistent challenges in the district and offers supports to schools in the interest of creating an environment for teaching and learning that fosters student success. As the priority of the district is excellence in WPS regardless of the financial climate, the plan incorporates actions that can be implemented immediately and calls attention to ones that will require significant financial support and collaboration to realize.

25,306 STUDENTS



Community

183,677
RESIDENTS



83% OF SCHOOL-AGE RESIDENTS ATTEND WPS



SPEAK A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH

90+
Languages

Schools

44
K-12 Schools



7 INNOVATION SCHOOLS



Schools Met State Targets

13
CAREER PATHWAY PROGRAMS

Outcomes

2.2%
DROPOUT



86% FIVE-YEAR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE



ATTENDANCE RATE

4.3%
Dropout for English Language Learners

Mission of Worcester Public Schools

To provide all students the opportunity to advance their scholarship with a rigorous core curriculum and high-quality instruction. This enables students to discover the expanse of their academic talents, shape the quality of their character, and develop the confidence to become conscientious, reflective citizens who are empowered to better our community and our world.¹⁴

Our Vision for 2023

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THEN we will build a system of diverse, high-performing schools that can equip all students with the academic, social, and technical skills necessary to thrive.

Focus Areas



CULTURE OF INNOVATION



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE



WELCOMING SCHOOLS



INVESTMENT IN EDUCATORS



TECHNOLOGY & OPERATIONS

Where We're Headed¹³

WPS STUDENTS WILL

Current **2023**

31% ➔ **47%**

**MEET/EXCEED EXPECTATIONS
ON 3RD GRADE ELA MCAS**

65% ➔ **76%**

**ENROLL IN POSTSECONDARY
OPPORTUNITIES^B**

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REDUCE CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

1:4 ➔ **1:1**

**ACCESS TECHNOLOGY
(STUDENT-TO-DEVICE RATIO)**

WPS WILL

INCREASE PER-PUPIL EXPENDITURE BY

↑ 20%

**INCREASE NUMBER OF HIGH-
PERFORMING SCHOOLS BY**

↑ 20%

INCREASE DIVERSITY OF NEW HIRES BY

↑ 25%

^B Students attending a private or public 2 or 4-year college within 16 months of graduation

Guiding Our Vision

COORDINATING COMMITTEE

17 Members

District managers, along with university and community leaders, met monthly for review of local resources and state data to craft recommendations for the strategic plan.

SUBCOMMITTEES

50 Members

Five groups with approximately 10 participants each, including parents, recent students, educators, and community members reviewed district data, prioritized challenges, and developed strategy recommendations within specific focus areas.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

50 Members

Parents, educators, School Committee, and community, city, and university leaders met monthly to investigate challenges facing the district and weigh in on strategies for improving WPS.

Engaging the Community



About the Strategic Planning Process

Launched in June 2017, the strategic planning process was a community-driven effort led by Worcester Education Collaborative (WEC) and Worcester Regional Research Bureau (WRRB) in collaboration with WPS. Organizers recognized the need for a jointly developed strategic plan able to address the growth and demographic changes of the community, new economic demands, new expectations and methods in teaching and learning, and achievement gaps that persist despite concerted efforts for improvement. These organizations, representative of multiple sectors of the community, and others with a vested interest in education assumed collective responsibility for charting a course toward success for WPS.

CONTEXT

WPS has made progress in improving several outcomes, including significant gains in attendance and noteworthy services for English Language Learners, resulting in the lowest dropout rate for a large urban district in the Commonwealth.¹⁵ However, gaps in students' academic proficiency, growth, and achievement remain.¹⁶ Spurred by these findings and the transition in district leadership, the 2016 report, *The Urgency for Excellence: Considerations for the School Committee and New Superintendent of Schools in Worcester*, called for a new approach to fostering student success: the development of a city-wide vision and plan for educational improvement.¹⁷

Following the report's release, community leaders representing businesses, foundations, nonprofits, and service agencies signed the Worcester Compact for Public Education (Worcester Compact), a public document detailing their commitment to educational improvement in the city. The group secured private financial support for the strategic planning process and engaged students, alumni, parents, educators, and community-based organizations to participate.¹⁸ The strategies listed in the plan are designed to enhance success for all students and include action steps for the whole community. The collaborative model established through the Worcester Compact and continued through this process was foundational to our approach, and differentiating this document from any other known resource.

PARTICIPANTS

The strategic planning process was informed by voices throughout the community. From June 2017 to January 2018 community and district organizers along with strategic planning facilitators from the Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy met with more than 400 Worcester residents in focus groups and forums. In response to community requests, one forum, attended by more than 100 participants, was conducted "café-style" to assure maximum opportunity for small group discussion and input. Throughout the process, all who sought an opportunity for input or to participate were included.

Events were held throughout the district and offered in multiple languages to maximize participation and ease of access. Individuals also had the chance to share their input through surveys on their experiences with WPS and education in the City of Worcester more broadly. Respondents included students, families, educators, and community members.

Finally, the strategic planning process featured a multi-tiered committee system that engaged stakeholders from diverse backgrounds and roles in the community. More than 70 community members participated in one or more committees. The planning groups included an Advisory and a Coordinating Committee as well as five subcommittees focused on high-priority areas for the city: Access to Availability of Higher-Level Learning; Educator Resources and Development; Governance, Finance, and Operations; Instructional Resources and Technology; and Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate. With the help of the Rennie Center, these committees reviewed more than 40 data sets from state and district systems, along with 30 local and national journal publications providing insights on budget, population demographics, discipline, culture, and educational best practices.^c

Lessons Learned

Committee members considered the themes and trends that emerged from the conversations, meetings, and data review to refine and prioritize the recommendations of the strategic plan. Key learnings included¹⁹:

- Worcester’s residents are dedicated to high-quality education for all its students. The commitment of teachers, staff, and the community to support students is what allows the district to operate and succeed despite challenges.
- Offering high-quality learning options for all students—regardless of age, ability, language, background, and/or neighborhood—is paramount. It is critical that improvements in learning experiences address needs from early childhood education through high school and benefit the whole student population, including advanced learners, students with disabilities, and English language learners.
- Improvements must also address complementary learning needs, such as developing social and emotional skills, cultivating a welcoming and supportive environment in schools, enhancing communication and partnership with families, and overcoming any barriers that hinder student success.
- Specific calls to action include increased options for advanced learning, better access to technology, greater support for postsecondary transitions, new and enhanced facilities, and more collaborative learning opportunities for educators.
- All stakeholders described the dire need to increase the district’s operating budget, including through additional funds from an improved Chapter 70 state funding formula.

These lessons inform a new vision for the district, which calls on all sectors of the city to support Worcester in becoming a national leader in urban education.

^c Example local reports reviewed by subcommittees include *Report of the Dialogues on Race*, *The Schools We Deserve*, and *Not Present, Not Accounted For*.

Orientation to the Plan

The strategic plan is divided into five sections aligned with the focus areas. Each section includes information on:

What We Heard: Reflects the findings from focus groups, document reviews, surveys, and subcommittee reports related to the focus area. This information provides insights on key challenges that the strategic plan's objectives and strategies are designed to address.


Making it Count for All Students: Highlights outcomes from comparable urban districts and state averages on key indicators. Reported metrics are based on data from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and reflect the top-performing comparison district in each category. Metrics are intended as a guide, rather than an expressed goal for Worcester. The list of communities was drawn from participants in the Urban Superintendents Network, based on size and demographics, and vetted by strategic plan organizers. The full list of comparison districts and additional measures are included in Appendix A.

Benchmarks for Success in 2023: Features priority benchmarks for expected improvement (e.g., growth in students' ELA and Math performance) based on the successful implementation of this plan's strategies. A full list of improvement benchmarks associated with each section is included in Appendix B.

Current Resources and Initiatives: Worcester has many resources and initiatives that exist to support the action steps of the plan. This section acknowledges the ongoing work to address core challenges and highlights initiatives that may need to be scaled to achieve maximum impact.

Subsequent pages detail objectives and action steps that will guide improvement efforts over the next five years. Each objective includes feasibility metrics established in collaboration with district and community leaders that delineate the level of effort and financial cost.

Investment: The financial investment needed to implement the objective


 **\$0-\$100,000** No or minimal additional cost for implementation


 **\$100,000 - \$499,000** Seed funding required for implementation

 **\$500,000+** Substantial funding must be added for implementation

Level of Effort: The amount of resources, coordination, or operational change that would be required

 Minimal effort required to implement objective (resources already exist)

 Medium effort required to implement objective (resources already exist, but may need to be coordinated or repurposed)

 Maximum effort required to implement objective (new resources must be developed or brought on)



CULTURE OF INNOVATION



Culture of Innovation

The achievement gap is a persistent and critical obstacle to ensuring the future personal, academic, and career success of today's youth.²⁰ In Worcester, the gap exists primarily for students with disabilities and those from low-income, Latino, and/or language-diverse backgrounds, who are less likely than their peers to reach grade-level benchmarks and graduate from high school.²¹

In Massachusetts, research shows that practices focused on school leadership, collective teacher efficacy, rigorous instruction, and high expectations for all students are critical to turning the tide in schools.²² Worcester has undertaken numerous initiatives to support the needs of students, with localized success.²³ To see systemwide change, structures must be established so that effective practices can be tested and brought to scale. By developing a culture of innovation that supports the incorporation of established and emerging best practices, the district will make the necessary adjustments that enable all students to learn and thrive, while ensuring enhancements (and lessons learned from them) benefit the entire school system.

WHAT WE HEARD²⁴

- Worcester residents and its education professionals value community schools and specialized or focused programs as opportunities to bring educators, families, and community partners together to offer broad opportunities, supports, and services to students and their champions.
- New approaches are needed to address student achievement gaps and foster improvement.

CURRENT RESOURCES & INITIATIVES²⁵

- Principal Learning Network
- New Principals' Institute and Mentoring

MAKING IT COUNT FOR ALL STUDENTS

Our actions will drive improvement for all students and—most critically—change the course for our highest-need students. In the 2016-2017 school year²⁶:

49%

of the 44 schools in Worcester ranked in the top 80% statewide

91%

of the 11 schools in a comparable urban district ranked in the top 80% statewide

69%

of the 1514 schools in Massachusetts met or exceeded state learning targets

OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

CULTURE OF INNOVATION

1. Embrace a culture of innovation that develops and pilots evidence-based approaches and allocates resources to address chronic student achievement gaps and underperforming schools

- **Target District Supports for High Needs Schools:** Create a Superintendent Schools designation, afforded to consistently underperforming settings, that provides increased supports coupled with enhanced accountability, trainings, and resources for the school to implement transformative learning approaches
- **Proactive Supports to Enable School Improvements:** Identify and develop aggressive improvement strategies for lower-performing schools prior to required state intervention, incorporating successful turnaround practices from across Massachusetts and providing necessary operational flexibility for successful implementation

Investment: \$\$\$

Effort: ★★

2. Increase the capacity of school leadership to leverage existing resources for school improvement

With support from the community we will:

- **Enhance School Leader Training Initiatives:** Expand the New Principals' Institute through a third year of practice in partnership with community organizations, allowing aspiring and experienced principals to collaborate and catalyze innovative management practices that foster improvement and student success
- **Provide Supports and New Learning Experiences for Veteran Leaders:** Develop an Institute for veteran principals to support continued growth and development in school management and classroom pedagogy

Investment: \$\$

Effort: ★★

3. Identify demonstrated best practices regionally and across the globe that can be adapted to Worcester's unique conditions to alleviate achievement gaps

- **Expand Early Learning Supports:** Increase implementation of, and access to, early literacy and math interventions for all students through the 6th grade
- **Scale Early Learning Solutions:** Pilot early literacy initiatives in select elementary schools to determine the best fit for a district-wide approach
- **Sustain High Performance in Thriving Schools:** Engage and support the continued success of on-track and high-performing schools by establishing a process to set next-level targets for student learning and spread effective practices

With support from the community, we will:

- **Develop a Network of Schools to Pilot and Scale Evidence-Based Practice:** Design an Incubation Hub drawing on tested, effective, and transferable practices from multiple school models (e.g., community and pathways schools). The hub will focus on scaling these practices in the district and be supported by a body of community members and elected officials²⁷

Investment: \$\$

Effort: ★★

BENCHMARKS FOR SUCCESS IN 2023

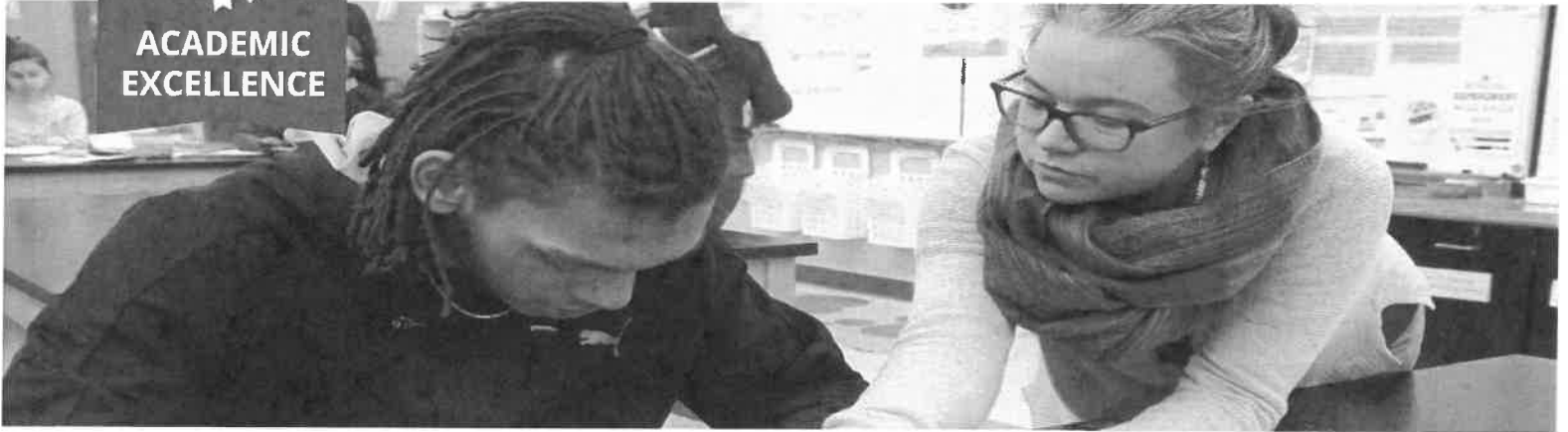
	CURRENT	2019	2021	2023
REDUCE NUMBER OF SCHOOLS PERFORMING AT OR BELOW THE 10TH PERCENTILE STATEWIDE	10	9	7	5

Strategies in Action: *Incubation Hub*

Worcester Public Schools will create an Incubation Hub in the District. The Hub will consider the current elementary and secondary school feeder system and serve as the pilot site for innovative and best practices, drawing significantly from those of community schools and special academic programs, and leverage parent, educator, and community expertise and resources. These practices will be refined and scaled across the district.



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE



Academic Excellence

As the third-largest school district in the state, WPS makes an important contribution in equipping today's students with knowledge and skills to become tomorrow's engaged community and productive workforce.²⁸ As the district builds on a legacy of success in preparing students with real-world skills, it must expand its offerings to accommodate the learning needs and interests of its diverse population, ensuring that all students can chart a path to a meaningful postsecondary opportunity.²⁹ In addition, it must equip students with the digital skills necessary for success in the modern workplace.

Academic excellence starts with universal access to the learning environment and a focus on foundational skills at the elementary level. This ensures that essential building blocks for knowledge are well-established, laying the groundwork for more advanced courses in later years.³⁰ Given the importance of rigorous learning experiences across all grades, WPS will focus on enhancing early education, expanding the breadth and depth of coursework, increasing options for demonstrating knowledge, developing students' technological skills, and providing additional supports for students' college or career aspirations.

WHAT WE HEARD

- Students and educators wanted increased course variety and the opportunity to delve deeply into subject matter and explore current topics.
- Students need more opportunities to develop real-world skills such as financial literacy, career skills, and civics.
- College and career decisions are at the forefront of discussion for middle and high school students; students and parents want planning supports for college and career decision making to start earlier (e.g., middle school) so that youth can be intentional about the learning opportunities they select.

MAKING IT COUNT FOR ALL STUDENTS

Our actions will drive improvement for all students and—most critically—change the course for our highest-need students. Currently³¹:

31%

of 3rd graders in Worcester meet grade-level benchmarks in English Language Arts MCAS

49%

of 3rd graders in a comparable urban district meet grade-level benchmarks in English Language Arts MCAS

47%

of 3rd Graders in MA meet grade-level benchmarks in English Language Arts MCAS

**ACADEMIC
EXCELLENCE**

- Students and parents advocated for more variety in programming inside and outside the school day, including sports, additional advanced courses, and the arts.
- Students and educators need increased access to technology and its full and sustainable integration in classrooms to enhance digital skills.
- Parents and residents noted the importance of expanded partnerships with the community to address district needs, including enrichment initiatives, technology deficits, and transportation.

CURRENT RESOURCES & INITIATIVES

- Targeted, evidence-based literacy and math interventions in elementary schools
- Early college opportunities (e.g., 100 Males to College, dual enrollment initiatives)
- Career technical education pathways throughout the district
- 2018 donation to support 2:1 technology access for students in grades 4-8

BENCHMARKS FOR SUCCESS IN 2023

	CURRENT	2019	2021	2023
47% OF 3RD GRADERS WILL MEET OR EXCEED BENCHMARKS IN READING	31%	36%	41%	47%
49% OF 3RD GRADERS WILL MEET OR EXCEED BENCHMARKS IN MATH	29%	36%	42%	49%
100% OF STUDENTS CAN ENGAGE IN A DIGITAL LEARNING EXPERIENCE <i>(Course or skill-building activity)</i>	30%	53%	76%	100%

Strategies in Action: *Worcester City Enrichment Academy*

Worcester Public Schools—in collaboration with local universities, cultural institutions, and community organizations—will lay the groundwork for the creation of a year-long enrichment program providing instruction, academic support, and experiential learning opportunities for advanced learners.

Based on national models of accelerated learning, this program will be available to WPS students in grades 7-12 to enhance their academic knowledge and skills while providing opportunities to pursue specific subject areas in depth and cultivate their expertise. The program will offer mentoring from local college students and learning activities throughout the school year hosted by the city’s cultural and community organizations. In the summer, grade cohorts will participate in intensive seminars on Worcester’s college campuses. Juniors will participate in a short summer residency.

More than 300 qualified students will be able to participate in the Academy each year (with an expected enrollment of five students per grade, per school). Students will be accepted by application or nomination from each middle and high school. The program is anticipated to begin in the 2022-2023 school year.



ACADEMIC
EXCELLENCE



OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

1. Increase opportunities for students to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills and demonstrate knowledge

- **Implement Community-Based Learning Opportunities:** Strengthen experiential learning options across grades K-12, providing students with multiple strategies to acquire and demonstrate understanding of concepts
- **Employ Demonstrated College and Career Academic Sequence:** Align class offerings to state requirements and ensure all students can access learning opportunities to fulfill the state's recommended course sequence for college and career readiness (MassCORE)
- **Offer More Advanced Course Options:** Increase the number of advanced learning options and enrichment opportunities in 9th grade to better prepare students to succeed in advanced courses throughout high school
- **Diversify and Increase High School Electives:** Foster deeper and broader subject matter exploration in areas relevant to student interests and societal needs by increasing the variety of electives in grades 9-12

Investment: \$\$

Effort: ★★

2. Develop students' technology fluency and ensure access to digital learning and computer science (DLCS) curricula

- **Develop Digital Learning and Computer Science Options:** Create course curricula to meet state standards for DLCS and provide learning opportunities at the elementary, middle, and high school levels
- **Implement Digital Skill-Building Opportunities:** Develop learning opportunities for students and their families to develop foundational digital skills
- **Increase Access to Digital Learning Options and Courses:** Align curricula to include effective technology integration strategies and blended learning opportunities and ensure all students have the opportunity to participate in at least one digital learning experience each year

Investment: \$\$\$

Effort: ★★

**ACADEMIC
EXCELLENCE**

3. Increase career awareness and exploration at all grade levels through integrated coursework and a tiered career learning program

- **Foster Career Skills Development:** Vertically align career exploration experiences from elementary through high school, creating age-appropriate learning opportunities that are rigorous, skill-building, and linked to meaningful postsecondary options
- **Implement *My Career and Academic Plan* and Mentoring:** Increase relevance of learning experiences by aligning options to students' skills and interests through personalized learning plans and partnerships with students, families, and the community
- **Increased Availability and Access of Career Learning Experiences:** Create opportunities for students to develop real-world skills through integrated academic and career pathway initiatives in their own or other district schools
- **Enhance Career Exploration and Planning Process through Technology:** Use technology to streamline and support the postsecondary planning process by increasing access to career resources, assessments, and a digital portfolio of students' accomplishments

With support from the community, we will:

- **Increase Community-Based Career Learning Options:** Expand career learning opportunities for students by scaling existing pathways and developing new initiatives in partnership with business and community organizations
- **Develop Afterschool Career Learning Opportunities:** Enhance in-school and out-of-school-time options for students to participate in career exploration programs
- **Increase Accessibility of Career Learning:** Increase access to vocational learning opportunities by identifying operational resources to support student participation (e.g., schedule, transportation)
- **Implement Skill-Building Opportunities in Digital Literacy:** Develop learning opportunities for families to build foundational digital skills

Investment: \$\$\$

Effort: ★★

4. Leverage Worcester's distinct community assets to increase choices in learning options and academic support through partnerships with higher education and community organizations

With support from the community, we will:

- **Document Effective Programs and Monitor Barriers to Access:** Establish partnerships with local universities and/or research centers to document existing advanced learning opportunities (e.g., dual enrollment, STEM programs), identify barriers to access, and monitor program impacts as well as effects of improvements
- **Monitor Student Interest to Design Relevant Coursework:** Develop and maintain an information system that monitors student interest and course needs to inform future learning options as well as academic supports
- **Collaborate with Community Leaders for Comprehensive Student Supports:** Establish a body that includes representatives from youth-serving organizations to develop strategies for supporting students' needs beyond the school schedule (e.g., after school, summer, and vacations)
- **Offer Credit-Bearing Courses in Partnership with Colleges and Universities:** Partner with local colleges and universities to offer high school students access to additional credit-bearing course opportunities through dual enrollment
- **Identify District Liaison to Organize and Manage Community Partnerships:** Develop a comprehensive and coordinated approach to community partnerships that is managed and executed by district liaison
- **Develop an Enrichment Academy Supported by Learning Institutions in the Community:** Develop a public/private enrichment academy to support advanced learners, including after-school and summer opportunities for children in grades 7-12, that leverages Worcester's distinct community, STEM, and civic assets

Investment: \$\$

Effort: ★★



WELCOMING SCHOOLS



Welcoming Schools

Students sit at the center of a network of individuals vested in their success. Parents, educators, and community leaders know the value of developing the talent and skills of Worcester's youth so that they can become thriving adults and strong community members capable of addressing the demands of the workforce. A whole-child approach ensures that education accounts for many of the challenges that extend beyond the schools but have an impact on students' ability to learn. Research shows that an emphasis on social-emotional learning aids the development of the skills needed for advancing academically, building positive relationships, communicating effectively, and thriving in the face of adversity, thereby increasing the likelihood of success in college and career.³²

Schools that foster positive culture—and build partnerships between families and the community—create effective learning environments that can address whole-child learning needs. Leveraging citywide assets for student success, Worcester will foster positive school culture by increasing resources to address students' social-emotional needs, raising awareness about trauma, and enhancing wraparound supports. As Worcester is a community rich in the ethnic and cultural diversity that characterizes our increasingly globalized world, each school will develop, as a part of its accountability plan, a program for ensuring cultural competence among the staff consistent with its student population. Worcester will also focus on enhancing communication efforts with families and the community to ensure that this work is coordinated and allows students, their families, and educators to feel confident, nurtured, and able to thrive in school.

WHAT WE HEARD

- Students and educators report that schools can be stressful environments. All stakeholders request additional resources to support social-emotional learning and problem-solving skills.
- A notable number of students and parents express a need for schools to provide warm and welcoming environments, as well as a need to identify and alter practices and policies that have a negative effect on school culture (e.g. limited family outreach, lack of recognition protocols for school visitors).
- All participants describe a need for increased sensitivity to cultural and individual differences, especially when communicating about life circumstances influencing school performance and adjustment.
- Parents need increased connections with educators through two-way communication and easier access to student information, such as grades.

MAKING IT COUNT FOR ALL STUDENTS

Our actions will drive improvement for all students and—most critically—change the course for our highest-need students. Currently:³³

17%

of Worcester Public Schools students are absent from school for 10% or more of the school year

13%

of students in a comparable urban district are absent from school for 10% or more of the school year

14%

of students in Massachusetts are absent from school for 10% or more of the school year

CURRENT RESOURCES & INITIATIVES

- Wraparound supports and trauma-focused initiatives (e.g., Worcester Healthy Environment and Resilience in Schools)
- Special Education Department parent trainings and Special Education Advisory Council
- Citywide Parent Planning Advisory Council (CPPAC)
- WIPLE (Worcester Involved in Parent Leadership Education) Trainings
- Chronic Absenteeism Task Force

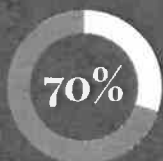
WELCOMING SCHOOLS

BENCHMARKS FOR SUCCESS IN 2023

	CURRENT	2019	2021	2023
REDUCE CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM TO 14% FOR STUDENTS	17%	16%	15%	14%
INCREASE THE NUMBER OF SCHOOLS WITH AN ACTIVE SITE COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY BY 50%	N/A	10%	30%	50%
REDUCE NUMBER OF YOUTH DISCIPLINED FOR NON-DRUG, NON-VIOLENT, AND NON-CRIMINAL OFFENSES BY 30%	71%	61%	51%	41%
REDUCE PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS SUSPENDED FOR NON-DRUG, NON-VIOLENT, AND NON-CRIMINAL OFFENSES BY ONE-THIRD	4.8%	4.48%	3.84%	3.2%

Tackling a National Challenge

Experts increasingly highlight the disproportionate application of disciplinary measures to students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds.³⁴ Addressing potential bias and resolving non-violent confrontations prior to the application of disciplinary measures for these subgroups offers an opportunity for WPS to substantially reduce overall disciplinary actions and address long-term inequitable outcomes. Worcester boasts a diverse student body and is cognizant that discipline must be appropriate and equitably implemented. As schools work to improve school climate and student engagement and reduce the overall need for disciplinary measures, the application of discipline in the African-American, Latino, and Special Education populations deserves special consideration. According to data reported by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education:



More than 70% of Worcester's disciplinary actions in the 2016-2017 school year were for non-drug, non-violent, and non-criminal offenses, exceeding state averages and most comparable urban districts.



Youth of color represented 80% of discipline actions for non-drug, non-violent, and non-criminal offenses, although they represent just 70% of the total population.



OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

1. Prioritize development of systems that support a shared vision for social and emotional development across the district

- **Engage Working Group to Design and Implement Whole-Child Support System:** Convene district and building leaders to create a 3-year multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) implementation plan
- **Employ a System to Proactively Respond to Student Needs:** Develop an early warning system to identify students' needs, establish benchmarks for intervention, and provide personalized and proactive support for high-risk students
- **Monitor and Take Action to Improve Differences in Outcomes Among Student Groups:** Develop a district approach to monitor differences among groups in academic performance, absenteeism, and behavior referrals and take corrective actions if gaps between groups exceed a specific threshold (e.g., 25%)
- **Monitor Student Needs and Allocate Appropriate Supports:** Establish a consistent process for data conversations among educators and administrators to monitor student progress and determine necessary supports and interventions
- **Support Behavioral and Mental Health of Students and Educators:** Implement an internal comprehensive behavioral health program for all schools
- **Increase Availability of Wraparound Resources:** Develop a wraparound coordinator position in all buildings, beginning with secondary and Superintendent's Schools

Investment: \$\$

Effort: ★★

2. Implement comprehensive, district-wide approach to monitoring and measuring social and emotional growth and school climate

- **Measure Social-Emotional Learning and School Climate:** Employ validated measures of social-emotional development and school climate in each building
- **Develop District-wide Expectations for Social-Emotional Learning:** Articulate district goals for social-emotional competencies, to be achieved through school-based initiatives
- **Increase Staff Capacity to Address Trauma:** Provide training on trauma intervention and trauma-sensitive practices at each school
- **Scale Tested Trauma Supports to All Schools:** Pending results of the Worcester HEARS initiative, share best practices from the program framework at all schools (beginning with Superintendent's Schools) to monitor students' social-emotional growth

Investment: \$\$

Effort: ★★

3. Foster and monitor positive school climate through articulation of shared values/ goals and implementation of effective practices in schools

- **Develop District-wide Expectations for School Culture:** Articulate shared values and expectations for school climate in all public schools in Worcester and provide resources for schools to localize best practices
- **Incorporate Student Participation in School Improvements:** Provide opportunities for students to participate in age-appropriate decision making at the school level
- **Review Discipline Practices to Ensure Equitable Outcomes:** Implement system-wide review and training on school and classroom management practices to ensure that the use of exclusionary discipline is limited, appropriate, targeted, and equitably implemented
- **Reduce Suspension Rates Across the District:** Build upon best practices from WPS, community-based programs, and beyond to include instructional and environmental supports that offer alternative consequences to suspension for non-drug, non-weapon, and non-criminal behaviors

Investment: \$\$

Effort: ★★

WELCOMING SCHOOLS

4. Increase opportunities for family engagement and participation in decision making at the school level

- **Enhance and Increase Positive Parent Engagement Experiences:** Partner with community organizations to strengthen engagement with constituents and foster a welcoming, culturally sensitive environment in each school
- **Increase Parent Engagement in School-Level Decision Making:** Increase parent awareness and engagement in school planning and decision-making opportunities by providing training to participate in school leadership initiatives (e.g., site councils, parent-teacher organizations, and CPPAC)
- **Increase Collaboration Between Parents and Teachers:** Provide co-trainings for parents and teachers on how to collaborate effectively for student success and school improvement
- **Increase Understanding of the Impact of Operational Decisions on Student Experience:** Explore including an analyst, hired by CPPAC, to consider the impact of contract provisions on students
- **Increase Ease of Access to District Information:** Develop standardized communication protocols for families' ease of access including: regular updates to the district website, multilingual communications across all contact types (e.g., phone, email), a tool for sharing sensitive information, and annual updates to contact lists (to make sure families are receiving district communications)
- **Increase Ease of Access to Student Information:** Provide timely and secure access to student information and progress indicators for families and students
- **Develop a Bilingual Parent Advisory Council:** Establish a parent advisory group that represents the diverse language community of Worcester and can contribute to school-level decision making

Investment: \$\$\$

Effort: ★★★

Strategies in Action: *Systems for Support*

Worcester has an established reputation of providing critical supports to students with demonstrated need. As the district improves, the focus will shift to more proactively supporting all students. Early Warning Systems monitor student outcomes and flag areas of potential concern early on, so that course adjustments can be readily made and supports can be provided. Similarly, a multi-tiered system of support allocates resources such that all students receive high-quality basic interventions and more intensive supports are provided as needed. Worcester will prioritize the development of both systems and use data to ensure that more students remain on track throughout their academic careers by monitoring key indicators such as attendance, grades, test scores, and behavior.



INVESTING IN EDUCATORS



Investing in Educators

Educators are the life force of schools. In considering how to best support students, we must also reflect on support for educators, including classroom teachers, aides, specialists, and service providers. Worcester students have a variety of learning needs that require educators to apply new approaches, such as trauma-informed instruction and personalized learning. As educators and students cultivate relationships, it is beneficial to have a workforce with a variety of life experiences that can inspire and support students. The district will focus on recruiting a diverse, highly qualified teacher and administrative workforce, offering professional development in key instructional and support areas, and creating professional ladders and lattices to ensure career opportunities throughout an educator's tenure.

WHAT WE HEARD

- Educators are seeking increased opportunities to collaborate within their grade levels or departments as well as with special educators and specialists.
- Educators need additional funding for classroom resources and learning materials.
- Educators want increased supports for the integration and use of technology.
- Educators need increased support, including staffing, to allow for personalized and differentiated instruction in the face of increasing class sizes.

CURRENT RESOURCES & INITIATIVES

- Student Centered Coaching Workshops
- First Year Teacher Induction Program
- Partnerships in teacher education with 11 colleges in surrounding areas
- Future District Administrators training program

MAKING IT COUNT FOR ALL SCHOOLS

Our actions will drive improvement for all students and—most critically—change the course for our highest-need students. Currently³⁵:

16%

of educators in Worcester identify as African American, Asian, Latino, Native American, or Multi-Race

70%

of students in Worcester identify as African American, Asian, Latino, Native American, or Multi-Race

48%

of educators in a comparable urban district identify as African American, Asian, Latino, Native American, or Multi-Race

BENCHMARKS FOR SUCCESS IN 2023

INVESTING IN EDUCATORS

	2019	2021	2023
INCREASE DIVERSITY OF NEW HIRES TO 25%	8%	17%	25%

OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

1. Review teacher recruitment and retention approach and implement strategies that will increase access to a highly qualified, diverse teacher workforce

- **Increase the Number of Highly Qualified Teacher Candidates:** Partner with local teacher preparation programs to provide career pathways for top educators to train and remain in Worcester
- **Recruit Educators Knowledgeable in Instruction in Urban Environments:** Identify and develop partnerships between the district and exemplary teacher preparation programs in urban education
- **Expand and Enhance Recruitment of Diverse Educator Candidates:** Review recruitment and retention processes to maximize the district's ability to attract diverse candidates from across the nation and partner with local organizations to increase the community's awareness of opportunities
- **Provide Supports to Increase New Teacher Retention:** Enhance and scale mentoring strategies to support and retain new teachers
- **Develop a Pipeline of Educators among WPS Students:** Strengthen existing educator development initiatives in the district using best practices from effective teacher training models
- **Attract Recent College Graduates to WPS:** Develop a teacher residency program that recruits talent to WPS and encourages students to pursue the teaching profession

Investment: \$\$

Effort: ★★

2. Provide pathways for educators to demonstrate mastery and advance in their professional development

- **Recognize Skill Acquisition with Formal Credentials:** Provide opportunities for educators to receive credentials for new skill sets or leverage expertise by becoming a building coach
- **Develop Career Advancement Opportunities for Top Educators:** Develop opportunities for educators to become teacher leaders, based on a consistent demonstration of efficacy in the classroom. Teacher leaders will receive recognition, participate in school and district decision making, and support their colleagues

Investment: \$\$

Effort: ★★

Strategies in Action: *Diversity in Education*

As Worcester becomes more diverse, it is critical to have an educator population that reflects the various life experiences of the community. Worcester will make a concerted effort to attract and retain educators and leaders from a variety of backgrounds by establishing partnerships with reputable programs in urban education. Worcester will rely on these settings to recruit candidates who are deeply knowledgeable about how to address and support the learning needs of students in urban settings. In addition, Worcester will initiate partnerships with multicultural institutions (e.g., historically Black Colleges/Universities and Hispanic Serving Institutions) to develop an educator workforce that reflects the student population. Furthermore, Worcester will employ evidence-based educator retention strategies to increase the longevity of new educators within the district. Efforts to increase diversity of the teacher workforce will launch for the 2019-2020 hiring period and continue beyond 2023.



**INVESTING IN
EDUCATORS**



3. Increase educator capacity to provide high-quality instruction and address student needs by offering diverse professional development opportunities and positive supports

- **Provide Training in High-Need Content Areas:** Provide district-level training opportunities in emerging content areas, including but not limited to social-emotional learning, trauma-sensitive practices, and cultural sensitivity
- **Ensure Peer Learning Opportunities District-wide:** Establish district expectations and opportunities for peer learning that can be implemented in schools
- **Encourage Existing Peer Sharing Initiatives in Schools:** Support and encourage the development of existing communities of practice for educators
- **Create Inclusive General Education Classrooms for English Language Learners:** Implement staff training in co-teaching models for general education classes with English language learners beginning with elementary educators
- **Provide Trainings for Special and General Educators:** Offer learning opportunities on updated assessments in special education as well as support for co-teaching implementation strategies
- **Review Positive Incentives for Educator Engagement:** Explore ways to support and re-energize educators to cultivate renewed enthusiasm and reduce non-health-related absences

Investment: \$\$

Effort: ★★

4. Prioritize and provide supports to develop digital competence and confidence among all educators and leaders in the district to ensure the effective use of technology for teaching, learning, and communication

- **Use Technology to Enhance Communication Options for Educators:** Ensure that technology resources for both internal and external communication are available and that all staff are trained in their use
- **Provide Professional Development on Available Technology:** Build the collective efficacy of teachers and leaders to utilize technology by developing a professional development plan based on current educator needs
- **Employ Instructional Coaches for Technology Integration:** Train instructional coaches in digital literacy at each school. Identify at least six educators with advanced technology and instruction skills to serve as master coaches who provide learning sessions for peers through a “train the trainer” model
- **Employ District Liaison in Digital Learning and Computer Science:** Identify and bring on board a district liaison to work with educators to create and monitor K-12 DLCS curriculum
- **Increase Training District-wide on Technology-Enhanced Classrooms:** Provide trainings on technical skills as well as strategies to maximize the impact of technology-integrated instruction
- **Provide Variety in Continued Learning Opportunities:** Offer self-paced and diverse professional learning for teachers

Investment: \$\$\$

Effort: ★★





TECHNOLOGY + OPERATIONS



Technology & Operations

The vision of Worcester as a national leader in urban education can only be realized through wide-scale improvements in teaching and learning supported by a sustainable infrastructure. Worcester must address challenges that deeply impact the learning experience in the district—such as access to technology inside and outside the school building, transportation options for after-school programming, and funding gaps. This will require coordination among district administrators, School Committee members, municipal leaders, and community members. Together, the community can develop collaborative interim solutions and advocate for the foundational issue of underfunding in the school district. By working together to improve our schools and strategizing to increase state funding, we will be well-equipped to develop an infrastructure that can support excellence in education.

WHAT WE HEARD³⁶

- There is a need for increased coordination among the School Committee, City Council, and district leadership to prioritize, support, and implement improvements for the schools.
- The current budget of the district is insufficient to effectively operate and educate all students because of a \$90 million gap between foundation formula calculations and actual spending.
- In 2017, unfunded budget needs totaled \$12.9 million, including resources such as textbooks, furniture, and instructional technology.
- Critical improvements to physical spaces, transportation, and programming can be better and more consistently addressed with additional financial supports.
- Educators and students expressed the need for enhanced wireless infrastructure and access to devices for teaching and learning.

MAKING IT COUNT FOR ALL SCHOOLS

Our actions will drive improvement for all students and—most critically—change the course for our highest-need students. Currently³⁷:

\$14,492

on average, is allocated per pupil within Worcester

\$15,545

on average, is allocated per pupil for students in Massachusetts

\$20,247

on average, is allocated per pupil within a comparable urban district

CURRENT RESOURCES & INITIATIVES³⁸

- Building replacement plan resulting in new South High Community School and anticipated Doherty High School
- Partnership with Massachusetts State Building Authority to replace windows and boilers
- Transportation of 12,000 students and current feasibility study to insource transportation within the district

**TECHNOLOGY
 + OPERATIONS**

BENCHMARKS FOR SUCCESS IN 2023

	CURRENT	2019	2021	2023
INCREASE PER-PUPIL EXPENDITURE BY 20%	0%	4%	12%	20%

OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

1. Coordinate and align school administration, governance, and municipal processes to prioritize and support educational improvements for the success of all students

The community will:

- **Review and Improve Governance Operations for Efficiency:** Review governance procedures and identify strategies to enhance the district’s efficiency and foster continuous improvement
- **Increase Opportunities for the Community to Engage in Policy Discussions:** Expand School Committee planning and strategy processes to engage the public in policy discussions
- **Develop Joint Committee for Improvement:** Establish standing joint committee (School Committee and City Council) to address district challenges and improvement needs

Investment: \$ Effort: ★★

2. Identify and establish support for fiscal strategies that enhance and scale improvements with demonstrated effectiveness

- **Review and Identify Strategies to Support District Priorities within Current Budget:** Engage in a targeted review of district operational and fiscal efficiency to identify strategies for addressing high-priority improvements within current budget
- **Launch Campaign for Increased State Funding for School District:** Establish committee and campaign to advocate for an increase in the foundation budget

Investment: \$\$ Effort: ★★

Strategies in Action: *Quarterly Policy Forums*

Worcester aims to increase the participation of a range of sectors and stakeholders in policy conversations that ultimately affect the functions and initiatives of schools. Building on existing opportunities for formal feedback through School Committee meetings, Worcester will use one meeting per quarter to engage in a rigorous briefing and dialogue around district policy and its ability to support the actions and improvements envisioned in this document for Worcester Public Schools. Through this discussion, Worcester aims to keep all stakeholders informed and coordinated on the strategic vision of the district and its successful implementation.



**TECHNOLOGY
+ OPERATIONS**



3. Establish a strategic communication and outreach approach that promotes district opportunities and establishes Worcester as a leader in urban education

- **Develop and Maintain Resources that Attract New Families to WPS:** Strengthen public presence (including web presence and social media) to promote opportunities in the school district
- **Enhance Community Awareness of WPS Offerings:** Create central information points for community members to learn about and support the district

Investment: \$\$\$

Effort: ★★

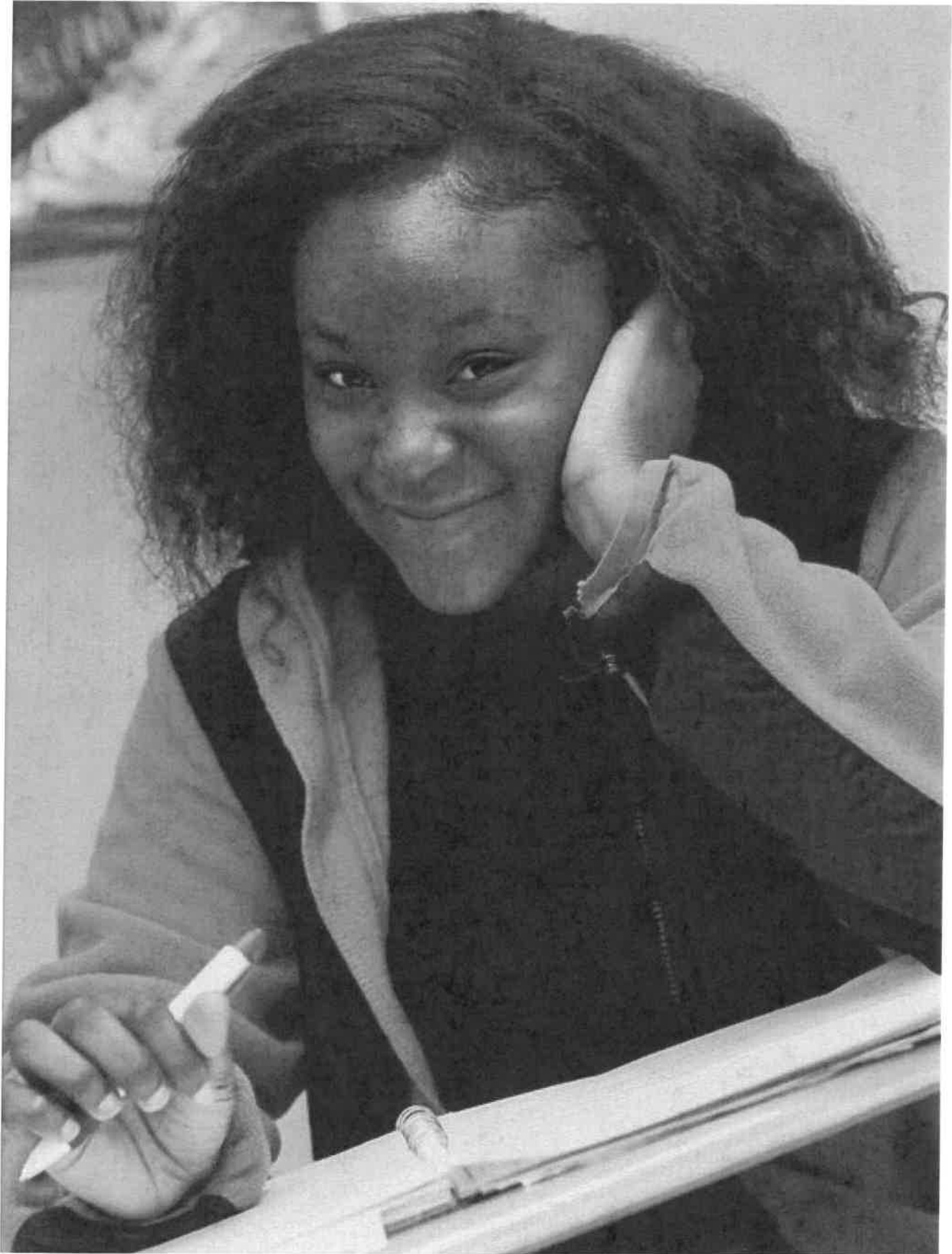
4. Establish the infrastructure necessary to support technology access and integration across the district

With support from the community we will:

- **Establish District Culture and Operations Around Technology:** Develop policies and procedures for technology access, use, and improvement that will facilitate district-wide implementation and sustainability
- **Engage an Advisory Body on Technology Rollout:** Establish a committee on technology, representative of all stakeholders, to oversee implementation and ensure alignment with community needs
- **Employ an Updated Information System:** Invest in the acquisition and support of a student information system
- **Improve Wireless Access in School Buildings:** Develop and maintain a robust wireless infrastructure to support a 1:1 device initiative throughout the district
- **Develop a Strategy to Increase Access to Technology in Classrooms:** Craft a district-wide strategy to ensure all educators have access to basic technology that effectively supports instruction
- **Increase Student Access to Devices in All Grades:** Provide access to devices to ensure that all students can use technology for personalized learning experiences
- **Establish Funding for Device Maintenance:** Develop funding mechanisms for the maintenance and replacement of technology at appropriate intervals
- **Address the Digital Divide Outside of School:** Work on solutions to improve after-school access to technology and the internet to support student learning

Investment: \$\$\$\$

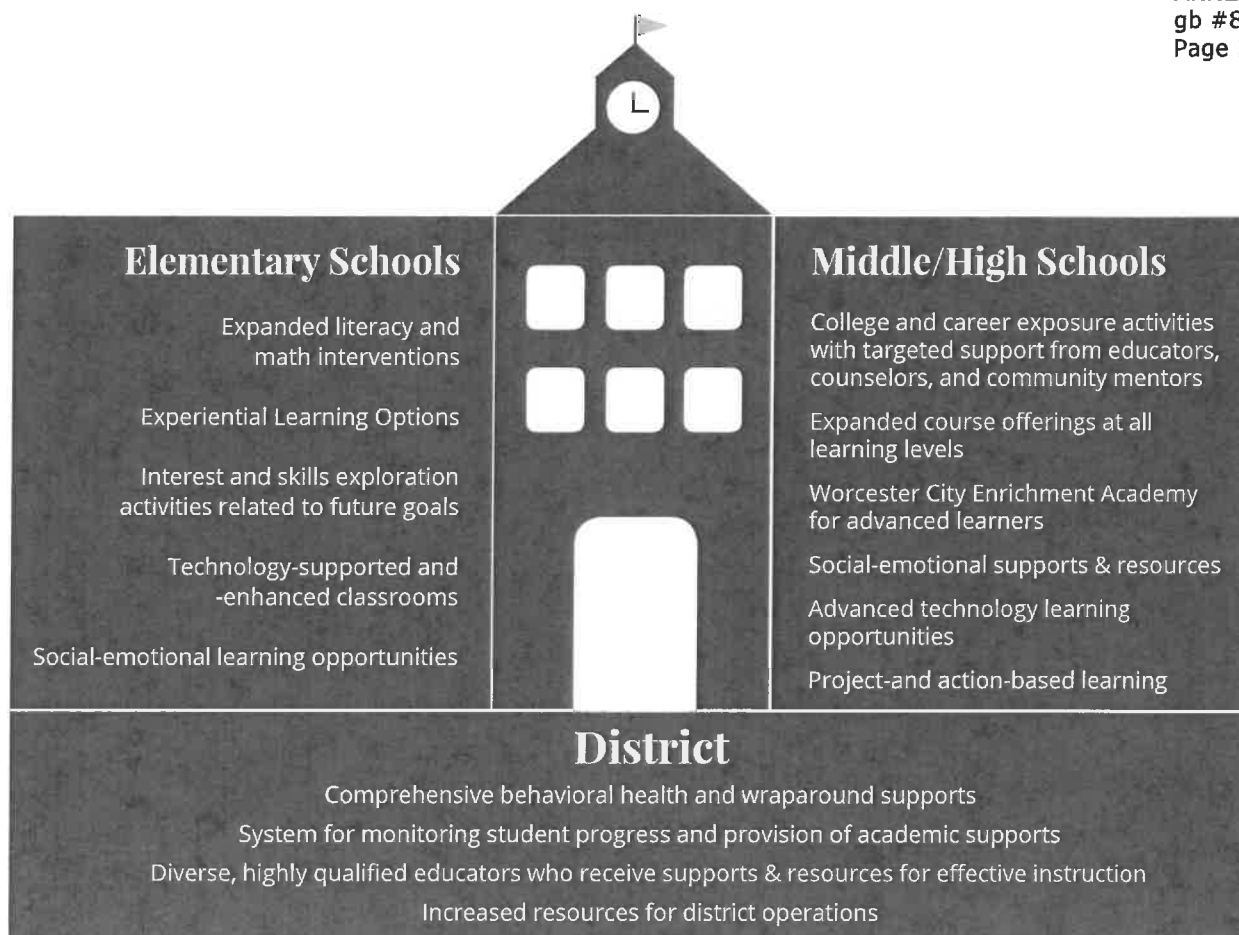
Effort: ★★





Conclusion

Defining our Path provides a broad and ambitious plan for assuring strong educational outcomes for all Worcester Public School students. Unlike most public school strategic plans, the genesis of this work was not with the School Department or the School Committee but rather with the community. While at times challenging, the work to bring together the multitude of sectors and interests making up our city highlighted a new way for all stakeholders to collaborate to address the pressing matters facing our schools and impacting our common life. Each participant learned a tremendous amount about the work of education in our district and the lived experience of administrators, teachers, students, and families. We believe that the cooperative approach that founded this plan remains key to its implementation; soliciting meaningful community engagement, calling on expert insight, and working with civic leaders and associations is integral to sustaining the forward momentum that will ensure the ongoing success of our schools and our children.



Worcester Public Schools in 2023

ALL STUDENTS WILL

1. Have access to high-quality learning experiences that leverage effective approaches;
2. Have access to rigorous and personalized learning supported by technology;
3. Gain a holistic set of skills and be supported by a network—inclusive of their families and the community—to realize their personal, academic, and professional goals;
4. Be supported by effective educators who demonstrate leadership and commitment to enhancing student learning and development; and
5. Learn in an efficient and fiscally sound district.

Acknowledgments

Our deepest gratitude to the individuals and organizations who made this process possible and participated in the planning effort.

SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

Barr Foundation

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Greater Worcester Community Foundation

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Reverend Clyde Talley

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Appendix A^D

Worcester: Where We Are and Our Comparisons³⁹

	Worcester	Highest-Performing Comparison District	Median Performance of Comparison Districts ^F	State
Innovation				
Graduation Rate- 5yr	86.4%	90.3% ^F	78.9%	89.8%
Student Growth Percentile- ELA	50%	53% ^G	46%	50%
Student Growth Percentile- Math	49%	52% ^H	41%	50%
Academic Excellence				
3rd Graders Meeting or Exceeding Expectations on MCAS - English Language Arts (%)	31%	49% ^I	32%	47%
3rd Graders Meeting or Exceeding Expectations on MCAS- Math (%)	29%	53% ^J	36%	49%
8 th Graders Meeting or Exceeding Expectations on MCAS- ELA (%)	33%	46% ^J	30.5%	49%
8 th Graders Meeting or Exceeding Expectations on MCAS-Math (%)	25%	46% ^K	31%	48%
Completion of College and Career Curriculum (MassCORE)	92.4%	100.0% ^L	71.2%	80.9%

^D All indicators and rates described within the appendix are sourced from the most current Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education statewide reports and data sets available.

^F Comparison District Cohort: Boston, Brockton, Fall River, Fitchburg, Holyoke, Lawrence, Leominster, Lowell, Lynn, New Bedford, Revere, and Springfield Public Schools

^F 2016 Graduation Rate: Leominster Public Schools

^G 2017 Next Generation MCAS Achievement Results: Revere Public Schools

^H 2017 Next Generation MCAS Achievement Results: Lynn Public Schools

^I 2017 Next Generation MCAS Achievement Results-3rd Grade ELA: Revere Public Schools

2017 Next Generation MCAS Achievement Results-3rd Grade Math: Revere Public Schools

^J 2017 Next Generation MCAS Achievement Results-8th Grade ELA: Revere Public Schools

^K 2017 Next Generation MCAS Achievement Results-8th Grade Math: Leominster Public Schools

^L 2016-2017 MassCORE Completion Report All Students: Lawrence, Leominster, and Revere Public Schools

	Worcester	Highest-Performing Comparison District	Median Performance of Comparison Districts^M	State
	Positive Culture			
Dropout Rate (Grades 9-12)	2.2%	1.2% ^N	3.8%	1.8%
Students Disciplined for Non-Drug, Non-Violent, or Non-Criminal-Related Offenses (% of All Students Disciplined)	71.3%	9.5% ^O	69.5%	63.5%
Students Disciplined (% of Total Student Population)	8.4%	2.1 % ^P	7.7%	4.0%
Attendance Rate	94.1%	94.7% ^Q	92.9%	94.6%
Chronically Absent	16.9%	12.9% ^Q	23.3%	13.5%
	Educators			
Educator Proficient or Higher on Evaluation	97.4%	98.0% ^R	91.2%	95.7%
	Foundations for Improvement			
Per Pupil Spending Rate	\$14,492	\$20,247 ^S	\$14,473	\$15,545

^M Comparison District Cohort: Boston, Brockton, Fall River, Fitchburg, Holyoke, Lawrence, Leominster, Lowell, Lynn, New Bedford, Revere, and Springfield Public Schools

^N 2016-2017 Dropout Report (District) All Students: Lowell Public Schools

^O 2016-2017 Student Discipline Data Report- 18. Non-Drug, Non-Violent, or Non-Criminal-Related Offenses: Lawrence Public Schools

^P 2016-17 Student Discipline Data Report - All Offenses - All Students: Revere Public Schools

^Q 2016-2017 Student Attendance and Retention Report: Revere Public Schools

^R 2015-2016 Educator Evaluation Performance (District)- All Educators: Lowell Public Schools

^S 2016 Per Pupil Expenditures, All Funds: Boston Public Schools

Teacher Race and Ethnicity Comparison

	African American	Asian	Hispanic	White	Native American	Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic
Worcester	4.05%	1.25%	9.17%	84.05%	0	0.22%	1.26%
Highest Comparison District	27.39%	5.09%	13.16%	52.42%	0.23%	0.10%	1.61%
State	3.76%	1.39%	3.90%	90.28%	0.08%	0.06%	0.52%

Appendix B⁴⁰

Benchmarks for Success in 2023

	Current	Year 1	Year 3	Year 5
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT ^T				
Reduce number of schools performing at or below the 10th percentile statewide	10 schools	9 schools	7 schools	5 schools
Increase the number of schools demonstrating or maintaining an SGP in ELA higher than state median 50%	50%	50.33%	50.67%	51%
Increase the number of schools demonstrating or maintaining an SGP in Math to higher than state median 50%	49%	49.33%	49.67%	50%
100 % of top-performing schools maintain their performance levels on state-designated metrics	9 schools	9 schools (Minimum)	9 schools	9 schools
100% of building leaders participate in Principal Academy	n/a	25%	45%	100%
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE				
Reduce proficiency gap to 75% in English Language Arts and Math	50%	58%	67%	75%
47% of 3 rd Grade students will meet or exceed benchmarks on English Language Arts MCAS	31%	36%	41%	47%
49% of 3 rd Grade students will meet or exceed benchmarks on Math MCAS	29%	36%	42%	49%
49 % of 8 th Grade students will meet or exceed benchmarks on English Language Arts MCAS	33%	38%	44%	49%
46 % of 8 th Grade students will meet or exceed benchmarks on Math MCAS	25%	32%	39%	46%
100% of 12 th graders enroll and pass a college or career success activity prior to graduation (e.g. AP, dual enrollment, internship)	n/a ^U	80%	90%	100%
100% of students can engage in a digital learning experience (e.g., course or skill building activity in K-5)	30%	53%	76%	100%
Welcoming Schools				
Reduce chronic absenteeism to 13.5% for students	16.9%	15.8%	14.6%	13.5%
Reduce number of youth disciplined for non-drug, non-violent, and non-criminal offenses by 30%	71%	61%	51%	41%

^T Benchmarks for strategies listed in the culture of innovation section are reflected here as school improvement. This allows a focus on a critical goal for Worcester, improvement of the schools and acknowledges the innovative practices infused throughout all sections.

^U N/A signifies that current data is not available as the metric or initiative is yet to be calculated or implemented

Reduce number of students suspended for non-drug, non-violent, and non-criminal offenses by one-third districtwide	4.8%	4.48%	3.84%	3.2%
Reduce number of students suspended for non-drug, non-violent, and non-criminal offenses by one-third in each subgroup	Shown Below			
<i>English Language Learners</i>	4.7%	4.4%	3.8%	3.1%
<i>Economically disadvantaged</i>	6.1%	5.7%	4.9%	4.1%
<i>Students w/ disabilities</i>	10.4%	9.7%	8.3%	7.0%
<i>High needs</i>	5.5%	5.1%	4.4%	3.7%
<i>American Indian or Alaska Native</i>	11.4%	10.6%	9.1%	7.6%
<i>Asian</i>	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%	0.5%
<i>African American/Black</i>	4.8%	4.5%	3.8%	3.2%
<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	6.7%	6.3%	5.4%	4.5%
<i>Multi-race, Non-Hispanic/Latino</i>	6.6%	6.2%	5.3%	4.4%
<i>White</i>	3.1%	2.9%	2.5%	2.1%
100% of student engage in social and emotional support initiatives by graduation	n/a	33%	75%	100%
Reduce dropout rate to 1.8%	2.2%	2%	1.93%	1.8%
By 2023 all schools have a parent liaison trained in parent engagement best practices	20%	46%	72%	100%
Increase the number of schools with an active site council representative of the school community by 50%	0	10%	30%	50%
80% of families report using student information and communication vehicles	n/a	26%	52%	80%

EDUCATORS

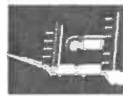
100% of educators proficient or higher on evaluation	97.4%	97.6%	98.1%	98.5%
Increase diversity of new hires by 25%	n/a	8%	17%	25%
80% of district- and school- level professional development opportunities align with strategic plan training areas	n/a	27%	53%	80%
50% of educators earn continuing education credits in priority areas of strategic plan	n/a	17%	33%	50%
80% of educators report application of practices aligned with training area	n/a	27%	53%	80%
80% of all leadership and educators will report that they have proficiency in the ISTE standards	n/a	26%	52%	80%
OPERATIONS				
100% of School Committee meetings are guided by a consent agenda supported by mayor and superintendent	n/a	33%	75%	100%
Increase participation of the community in existing governance meetings by 40%	n/a	13%	26%	40%
Increase per-pupil expenditure by 20%	n/a	4%	12%	20%
Increase the revenue from in-kind or financial contributions within the community by 20%	n/a	6%	13%	20%

INTERIM AND PROCESS BENCHMARKS

100% of students have a personalized learning plan	n/a	20%	50%	100%
100% of high schools provide course offerings meeting all requirements of MassCORE	n/a	33%	75%	100%
Increase available spaces for advanced learning initiatives by 25%	n/a	8.3%	16.6%	25%
Increase available internships by 25%	n/a	8.3%	16.6%	25%
Develop district-wide policy and procedures manual that outlines EWIS, school data teams, and MTSS ^v	n/a	100% (complete)		
100% of schools collect data using district school climate measures	n/a	25%	50%	100%
100% of schools collect data and report on social emotional learning	n/a	25%	50%	100%
75% of schools will use a multi-tiered system of support for both academic and behavior intervention	n/a	n/a (design year)	30%	75%
Implement system-wide review of and training program in classroom management practices for equitable behavioral outcomes launched	n/a	50%	100%	
80% of grade-level teams routinely use EWIS data to proactively identify students at risk	n/a	20%	40%	80%
Implement positive supports for teacher wellness and attendance in all schools	n/a	30	70	100%
Implement enhanced communication process and system implemented (website, contact protocols, identification of student system vendor)	n/a	50%	100%	
100% of students are educated in technology-enabled classrooms	20%	46%	72%	100%
Develop districtwide policy and procedures manual for technology use and operations	n/a	100%		
Quarterly policy discussions are held in the community and within School Committee	n/a	100%		
Establish a standing joint committee of city and school district leaders	n/a	100%		
Develop a funding campaign that engages community and policy leaders	n/a	100%		

^v EWIS- early warning indicator system; MTSS- multi-tiered system of support

Worcester
Education
Collaborative



The Research Bureau

In Collaboration with:



With the Support of:



Defining our Path



A STRATEGIC PLAN FOR EDUCATION IN WORCESTER 2018-2023

Our Strategic Vision

Worcester Public Schools will be a national leader in education, offering **high-quality learning experiences**, ensuring that **all young people are prepared to thrive**, and equipping them to become **engaged citizens in their community**.

Worcester Public Schools in 2023

- **All Students Will**
 - Have access to high-quality learning experiences which leverage effective approaches.
 - Have access to rigorous and personalized learning supported by technology.
 - Gain a holistic set of skills and be supported by a network – inclusive of their families and the community – to realize their personal, academic, and professional goals.
 - Be supported by effective educators who demonstrate leadership and commitment to enhancing student learning and development.
 - Learn in an efficient and fiscally sound district.

Focus Areas and Improvement We Expect

Our Focus Areas

- Culture of Innovation
- Academic Excellence
- Welcoming Schools
- Investment in Educators
- Technology & Operations

WPS Students Will...	Current	2023
Meet or Exceed Expectations on MCAS ELA at 3 rd Grade	31%	47%
Enroll in Postsecondary Opportunities	65%	76%
Reduce Chronic Absenteeism	17%	14%
Access Technology	1:4	1:1
WPS Will...	Current	2023
Increase Per Pupil Expenditure by	NA	8%
Increase Number of High Performing Schools by 20%	NA	20%
Increase Diversity of New Hires by 25%	NA	25%

Culture of Innovation

Objectives:

- Embrace a culture of innovation that develops and pilots evidence-based approaches and allocates resources to address chronic achievement gaps and underperforming schools.
- Increase the capacity of school leadership to leverage existing resources for school improvement.
- Identify demonstrated best practices regionally and across the globe that can be adapted to Worcester's unique conditions to alleviate achievement gaps.

•Example Initiatives:

- Target District Supports for High Needs Schools (Superintendent Schools)
- Enhance School Leader Training Initiatives
- Support New Learning Experiences for Veteran Leaders
- Sustain High Performance in Thriving Schools

Strategy in Action
Incubation Hub

Create a network of schools that will pilot and measure evidence-based practices that can be scaled through the district

Academic Excellence

Objectives:

- Increase opportunities for students to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills and demonstrate knowledge.
- Develop students' digital competence and ensure access to digital learning and computer science (DLCS) curricula.
- Increase career awareness and exploration at all grade levels through a coordinated and tiered career learning program.
- Leverage Worcester's distinct community assets to increase choices in learning opportunities and academic support through partnerships with higher education and community organizations.

•Example Initiatives:

- Expand Early Learning Interventions (K-6)
- Implement Career and Academic Plans and Mentoring
- Increase Access to Digital Learning Options and Courses for Students
- Increase Availability of and Access to Career and Community-Based Learning Experiences
- Diversify and Increase Available Electives

Strategy in Action

Enrichment Academy

Increase experiential and accelerated learning options by creating a yearlong enrichment program supported by private and public partnerships

Welcoming Schools

Objectives

- Prioritize development of systems that support a shared vision for social and emotional development across the district.
- Implement comprehensive, district-wide approach to monitoring and measuring social and emotional growth and school climate.
- Foster and monitor positive school climate through articulation of shared values/goals and implementation of effective practices in schools.
- Increase opportunities for family engagement and participation in decision making at the school level.

• Example Initiatives:

- *Engage Working Group to Design and Implement Whole-Child Support System*
- *Increase Availability of Wrap-Around Services and Staff Capacity to Address Trauma*
- *Monitor and Take Action to Improve Differences in Outcomes Among Student Groups*
- *Develop a Bilingual Parent Advisory Council*
- *Increase Collaboration of Parents and Teachers*
- *Measure Social-Emotional Learning and School Climate*

strategy in Action

Tackling a National Challenge

disproportionate application of disciplinary measures to students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds. Addressing potential bias and resolving non-violent confrontations prior to the application of disciplinary measures for these subgroups offers an opportunity for WPS to substantially reduce overall disciplinary actions and address long-term inequitable

Investment in Educators

Objectives:

- Review teacher recruitment and retention approach and implementation strategies that will increase access to a highly qualified, diverse teacher workforce.
- Increase educator capacity to provide high-quality instruction and address student needs by offering diverse professional development opportunities and positive supports.
- Provide pathways for educators to demonstrate mastery and advance in their professional development.
- Prioritize and provide supports to develop digital competence and confidence among all educators and leaders in the district to ensure the effective use of technology for teaching, learning, and communication.

•Example Initiatives:

- Increase the Number of Highly Qualified Teacher Candidates
- Expand and Enhance Recruitment of Diverse Educator Candidates and Develop a Teacher Residency Program for WPS
- Ensure Peer Learning Opportunities District-wide
- Create General Classrooms with Effective Co-Teaching Models for English Language Learners
- Employ District Liaison for Educator Instruction in Digital Learning and Computer Science
- Develop Career Advancement Opportunities for Educators and Provide Variety in Continued Learning Opportunities

Strategy in Action

Collaborative and Diverse Educator Workforce

Enhance recruitment and retention strategies to maximize attraction of a teacher workforce representative of the student population. Simultaneously, build the capacity of existing educators to collaborate for the education of all students

Technology & Operations

Objectives:

- Coordinate and align school administration, governance, and municipal processes to prioritize and support education improvements for the success of all students.
- Identify and establish support for fiscal strategies that enhance and scale improvements with demonstrated effectiveness.
- Establish a strategic communication and outreach approach that promotes district opportunities and establishes Worcester as a leader in urban education.
- Establish the infrastructure necessary to support technology access and integration across the district.

•Example Initiatives:

- Launch Campaign for Increased State Funding for School District (Chapter 70 Reform)
- Review and Improve Governance Operations for Efficiency
- Increase Opportunities for Community Engagement in Policy Discussions
- Establish District Culture and Operations Around Technology
- Increase Student Access to Devices in All Grades
- Improve Wireless Access in School Buildings

Strategy in Action

Enhanced Policy Discussion and Fiscal Support

Host quarterly policy forums open to the public which discuss the ways that district policies and governance entities can better support the improvements needed in education. An initial focus will be ways to address underfunding in the school district.



For more information:

www.worcesterschoolsstrategicplan.wrrb.org

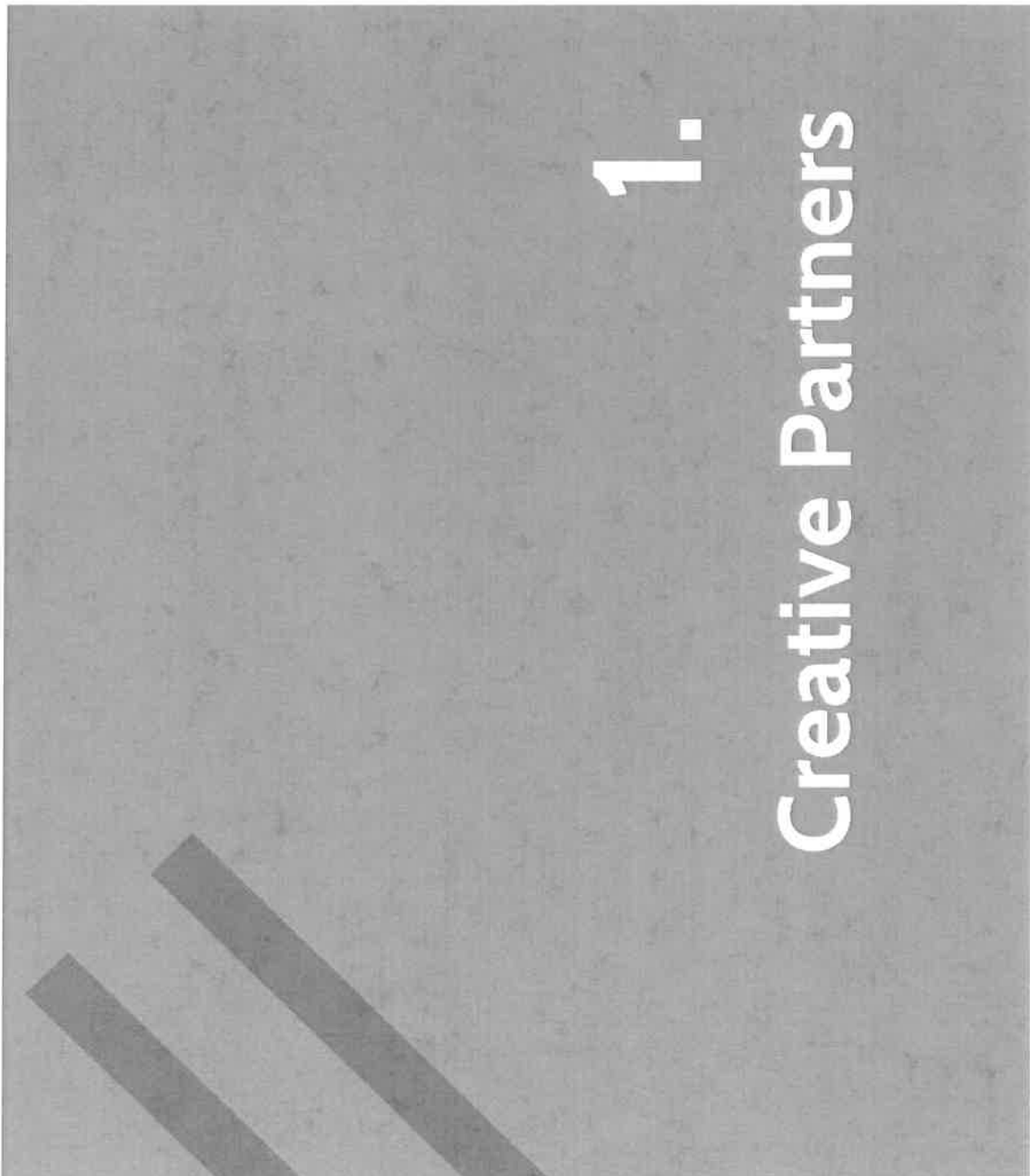


From Here, Anywhere

A new look for the Worcester Public Schools

Sarah Kyriazis, Manager of Instructional Technology & Digital Learning







MRW provides custom web solutions and creative services to educators, non-profits, government agencies, and other do-gooders.

Certified



Corporation[®]

bcorporation.net

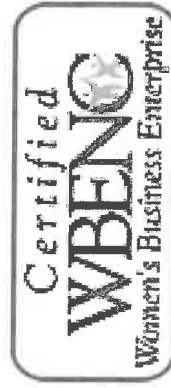


FOR THE
PLANET

MEMBER

Zack Forray & Jeff Mackler

OPUS



Opus is an award-winning brand and information design agency in Boston that focusses on higher-ed and non-profits.

Lily Robles

WPS Team

Sarah Kyriazis, Manager of
Instructional Technology & Digital
Learning

Kate Kerr, Superintendent's Chief of
Staff

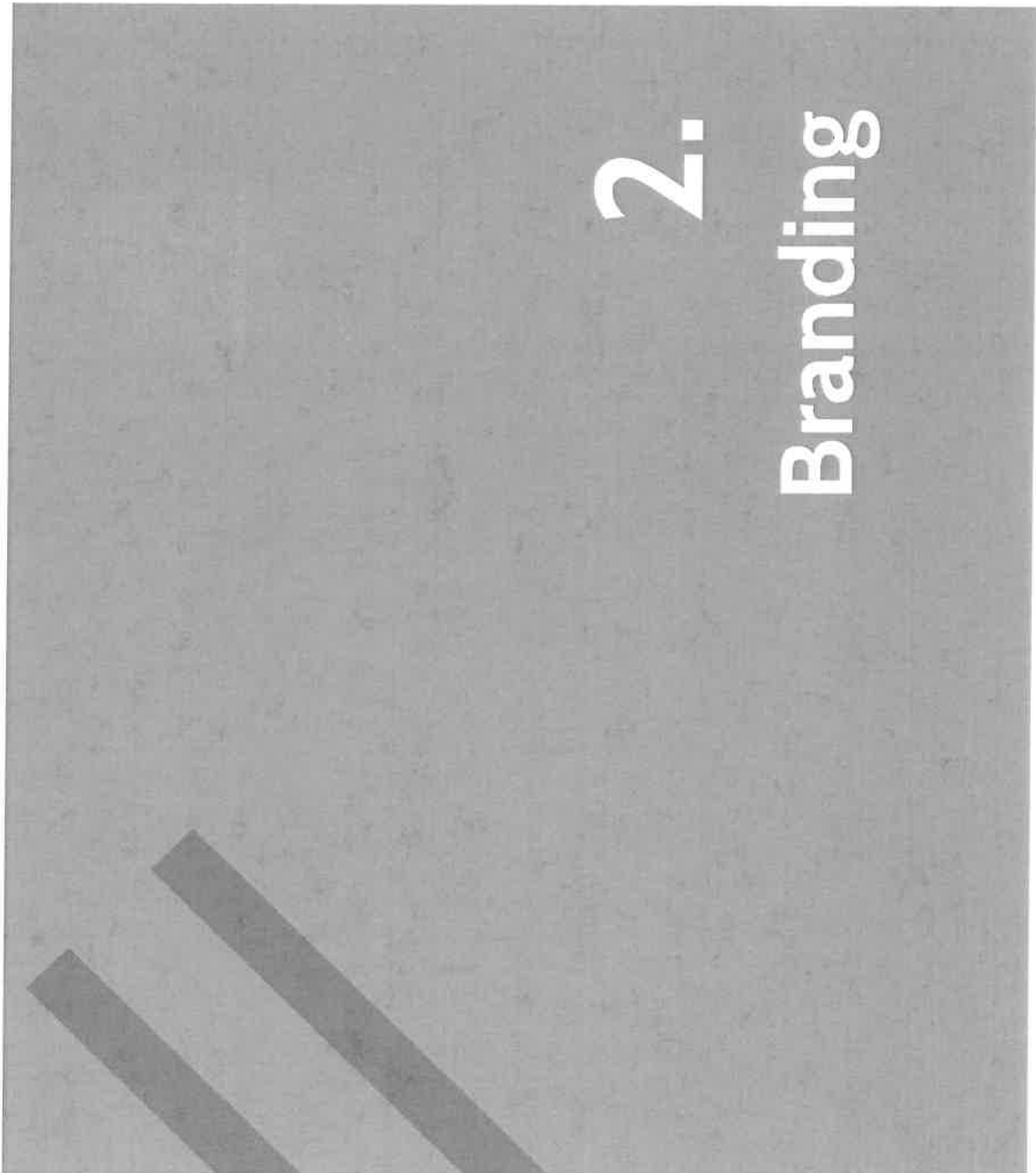
Bob Walton, Information Technology
Officer

Timmary Leary, Visual Arts Liaison

Ben Audberto, Webmaster

Various High School Students

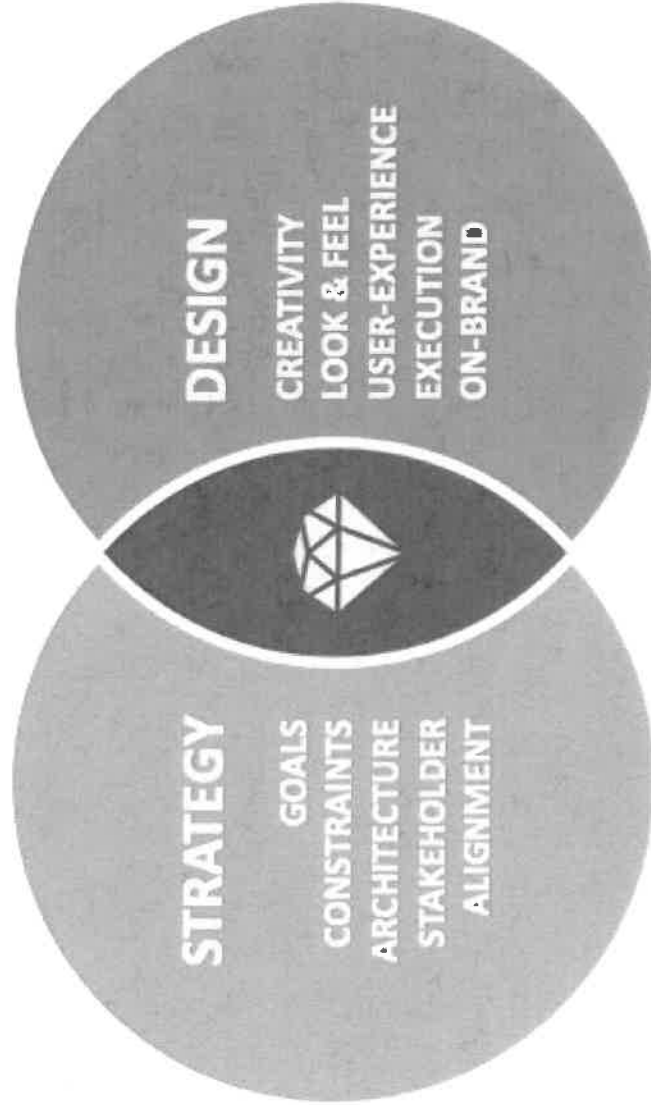
2. Branding

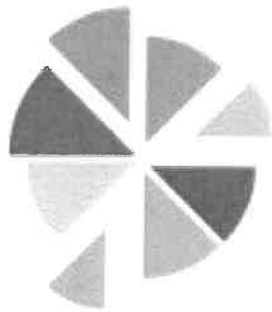


Brand Definition

“Your brand is your promise to your customer. It tells them what they can expect from your products and services, and it differentiates your offering from that of your competitors. Your brand is derived from who you are, who you want to be and who people perceive you to be.”

Strategy vs. Design



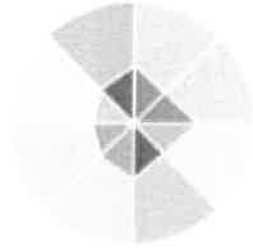


LEARN

Discovery meetings
with team

Identify goals and
constraints

Competitor and
industry research



PLAN

Architecture:
Sitemap, Wireframes

Document technical
requirements

Timeline &
milestones



CREATE

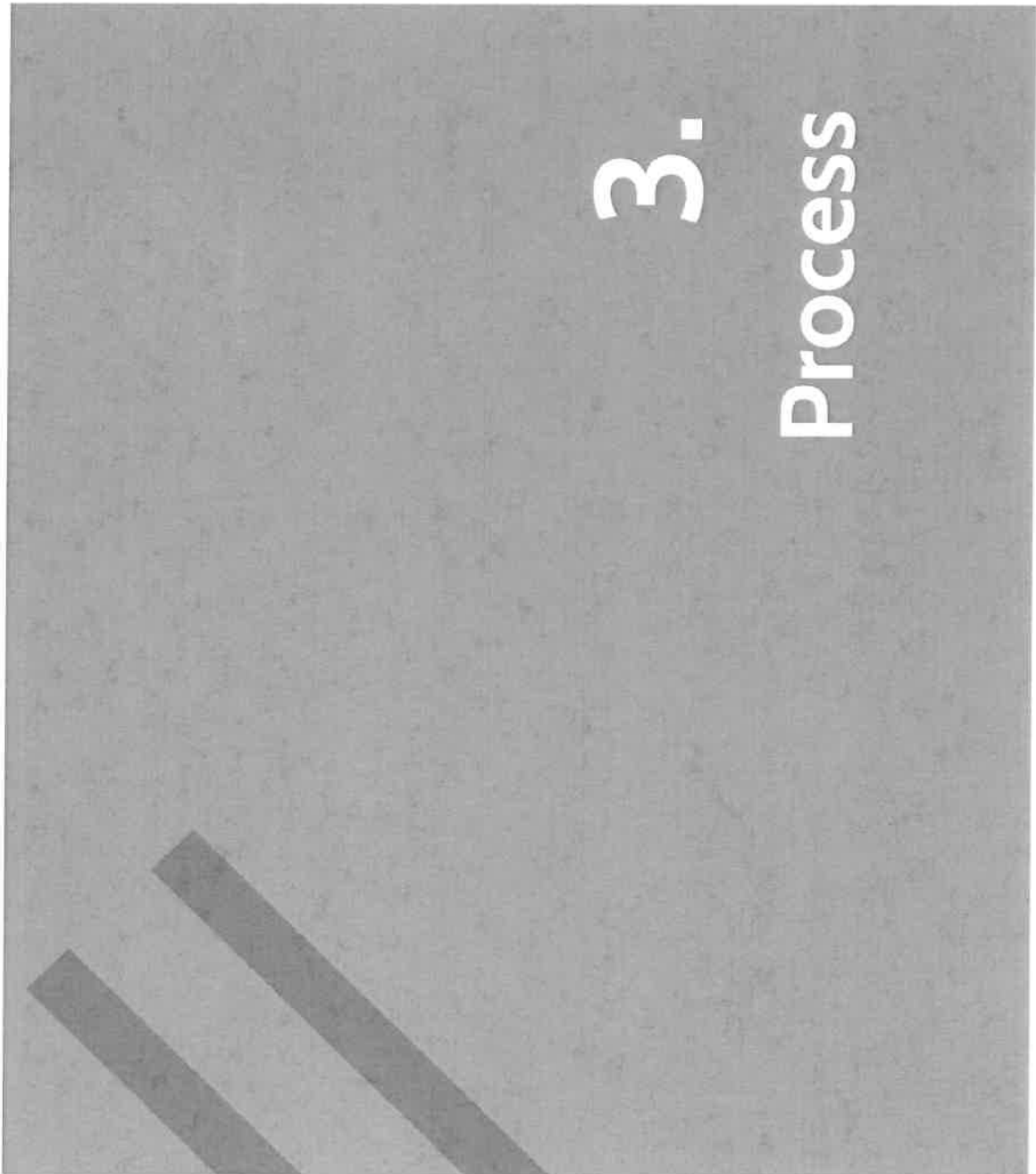
Design, iterate on
layouts

Development,
testing and training

Content
implementation

3.

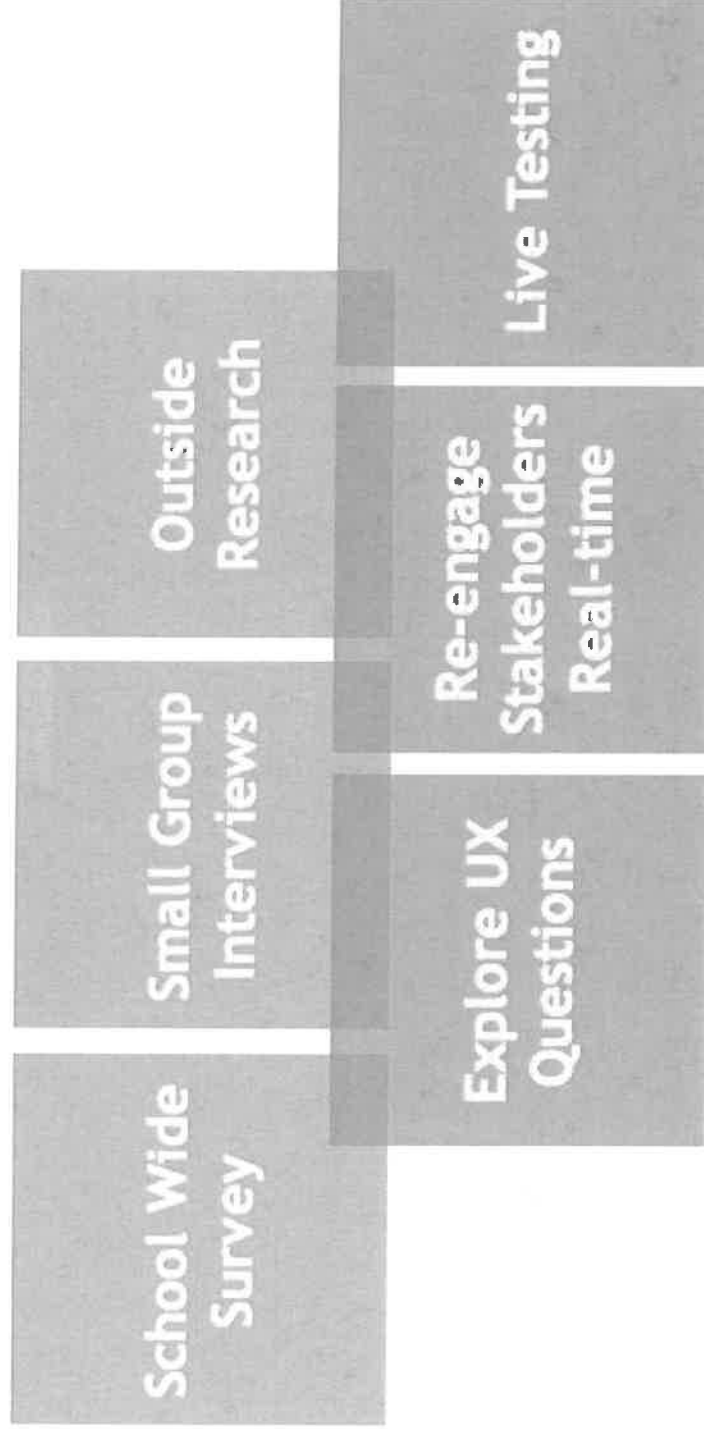
Process



Goals for the Process

- Strategic
- Inclusive
- High Quality
- Aspirational
- User-Focused

Collecting Stakeholder Feedback



Focus Groups & Interviews

Who is your target audience? If there are segments, please prioritize.

How do other school systems present themselves, what's their reputation?
How should WPS be similar? different?

How would you describe WPS to a new parent moving to the area?
A potential faculty member or administrator?

1. Please select 5-10 adjectives that describe the brand you want to create (brand attributes).
2. Note other adjectives you desire for the brand or want to avoid in the text field below.

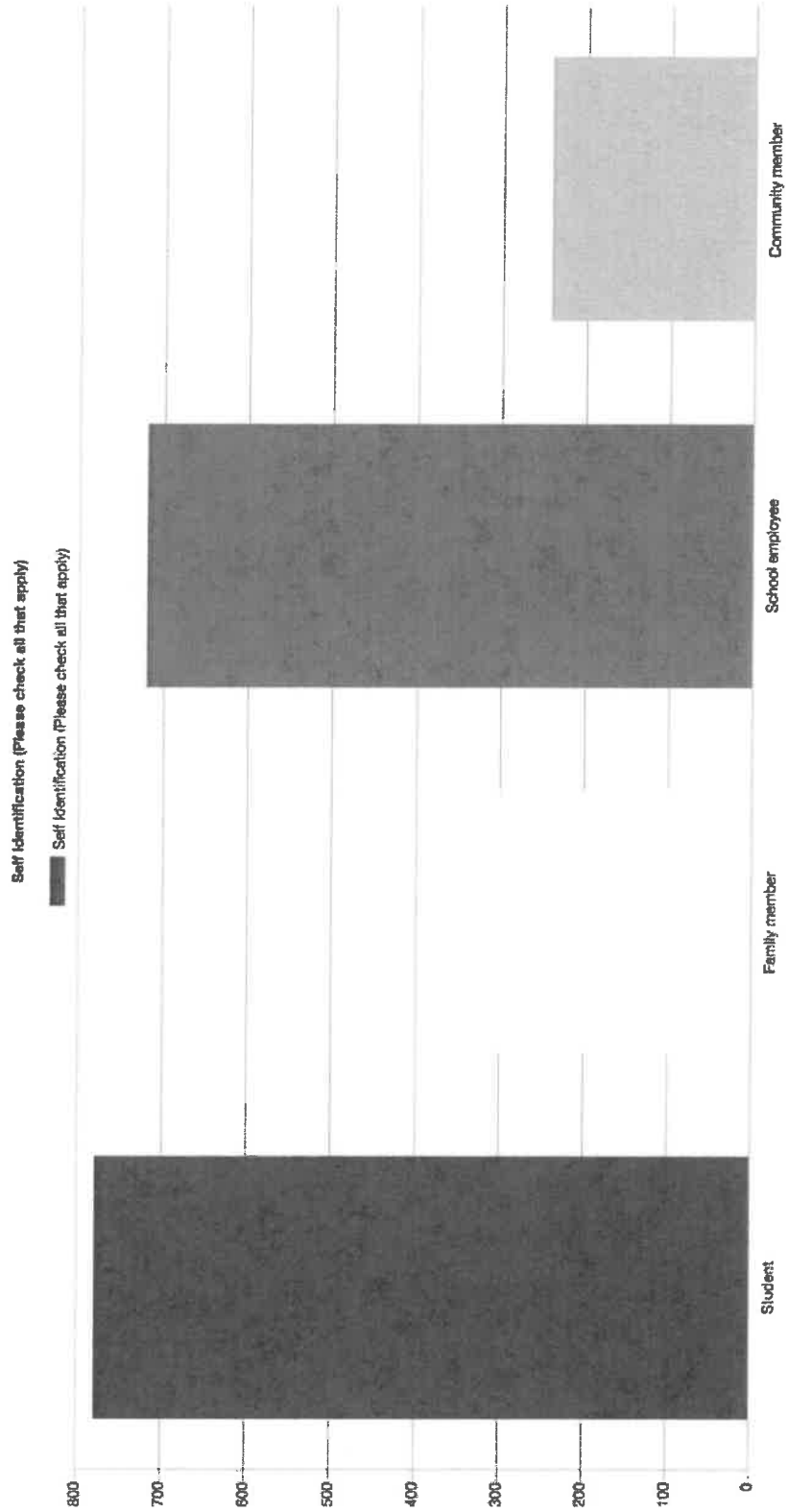
The adjectives should not be taken too literally; consider the immediate emotional reaction/impression the audience has to your brand/materials. Please add additional words below if you do not see them on the list.

- | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> friendly | <input type="checkbox"/> accessible | <input type="checkbox"/> open | <input type="checkbox"/> fresh | <input type="checkbox"/> lofty |
| <input type="checkbox"/> inclusive | <input type="checkbox"/> academic | <input type="checkbox"/> established | <input type="checkbox"/> conservative | <input type="checkbox"/> elite |
| <input type="checkbox"/> expensive | <input type="checkbox"/> authentic | <input type="checkbox"/> wholesome | <input type="checkbox"/> slow | <input type="checkbox"/> fast |
| <input type="checkbox"/> dark | <input type="checkbox"/> light (color) | <input type="checkbox"/> fast | <input type="checkbox"/> traditional | <input type="checkbox"/> dynamic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> modern | <input type="checkbox"/> historic | <input type="checkbox"/> linear | <input type="checkbox"/> clear | <input type="checkbox"/> complex |
| <input type="checkbox"/> nerdy | <input type="checkbox"/> smart | <input type="checkbox"/> luxurious | <input type="checkbox"/> trendy | <input type="checkbox"/> remarkable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> playful | <input type="checkbox"/> sophisticated | <input type="checkbox"/> fun | <input type="checkbox"/> classic | <input type="checkbox"/> youthful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> exciting | <input type="checkbox"/> professional | <input type="checkbox"/> strong | <input type="checkbox"/> simple | <input type="checkbox"/> flashy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> glossy | <input type="checkbox"/> polished | <input type="checkbox"/> finished | <input type="checkbox"/> rough | <input type="checkbox"/> innovative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> creative | <input type="checkbox"/> cutting-edge | <input type="checkbox"/> stylish | <input type="checkbox"/> warm | <input type="checkbox"/> cold |
| <input type="checkbox"/> emotional | <input type="checkbox"/> masculine | <input type="checkbox"/> feminine | <input type="checkbox"/> colorful | <input type="checkbox"/> plain |
| <input type="checkbox"/> minimalistic | <input type="checkbox"/> organic | <input type="checkbox"/> diverse | <input type="checkbox"/> corporate | <input type="checkbox"/> independent |

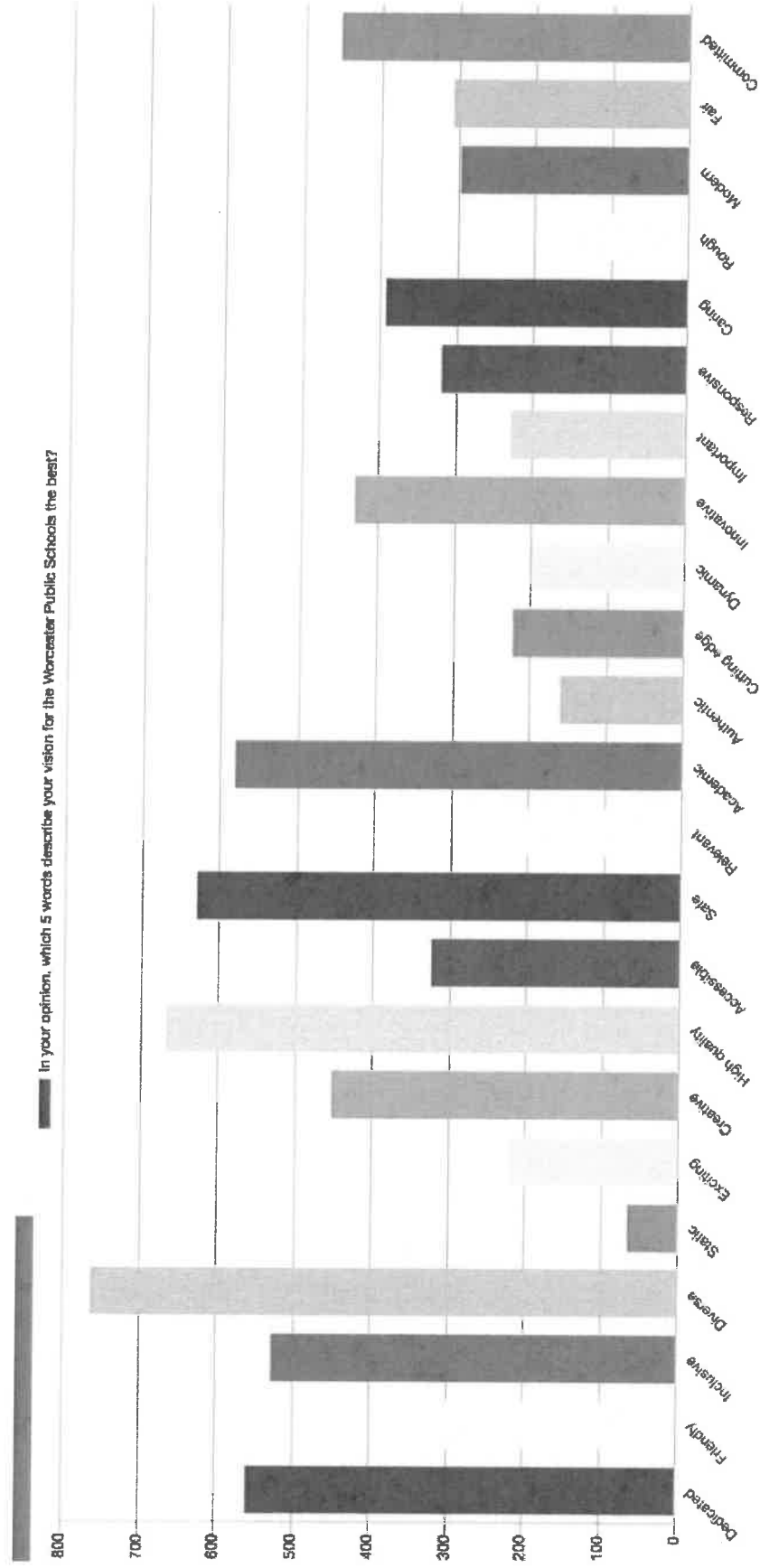
Survey

Title	Entries
Brand Survey -- Albanian	5
Brand Survey -- Arabic	7
Brand Survey -- English	1802
Brand Survey -- Portuguese	3
Brand Survey -- Spanish	18
Brand Survey -- Twi	3
Brand Survey -- Vietnamese	2

Survey

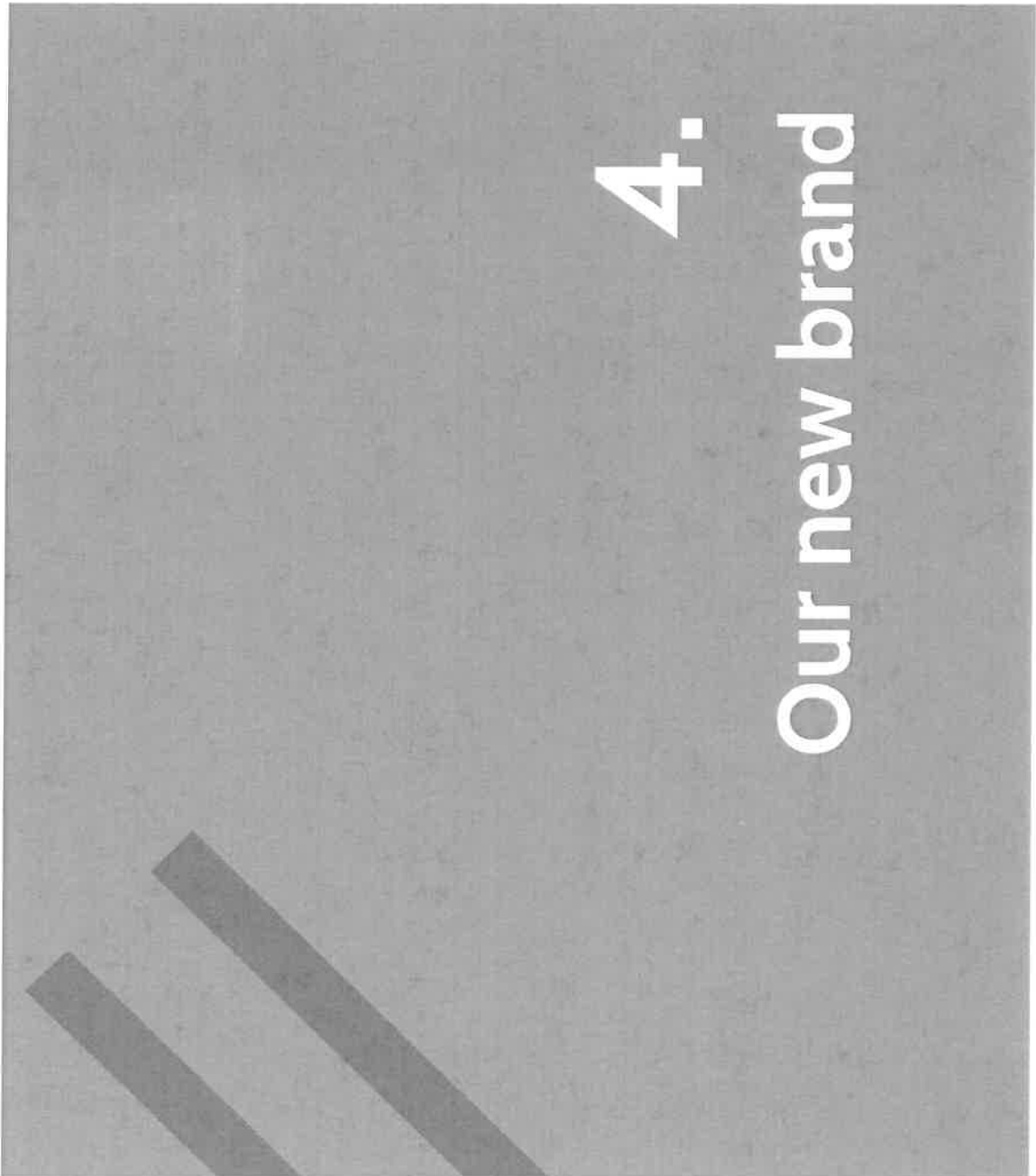


Survey



4.

Our new brand



WPS Brand Statement

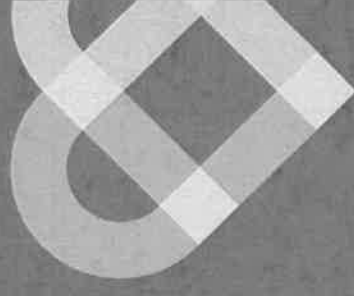
Serving a dynamic and diverse community, Worcester Public Schools uses a student-focused model to create individual pathways of success. Harnessing the passion of its leadership, teachers, and staff, WPS strives to create a nurturing and innovative learning environment. WPS is deeply rooted in the wider Worcester community, partnering with local leaders in business, the arts, and technology to provide a holistic and high quality educational experience.

WPS Tagline

“From Here, Anywhere”

WPS Brand Attributes

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| Academic | Passionate |
| Diverse | Fair |
| Dedicated | Approachable |
| Nurturing | Exciting |
| Student-Focused | Ambitious |



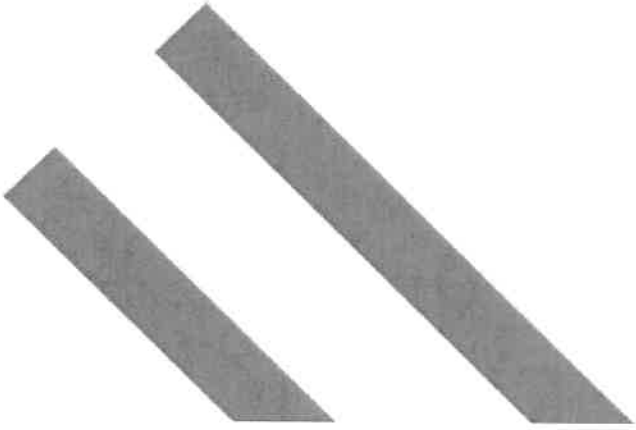


WORCESTER

PUBLIC SCHOOLS



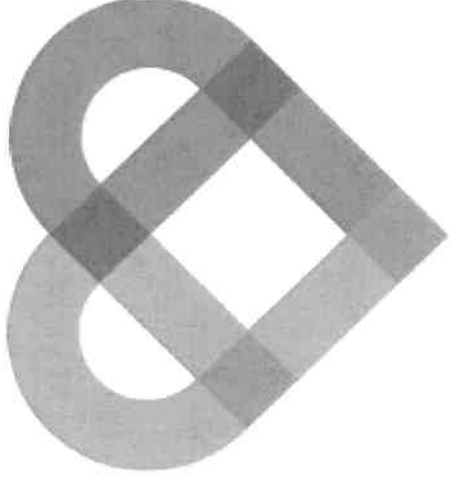
From Here, Anywhere



Rising Path

Symbolizes

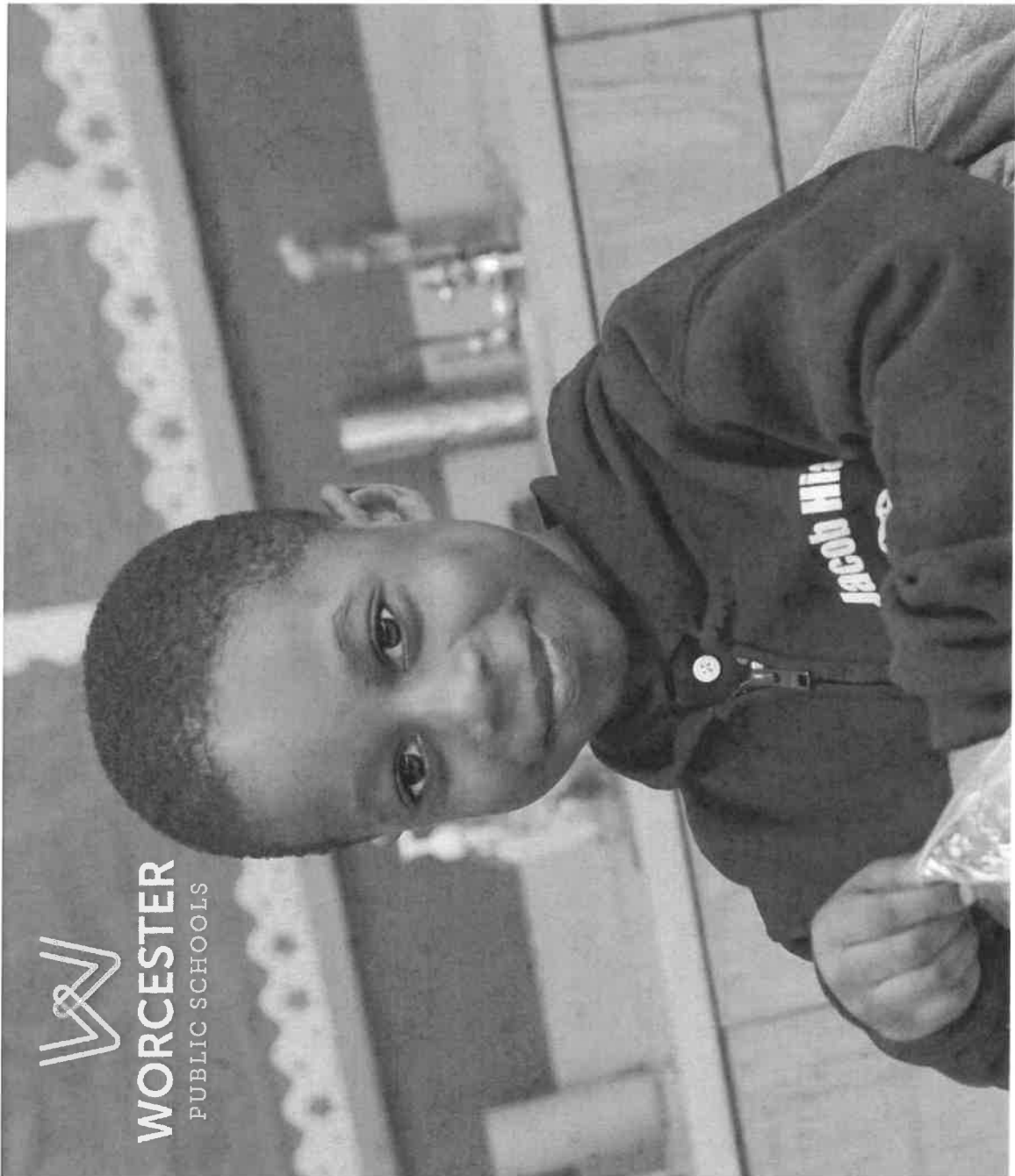
Pathways, piece of heart, the road to success, the road into Worcester as a Gateway city, tagline: From here, anywhere



Convergent Heart

Symbolizes

Diversity coming together to form something different, heart from Worcester seal, heart of commonwealth, caring of students, love of learning



WORCESTER
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Office of the Superintendent
Maximum E. Robinson
Superintendent

P 508-799-3229
F 508-799-3228
E info@worcesterschools.org

The John B. Doherty
State Administration Building
100 Irving Street
Worcester, Massachusetts 01609-0299

To Whom It May Concern

I would like to express my appreciation for the information you provided regarding the proposed contract for the purchase of instructional materials. I am pleased to hear that you are currently reviewing the contract and I am confident that you will find it to be a fair and reasonable contract. I am also pleased to hear that you are currently reviewing the contract and I am confident that you will find it to be a fair and reasonable contract.

I am confident that you will find it to be a fair and reasonable contract. I am also pleased to hear that you are currently reviewing the contract and I am confident that you will find it to be a fair and reasonable contract. I am also pleased to hear that you are currently reviewing the contract and I am confident that you will find it to be a fair and reasonable contract.

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My Roblin

My Roblin
Creative Director



WORCESTER
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Sarah Kyriazis
*Manager of Instructional
Technology and Digital
Learning*

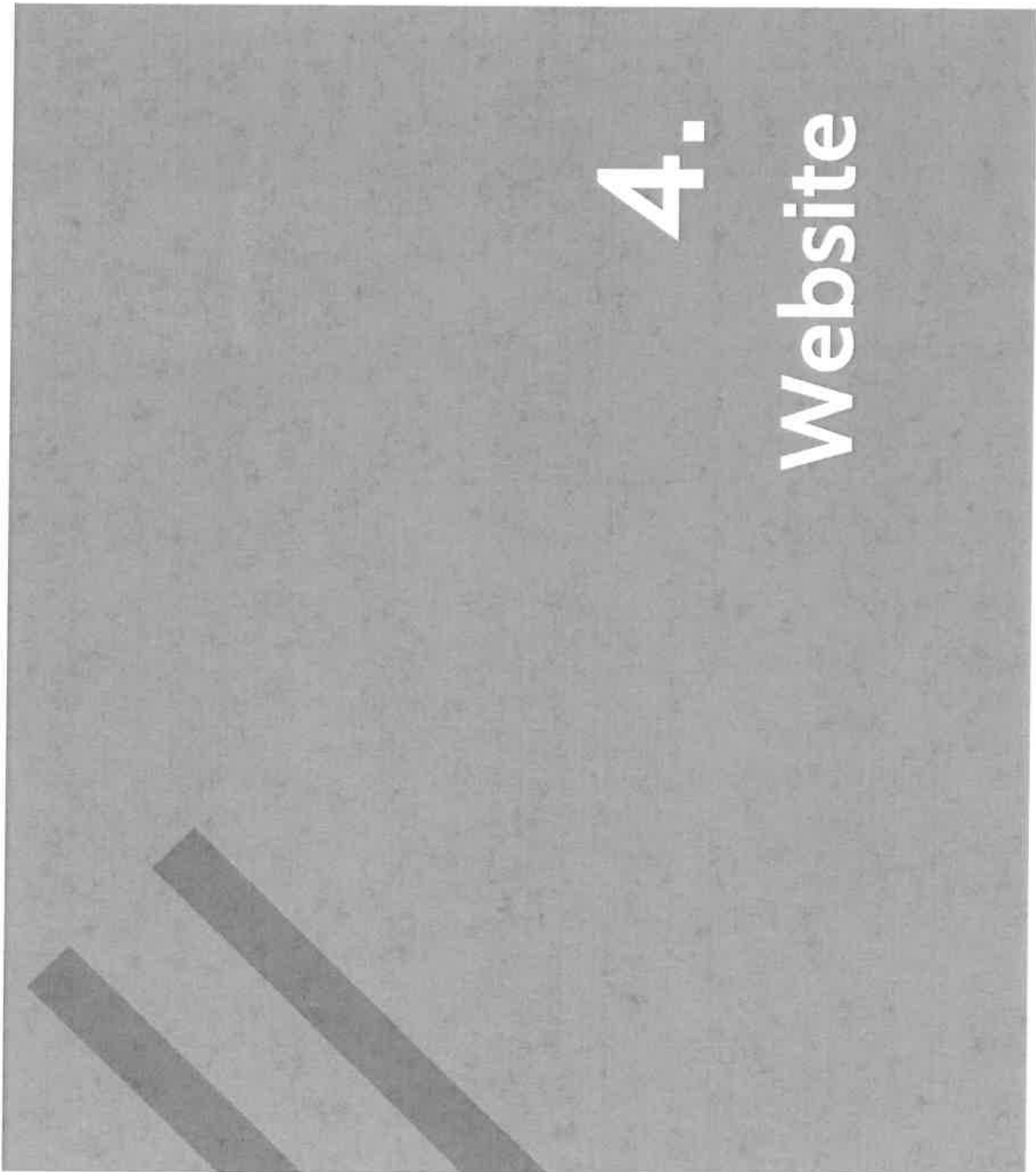
Office of Technology and
Digital Learning
20 Irving Street, Suite 103
Worcester, MA 01809

P 508-799-3499
F 508-799-3016
C 508-769-7820
E kyriazis@worc.k12.ma.us

worcesterschools.org

4.

Website

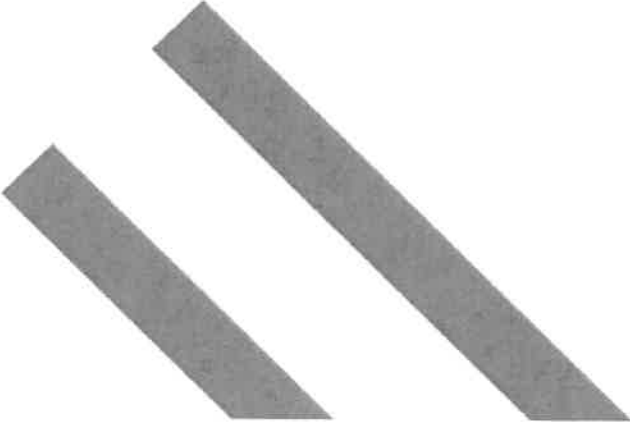


Priority Audience

Prospective Families

Current Families

Show, Don't Tell



Homepage Design Traits

Clean and modern

Visually engaging

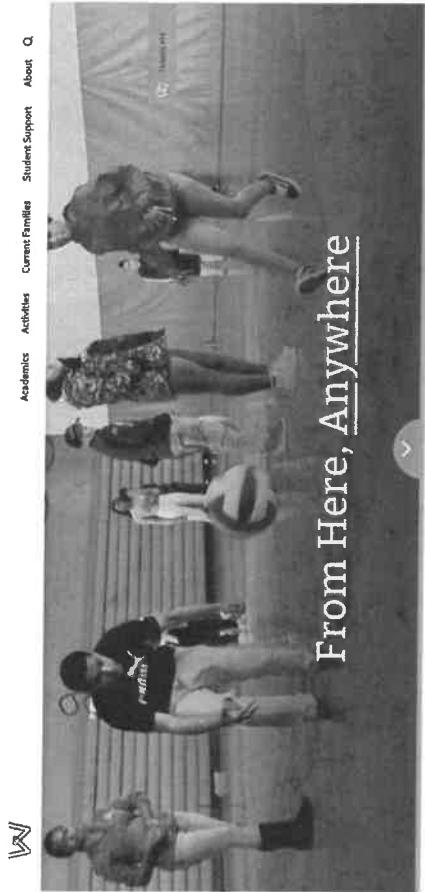
Large photo







Iconography and bold headings

Goal

To create a modern, welcoming website that engages families by depicting a diverse, safe, academically rigorous school district.

Homepage



-  **45** Schools in the District
-  **94%** Attendance Rate
-  **100%** Classrooms on the Internet
-  **14.2 to 1** Student/Teacher Ratio
-  **24** Sports offered during the school year
-  **74** Languages spoken in our schools



Our dedicated teachers work tirelessly to ensure that every student is supported.

[LEARN MORE](#)



Worcester's diverse offerings help ensure strong pathways to success.

[EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES](#)



From leadership opportunities to performing arts, WPCS offers a diverse set of enrichment activities.

[VIEW ACTIVITIES](#)

Homepage - Menu



Academics
Academic Excellence
Curriculum
 By Grade Level
 By Content Area
 Course Catalog
 Program of Studies
CultureLEAP
Adult Education
 Night Life Catalog

Special Education & Intervention Services
Advanced Programs
Advance Placement
 Dual Enrollment (High School/College)
 Advancement Via Individualized Opportunities (AVOID)
 Academics
 Gifted Scholars Academy
 Honors Institute Academy of the Arts
 Regional Fine Arts
 Engineering Academy

[Academics](#)
[Activities](#)
[Current Families](#)
[Student Support](#)
[About](#)



45
Schools in the District



94%
Attendance Rate



100%
Classrooms on the Internet



14.2 to 1
Student/Teacher Ratio



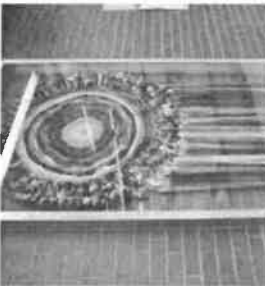
24
Sports offered during the school year



74
Languages spoken in our schools



News



Preschool Application & Kindergarten Registration

The Parent Information Welcome Center is now accepting Pre-school Applications for the half-day preschool program and Registrations for Kindergarten.



Project 351 Ambassadors Kick off Year of Service

Sullivan Middle School students kicked off a transformative year of service as Project 351 Ambassadors at an annual day of celebration and service in Boston.



Support Talmuck Magnet Robotics Team

Please consider helping the Talmuck Magnet Elementary School Robotics Team afford to compete in the 2018 VEX IQ World Championships

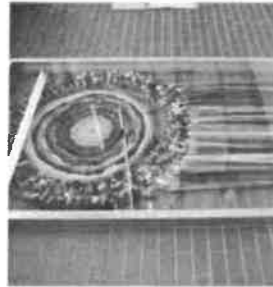


Dance Team Wins 5th State Title



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Preschool Application & Kindergarten Registration

The Parent Information Welcome Center is now accepting Pre-school Applications for the half-day preschool program and Registrations for Kindergarten.



Dance Team Wins 5th State Title

Congratulations to the Burncoat High School Dance Team as they won their 5th State Title in Hip Hop, their 4th in a ROW.

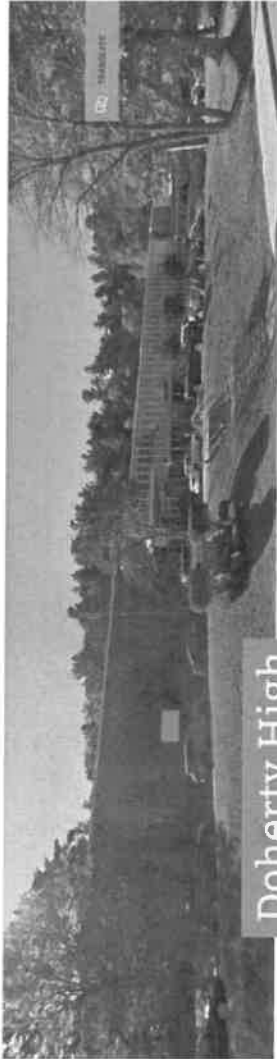


Support Talmuck Magnet Robotics Team

School Page



Home | Schools | Doherty High | Academics | Activities | Current Families | Student Support | About



Doherty High

Home \ Schools \ Doherty High

Doherty Memorial High School
Principal: Sally Mulaney
Email: srmulaney@wps.com
School Hours: 7:30 am - 3:45 pm

Phone: 508-799-3270
Fax: 508-799-3276
STAFF DIRECTORY



299 Highland Street, Worcester, MA, 01602

Resources



HEALTH & WELLNESS

A wellness resource brought to you in collaboration with various departments at Worcester Public Schools

DOHERTY

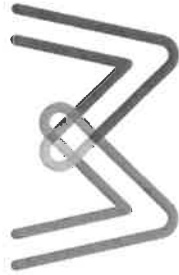
- Athletics
- Daily Announcements
- Engineering and Technology Academy (ETA)
- Guidance
- College Handbook
- Scholarships
- Library

Instructional Focus

Doherty Memorial High School is implementing a school-wide effort to demonstrate measurable growth in students' ability to read critically and respond thoughtfully in writing as evidenced by progress on external measures, such as the MCAS and the PSAT, and internal measures, such as the MAP and other common assessments.

View School Accountability Plan for more details about our school.

Thank You



WORCESTER
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



File: GBEBD

Online Fundraising And Solicitations - Crowdfunding

School District employees shall comply with all of the following provisions relating to online solicitations and the use of crowdfunding services for school-related purposes as well as all applicable laws, regulations and district policies. No online fundraising may occur except as provided below.

The Superintendent shall have final authority to approve any online fundraising activities by school district employees and shall determine and communicate to Principals the circumstances under which online fundraising proposals shall require Superintendent or School Committee approval in accordance with law and school district policy (KCD). The Principal of each school shall approve all online fundraising activities within their buildings prior to any employee posting any such fundraising solicitation.

Any solicitation shall be for educational purposes only (field trips, supplies, supplemental materials, books, etc.). The solicitation of personal items (coats, nutritional snacks, etc.) shall only be to benefit students directly. To the extent an employee solicits any technology or software, the employee shall secure the prior written approval of the Director of Technology or designee prior to any such solicitation. Any employee seeking to display or post a photograph of a student in conjunction with a fundraising solicitation must first secure the written consent of the student's parent or guardian.

Employees shall not use a crowdfunding source, or set up their appeal in such a way, that they are asking for donations directly from people over whom the employee making the request has authority, or with whom the public employee is having official dealings (such as parents of student's in a teacher's classroom - the solicitation can say "Classroom X needs tissues and crayons," but it shouldn't be directed to parents who have shared email addresses with the teacher for purposes of communicating about their student).

Employees using crowdfunding services shall periodically disclose in writing to the Superintendent the names of all individuals whom the employee has directly solicited in any manner including but not limited to oral, written, or electronic solicitation. The Superintendent shall maintain these disclosures as public records available for public review.

Employees may only use crowdfunding services that send the items or proceeds solicited by the employee directly to the employee's school or to the school district. Employees must verify under the crowdfunding service's terms and conditions that they meet all requirements for such solicitation. Items or proceeds directly sent to employees are considered gifts to the employee and may result in violation of state ethics laws.

If an employee's proposal is approved by the crowdfunding service, the employee agrees to use the donated materials solely as stated in the employee's proposal.

If a solicitation is not fully funded within the time period required by the crowdfunding service, or the solicitation cannot be concluded for any reason, every attempt will be made to return donations to the donors. Donations unable to be returned shall only be used as account credits for future solicitations.

Unless otherwise approved by the Superintendent in writing, all goods and/or proceeds solicited and received through any online solicitation shall become the property of the School Committee, and not of

the individual employee who solicited the item(s) or funds. The employee is prohibited from taking any such item(s) or funds to another school or location, without the Superintendent's written approval.

LEGAL REFS: MGL 44:53A; 71:37A; 268A:3; 268A:23; Ethics Commission Advisory Opinion EC-COI-12-1;

CROSS REFS: GBEA, Staff Ethics/Conflict of Interest;
GBEBC, Gifts To and Solicitations by Staff;
KCD, Public Gifts to Schools

SOURCE: MASC February 2018

NOTE: Crowdfunding services are defined as any online service used for the solicitation of goods, services, or money from a large number of people via the internet or other electronic network. Examples include GoFundme, Kickstarter, Indiegogo, YouCaring, and DonorsChoose.

File: ILD

STUDENT SUBMISSION TO EDUCATIONAL SURVEYS AND RESEARCH

In this policy, "surveys, analyses, or evaluations" refer to methods of gathering data for research purposes.

Without the prior written consent of the student's parent/guardian, or of the student if he/she is at least 18 years of age, no student shall be required as part of any program wholly or partially funded by the U.S. Department of Education to submit to any survey, analyses, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine eligibility for school programs or for receiving financial assistance under such program.

All instructional materials, including teachers' manuals, films, tapes, or other supplementary material which will be used in connection with any such survey, analysis, or evaluation shall be available upon request for inspection by the student's parent/guardian. For the purpose of this policy, "instructional material" does not include academic tests or assessments.

A parent may inspect, upon request, a survey created by a third party before the survey is administered or distributed to a student.

The Superintendent or designee will be responsible for implementing any procedures necessary to protect the privacy of participating students and to provide parents with access to surveys within a reasonable time before administration or distribution.

The School District will notify parents of this policy at least annually at the beginning of the school year and within a reasonable time of any substantive change in policy. Where practical, the District will also directly notify parents annually at the beginning of the school year when surveys, analyses, or evaluations are scheduled or anticipated. Parents shall have the opportunity to opt their child out of participation in any survey, analysis, or evaluation. Students who are 18 years of age or older may opt out of such surveys, analyses, or evaluations.

Parents or eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office of the U.S. Department of Education.

LEGAL REF.: Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment, 20 U.S.C. § 1232h

CROSS REF.: JRA, Student Records

SOURCE: MASC February 2018

TO: School Principals
FROM: Maureen Binienda, Superintendent of the Worcester Public Schools
DATE: September 7, 2017
RE: Appropriate School Response to Immigration Enforcement Activities

The Worcester Public School District is committed to serving all children who reside in the District and to maintaining a safe and productive learning environment for all students. In order to provide a public education, **regardless of child or family immigration status**, absent any applicable federal, state, or local law, regulation, ordinance or court decision, and in absence of proof of criminal proceedings as determined by a law enforcement agency, the District shall abide by the following practices and procedures:

Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying

In accordance with the District's Nondiscrimination and Bullying Prevention Policies:

1. Any allegations of bullying or harassment of students based on their race, ethnicity, color, national origin or immigration status shall be promptly investigated and handled in accordance with District policy.
2. Student residency determinations will not be based, in whole or in part, on the student's immigration or undocumented status.
3. District personnel will not inquire about a student's immigration status, or require documentation of a student's legal status, such as asking for a green card or citizenship papers, at initial registration or at any other time.
4. District personnel will not make unreasonable inquiries of a student or his/her parents for the purpose of exposing the immigration status of the child or his/her family.
5. District personnel shall be attentive to school curricula to ensure that it is inclusive and nondiscriminatory. All District curricula shall encourage respect for the civil rights of all individuals regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.
6. District personnel will not require students to apply for Social Security numbers.
7. District personnel shall promptly report any potential or alleged hate crime to the local law enforcement agency.

Access to Records

In accordance with Worcester Public Schools Student Record Policy and state laws and regulations (*603 CMR 23.00 et seq.*):

1. Unless directed by the Superintendent, District personnel shall not share student record information, including immigration status, with any immigration law enforcement official or agent.

2. All requests for student records or student record information documents by ICE or INS should be forwarded to the Superintendent, who may consult with the District's legal counsel to determine if the documents can be released.
3. Principals may remind families of their right to opt out of disclosure of student directory information, which shall include student name, address and date and place of birth.

Access to School Premises

Because an ICE or INS visit may severely disrupt the educational setting, any request by ICE/INS to visit a school site should be forwarded immediately to the Superintendent's Office for review **before** a decision is made to allow access to the site.

If immigration law enforcement agents arrive at your school building, Principals shall take the following steps:

1. Do not allow the agents into the school building until instructed to do so;
2. Request identification from the agents and a copy of any judicial warrant;
3. Immediately contact the Superintendent's office for further instructions.

Dismissal of Students

1. Students may **only** be dismissed to persons specified by parents and/or guardians in writing. Principals may remind families to update student emergency contact information to include a robust network of persons who may be called in case of an emergency.
2. Parents may be provided with a Caregiver Affidavit to designate someone to make educational and/or medical decisions for a child if the child is temporarily living with someone who is not the parents/guardians.

Handling of Students Whose Parents Have Been Detained or Taken Into Custody

If you receive notification that parents/guardians of a student have been detained or taken into custody by immigration law enforcement officials or agents, the school should take the following steps:

1. Contact the person(s) listed on the student's emergency card to inform the person(s) of the situation and ask if they can retrieve the student;
2. Make arrangements for school counselors to be available to support the student;
3. Contact DCF if there is no responsible adult authorized by parents to receive the student.
4. Consult with the District's homeless liaison if the student becomes homeless as a result of their parent/guardian's detention.

“Section 54C. (a) Each school district, vocational district, charter school, approved private day or residential school and collaborative school shall provide and maintain at least 1 automated external defibrillator, AED, on site at each school facility where instruction is provided. Each school shall have on staff a person who is an AED provider having current certification in a training course in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and in the use of an AED in accordance with the standards established by the American Heart Association or the American National Red Cross. The school administration shall ensure that an AED and AED provider is readily available at any school-sponsored athletic event.”

PAGE		PROPOSED CHANGES
2017-18	2018-19	
COVER		Change title of document to: Worcester Public Schools' Student Handbook; change 2017-18 to 2018-2019
INSIDE FRONT		Insert updated calendar 2018-19
i		<p style="text-align: center;">School Committee Mayor Joseph M. Petty – Chairman John L. Foley – Vice-Chairman Dianna L. Biancheria Dante A. Comparetto Molly O. McCullough John Monfredo Brian A. O'Connell, Esq.</p>
ii		<p>Superintendent's message Update</p> <p>Policy Updates</p>
iii, iv		Update table of contents
2	2	<p>Registration (continued) Change section to read: Students new to our city in grades 7-8 register at the Dr. James L. Garvey Parent Information Center. New students in grades 9-12 have the option to register at their respective high school. Potential English learners must complete registration 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.</p>
2	2	<p>Immunization Requirements Change 2017-18 to 2018-2019; update chart (see attached)</p> <p>Add the following after chart:</p> <p>Students lacking proper documentation of required immunizations shall be excluded until proof of such immunization is provided (102 CMR 7.07 and CMR 220.00). If a child cannot be immunized due to medical reasons (requires physician documentation yearly) or if a parent refuses to have a child immunized because of religious or philosophical reasons (requires a parent-signed letter yearly), the non-immunized student will be excluded from school during outbreaks of disease for which the student is not immunized (MGL c. 111, § 3, 6, 7, 109, 110, 112 and 105 CMR 300.000</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead screening documentation is required of all students prior to entering Pre-K and/or kindergarten (105 CMR 460) • Physical examination documentation is required of all students prior to entering grades K, 4, y and 9 yearly for all students <p>An immunization clinic is available for students at the Dr. James L. Garvey Parent Information Center (PIC), 766 Main Street. All state-required immunizations are provided by an RN at no cost. Please refer to the WPS website for hours of operation or call the Parent Information Center at 508-799-3194.</p>

PAGE		PROPOSED CHANGES
2017-18	2018-19	
5	5	School Choice First paragraph: change 2017-18 to 2018-2019 Change bullets to numbers amend #1 to read: 1. Student enrollment in the Inter-district School Choice program is based on availability and limited preference will be given to young siblings, if space is available.
33	6	Voluntary School Uniform Policy Capitalize and center heading
33	6	Student Dress Code Policy Capitalize and center heading
33	7	Worcester Technical High School Shop and Uniform Policy
80	7	Policy Regarding Televised Broadcasts Capitalize and center heading
26	7	Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence
64	7	Safety and Behavior (except Riding School Buses) – move Safety and Behavior Heading followed by:
80-82	7-9	Internet Safety and Acceptable Use Policy
82	9	Electronic Messaging Guidelines Delete last sentence of first paragraph (If you have no students in the Worcester...)
82	10	Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)
65	10	Science Laboratory Safety Change bullets to numbers #4: remove the word “and” after emergency
65	10	Security Measures Capitalize and center heading Change sub-title to read: Crisis Prevention and De-escalation (Physical Restraint) Change last two sentences to read: Physical restraint shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be used only 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, medication restraints and seclusion are prohibited in all public education programs.
	11	Change 2 nd paragraph to read: The amended regulations may be found at http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr46.html
65	11	Security Cameras in Schools
66	11	Emergency Plans Keep first paragraph. Replace remainder of section with: The Superintendent shall review annually the safety plan with local police and fire officials. Building principals will meet all requirements for conducting fire drills and Emergency Response drills to give students practice in moving with orderly dispatch to designated areas under emergency conditions, and the staff practice in carrying out their assigned responsibilities for building evacuation.
67	12	Student Lockers

PAGE		PROPOSED CHANGES
2017-18	2018-19	
68	12	<p>Access to Students During School Hours Keep first paragraph, and numbers 1 and 2. Add 3. Certain individuals, including school personnel, police, and employees of certain state agencies may be granted access to students in the performance of their official duties. This information can be viewed at www.worcesterschools.org/handbook</p> <p>Remove next paragraph and #s 1-7. Finish with last paragraph: If any court ordered restrictions exist regarding access to your child, it is imperative that you provide the WPS a copy of the order so that we can comply with the order of the court.</p>
68	12	Visitors in the Schools
69	13	<p>Use of Motor Vehicles Add new rule #3: 3. Idling of a motor vehicle engine in excess of 5 minutes is prohibited on school property. Violators will be fined. Re-number as appropriate</p>
6	12	LEGAL POLICIES - move heading here
15	13	<p>Nondiscrimination Replace entire section (up to Sexual Harassment Policy on page 18) with: The Worcester Public Schools is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer/Educational Institution and does not discriminate regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity, age, criminal record (inquiries only), handicap (disability), mental illness, retaliation, sexual harassment, sexual orientation, genetics or military service. The Worcester Public Schools provides equal access to a full range of general, occupational and vocational education programs. The Chief Human Resource Officer 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 grievance procedures, which can be viewed at www.worcesterschools.org/handbook and by contacting your child's school. For more information relating to Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action contact the Chief Human Resource Officer, 20 Irving Street, Worcester, MA 01609, 508-799-3020.</p>
18	14	Sexual Harassment Policy
19	15	<p>Sexual Harassment Policy (continued) Violations Change to read: Violations of this policy and of the law, if proven, may 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 which can be viewed at www.worcesterschools.org/handbook and by contacting your child's school.</p> <p>Delete remainder of section</p>
22	15	Anti-Hazing Law
24	16	Child Abuse
24	16	Drug-Free School Zones

PAGE		PROPOSED CHANGES
2017-18	2018-19	
NEW	16	<p>Gun-Free School Zones (new section) Gun-Free School Zones MGL c.269§10(j) MGL c.269§10(j) prohibits anyone who is not law enforcement from carrying a gun or dangerous weapon on the grounds of any school (elementary, secondary, college or university). This prohibition is applicable <i>regardless of whether or not an individual possesses a valid license to carry.</i></p>
24	17	<p>Education of Homeless Children 2nd section, #4 change to read: If a homeless student arrives without records, the student will be enrolled immediately and the district’s designated Homeless Education Liaison must assist the family and contact the previously attended school system to obtain the required records.</p>
24	18	<p>Education of Homeless Children (continued) #8 change Maura Mahoney to the Office of Social and Emotional Learning</p>
31	18	<p>Policy on Parental Notification Relative to Sexuality Education Capitalize and center heading</p>
32	19	<p>Annual Notice to Parents/Guardians on the Protection of Pupil Rights (PPRA)</p>
26	19	<p>SELECTIVE SERVICE – Capitalize and center heading Second paragraph: replace “The no Child Left Behind Act of 2001” with “The Every Student Succeeds Act”</p>
26	19	<p>Sex Offender Registry Capitalize and center heading</p>
26	19	<p>Student Records Capitalize and center heading Change bullets to numbers. 2nd bullet (now #2) change to read: 2. To request that a school add information, comments, data or any other relevant written material to the student record. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a conference with the principal. After the conference, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to appeal to the Superintendent and has a further right to appeal to the School Committee. 4th paragraph, change first sentence to read: FERPA allows schools to disclose, without consent, “directory” information, which is considered by the Worcester Public Schools to include student’s name, honors and awards received...</p>
34	25	<p>Every Student Succeeds Act Capitalize and center heading 2nd paragraph, 2nd sentence, remove “if a parent/guardian asks for it.” 4th paragraph: end first sentence at ...required under Title I 5th paragraph, 1st sentence: parenthesize ...parents may request (and the school will provide)...</p>
6 - 15	26	<p>Due Process Move first two paragraphs here. Change second paragraph to read: The Worcester Public Schools adheres to the Student Discipline Laws and Regulations as set forth in MGL. C71§§37H, 37H½ and 37H¾ and 603 CMR 53.00 et. seq. which can be viewed on the district’s website at www.worcesterschools.org/handbook. Eliminate remainder of section through page 15</p>

PAGE		PROPOSED CHANGES
2017-18	2018-19	
35	26	Code of Conduct Third paragraph, second sentence, remove “known as Chapter 766”
40	31	Rule 11 – Hazing Remove (Ch. 536 – Acts of 1986)
40	31	Rule 13 – Smoking and Tobacco Products Change first sentence to read: Smoking, possession, use or distribution of tobacco or tobacco products, including e-cigarettes and vaping devices, within school buildings...
NEW	34	Add new rule Rule 24. – Bullying and Harassment A student shall not engage in conduct that constitutes bullying or harassment in school, at school events or activities, or outside of school if the conduct creates a hostile or disruptive environment at school.
43	34	Bullying Change title to: Bullying or Harassment
44	36	Athletes and Participants in School-Related Activities
46	37	Chemical Health MIAA Rule 62 Change section to read: 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, VAP pens and all similar devices); marijuana (including synthetic); steroids; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as “NA or near beer”, inhalants (defined as any substance that produces a mind-altering effect when inhaled), and misuse of over-the-counter medications and substances used for the purposes of altering one’s mental state. 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 to participate in interscholastic sports due to injury or academics, any penalty imposed will not take effect until that student is able to participate again. See MIAA Handbook for penalties.
47	38	Discipline of Students Under Section 504 and ADA First paragraph: change to read: 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 Student Handbook of the Worcester Public Schools, procedures will be implemented to comply with state and federal law and regulations regarding students with disabilities. Additional information can be found at www.worcesterschools.org/handbook or you may obtain a copy from your child’s school, or by contacting the WPS 504 coordinator at 508-799-3175. Delete remainder of section
48	39	Students with Disabilities Receiving Special Education Services Change heading to read: Students with Disabilities and/or Suspected Disabilities Receiving Special Education Services or 504 Plan
49	40	Resolving School-related Problems - Capitalize and center heading #3 change 799-3264 to 799-3499

PAGE		PROPOSED CHANGES
2017-18	2018-19	
50	40	<p>Policy Regarding the Reporting of any Potential or Actual Incidents that may Impact on the Safety of Children Remove last two sentences of first paragraph.</p>
50	41	<p>Health Services for Students – replace entire section (except Access for Pregnant Students) with: 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 all students’ physical, emotional and social well being through the coordinated efforts of all departments and services offered in the Worcester Public Schools. This model calls for a collaborative, coordinated and comprehensive approach to learning and health, and serves as the model for the WPS Wellness Policy and nursing practice.</p> <p>OVERVIEW OF SCHOOL HEALTH/NURSING SERVICES OFFERED A coordinated program of accessible health services will be provided to students through the leadership of the Nursing Department, in collaboration with the school Physician Consultant, various school departments, and community agencies, as applicable. The program includes communicable disease prevention and reporting, immunization compliance, health education and wellness promotion, health assessments and screenings, chronic condition (including but not limited to asthma, diabetes, life-threatening allergies, seizures, ADHD) management, counseling, community health referrals, first aid and emergency care. The school nurses collaborate and coordinate with parents and other health care providers to create an Individual Health Care Plan.</p> <p>School nurses provide mandated screenings for students at various grade levels in accordance with MA State laws and the Division of Public Health requirements. Screenings include vision and hearing (grades K-5, 8, 10), scoliosis (grades 5-9) height, weight and BMI (grades 1, 4, 7, 10) and Screening Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment [SBIRT] (grades 7 and 9). All students will receive a form from school for parents/ guardians to choose to opt out of one or more of these preventive screenings.</p> <p>All school staff throughout the district are trained by school nurses yearly on life threatening allergy awareness education and Epi-Pen administration and basic first-aid. There are also many school staff members who are trained by the Nursing Department in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) use. Every school and outside athletic area has at minimum one AED available and at least one person trained to use it at all times.</p> <p>The Nursing Administration coordinates and supports other health services available to students including oral health screenings and preventive care such as fluoride and sealant application with referral to a dentist as needed. All high-schools, Burncoat, Worcester East, and Sullivan middle schools, and Elm Park Community, Goddard School of Science and Technology, and Woodland Academy elementary schools have School-Based Health Centers (SBHC) staffed with Nurse Practitioners who can provide more advanced health assessments, diagnoses, and treatment as indicated. Students can also receive physical examinations and immunizations if registered. The Edward Kennedy Health Center (EKHC) and the Family Health Center (FHC) of Worcester operate the SBHCs in the WPSs. Parents/guardians who are interested in this additional health service must register your child/children at the start of every school year, providing consent for treatment.</p>

PAGE		PROPOSED CHANGES
2017-18	2018-19	
50	41	<p>School Health Advisory Council The School Committee recognizes the relationship between student wellness and student achievement. The purpose of the School Health Advisory Council is to recommend, review and help implement school district policies addressing school nutrition, nutrition education, physical activity and related issues that affect student health (105 CMR 215.000). The council is comprised of the Coordinator of Nursing and a variety of community agencies who work together to advocate, develop, implement, monitor, review and revise school health policy as needed/mandated.</p> <p>See the WPS Nursing and Health website for the complete Wellness Policy and other health-related policies and forms or call your school nurse with any questions</p>
61	42	Suggested Guidelines for Safe Backpack Use
61	42	<p>Access for Pregnant Students Eliminate last paragraph (The district does not require...)</p>
62	44	<p>Transportation (include Riding School Buses section from Safety and Behavior)</p>
69	45	<p>Student Services 10th bullet: change Risk/lethality assessments to Risk assessments</p>
70	46	Section 504 – Americans with Disabilities Act
71	47	<p>Section 504 – Americans with Disabilities Act (continued) Last paragraph change to read: The person responsible for Section 504 at your school is the principal. Please contact your child’s school or the Office of Social and Emotional Learning at 508-799-3175 if you have any questions or concerns regarding this notice or Section 504.</p>
71	47	<p>Special Education Replace current section with:</p> <p>The mission of the Special Education Department is to provide support, technical assistance and service to schools, staff, students, families and community stakeholders as we work collaboratively to promote safe schools to maximize educational outcomes for students with disabilities. Through our efforts we are committed to partnering with families and schools to ensure the fidelity of specialized instruction, inclusion opportunities, professional learning and rigorous outcomes to ensure the individual growth and personal success of students.</p> <p>The following key areas provides an overview of special education: Child Find activities includes the district providing screenings and evaluations annually for students to determine eligibility for special education and /or related services. Parental consent is required for all evaluations and completed within 45 school working days after the parent provides the district with written consent. Through the evaluations process the evaluation must assess the child in all areas related to the child’s suspected disability. The evaluation results will be used to determine the child’s eligibility for special education and/or related services or a 504 Plan.</p>

71	47	<p>Special education services provides specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of a child who has a disability. The Federal law, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), in combination with the state's special education law (MGL c.71B) protects students with disabilities who are eligible for special education and guarantees them an Individual Education Program (IEP) designed to meet their unique needs. Special education laws and regulations are meant to protect a student with disabilities to ensure that individualized education program services are designed to make effective progress. While not every child with a disability will require special education services, every child whose disability affects their school progress is entitled to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE).</p> <p>Students are the focus of the special education process as each IEP TEAM must discuss and create a vision for the student. A student at the age of 14 should be encouraged to be an active participant through the TEAM process as this begins the onset of the IEP TEAM to create a Transition Plan. The Transition Planning process should include an interest inventory, transition assessments, post-secondary goals and/or prevocational assessments for all students with a disability who are (14-22) years of age. The completion of the Transition Planning Form (TPF) allows TEAM members to discuss what a student is interested in doing after high school and what supports they need to get there. When the student is 17 years of age, the school district must discuss with both the student and parent the change in rights of the student and the parent(s) that will occur on the student's 18th birthday. In Massachusetts, at age 18 the student reaches the age of majority and thus able to make his or her own medical and education decisions.</p> <p>Another critical process for students with severe disabilities is the Chapter 688 process. This is not a continuation of special education services and is not an entitlement to services. Special education services provided while a student is in school are entitlements mandated by federal and state law. A 688 referral is to plan for needed adult services for students with severe disabilities. Filing a Chapter 688 referral is discussed by the TEAM at least two years before the student is expected to graduate or turn 22, as part of a transition planning. This process sets in motion a two year planning process for students whose entitlements to special education services will end when they graduate from school or turn 22 years of age. This filing results in the creation of an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) that describes how the student will connect with needed supports and services beyond school. Additional information about this process can be found at the following link: www.doe.mass.edu/sped/links/transition.html . Parents can also call the Parent Training Information Center at the Federation for Children with Special Needs at 1-800-331-0688, or the Director of the Bureau of Transitional Planning with The Executive Office of Health and Human Services at 617-573-1600.</p> <p>Referrals are made by contacting the principal, school personnel, or the district's Manager of Special Education when requesting an evaluation for a special education eligibility. The parent must give consent in writing before a special education evaluation can begin. The school must contact the parent within five school days of receiving the referral asking for written permission and/or consent to begin the evaluation process.</p> <p>Principals at each school are responsible to ensure that individual student's education plans are implemented with fidelity as written. The person responsible for assuring that the district complies with Federal and State guidelines that governs special education regulations is the Manager of Special Education and Intervention Services. Please contact your child's school, evaluation team chairperson or the Special Education Manager if you have any questions or concerns regarding special education and your child's educational program.</p> <p>Please visit www.worcesterschools.org/handbook for additional information.</p>
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PAGE		PROPOSED CHANGES
2017-18	2018-19	
72	49	Employment Information and Procedures 2 nd paragraph, 1 st sentence: remove "Effective January 3, 2007," Begin sentence with Anyone under 18 years of age...
73	49	Home and Hospital Instruction Change second paragraph to read: Home and Hospital instruction is a service of the Worcester Public Schools and must be requested by a physician in accordance with state regulations. The Home Hospital Department will review and approve request once in receipt of the state-mandated Physician's Statement Form which must be completed by the attending physician and must include, at a minimum, the following information: Change 4 th paragraph to read: The program begins as soon as the physician requests Home and Hospital Instruction on the Physician's Statement form and the district approves the services. Once the Home and Hospital Department receives the completed Physician's Statement, the parent or guardian will be contacted to coordinate the services and an instructor will be assigned to provide educational services.
73	50	Home Schooling 1 st paragraph – after first sentence add: Students must attend their assigned school until approval has been received. At end of paragraph, add: To avoid miscommunication and to ensure compliance with the home schooling approval law, parents are requested to give this notice in writing. 4 th paragraph last sentence Home schooled students applying to participate in district-sponsored sports must follow the athletic eligibility guidelines described on page 36.
74	50	Instructional Policies
75	51	Homework Policy – Secondary Schools Change last sentence in 2 nd paragraph to read: the average minimum daily homework assignment from the high school teachers should be 45 minutes per academic subject and up to one hour for AP classes.
75	52	Process for Assigning Textbooks
75	52	Promotion Policy
76	53	Academic Dishonesty
77	54	Attendance Policy After #5 (Illness), change sentence to read: Students who will be out of school for more than fourteen consecutive days because of illness or hospitalization may receive home or hospital instruction. For more information refer to Home and Hospital Instruction on page 49.
79	56	High School Attendance and Academic Credit Policy Number 1 and number 3 change 2017-18 to 2018-2019.
83	57	Field Trip Policy Capitalize and center heading
83	57	Honor Roll Policy Capitalize and center heading Remove Honor Roll sub-title before High School and Middle School

PAGE		PROPOSED CHANGES
2017-18	2018-19	
84	58	<p>Standardized Testing Capitalize and center heading Keep first and last paragraphs, and eliminate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – District Testing – State Testing – Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners (ACCESS for ELLs) – Testing Accommodations – Additional High School Tests <p>First paragraph: add sentence to end – A description of standardized instruments commonly used in the district can be found at www.worcesterschools.org/handbook</p> <p>Last paragraph: change Office of Research and Accountability to Office of School and Student Performance</p>
86	58	<p>High School Graduation Course Requirements Change heading to read: HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS Add:</p> <p>On February 27th, 2018 the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education established an interim passing standard for students in the classes on 2021 and 2022 in the subject areas of English language arts and mathematics. Students in the graduating classes of 2021 and 2022 will need to satisfy one of the following two conditions in both English language arts and mathematics to earn a competency determination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · meet or exceed the scaled score threshold on the English language arts and mathematics grade 10 MCAS tests administered in 2019 or later that has been determined by the Commissioner to be comparable to the scaled score threshold of 240 on the grade 10 MCAS tests administered before 2019, or · meet or exceed the scaled score threshold on the English Language Arts and Mathematics grade 10 MCAS tests administered in 2019 or later that has been determined by the Commissioner to be comparable to the scaled score threshold of 220 on the grade 10 MCAS tests administered before 2019 and fulfill the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan. <p>Continue with: In order to graduate, all students must...</p>
89	60	MCAS Appeals Process
88	61	Massachusetts State College & University Minimum Required Courses for Admission
89	61	Advanced Placement Policy
90	62	<p>Class Rank Grade Point Average Change second sentence to read: The official class rank will be recomputed after the second quarter. Change last sentence to read: For information on how grades are weighted visit www.worcesterschools.org/handbook.</p> <p>Eliminate chart</p>
91	62	College Courses for High School Students
91	63	General School Issues
91	63	<p>Early Dismissal Change to read: *Please note: When schools are dismissed early, all after-school programs including daycare are canceled. Early dismissal time is two hours earlier than each school’s regular dismissal time.</p> <p>Eliminate tiers and special schedule</p>

PAGE		PROPOSED CHANGES
2017-18	2018-19	
93	63	<p>No School/Delayed School Opening/Early Dismissal Announcements Change last sentence to read: 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 social media, and an automate phone message will be sent to parents/guardians.</p>
93	64	Policy Statement and Procedural Guidelines for Recess
94	64	Parents and Community
94	65	<p>Special Education Parent Advisory Council Change to read: The SEPAC provides ongoing professional development and networking to families of students with disabilities and the opportunity to discuss common areas of interest and specific needs regarding the education and well-being of students with disabilities. Parent/guardians meet four times during the school year to engage in various activities or selected topics of interest. These meetings provide opportunities for parents to share and collaborate as they deepen their understanding of the procedural regulations that govern special education, as well as various resources available for students with disabilities and their families.</p>
NEW	65	<p>English Learner Parent Advisory Committee The English Learner Parent Advisory Committee (EL PAC) will be established in 2018-2019. Its goal will be to enable parents of English learners (ELs) to participate in their children's education and success in school by creating and strengthening effective communication and home-school partnerships. The EL PAC will consist of parents, community members, teachers and district staff members. Meetings will be a venue for meaningful discussions about Dual Language, Transitional Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language, as well as for asking questions about topics related to education, schools, and the district. Parents of English learners are encouraged to attend the numerous meetings that will be held throughout the school year.</p>
95	65	<p>Title I Parent Involvement Replace entire section with: Parent and Family Engagement It is the policy of the Worcester Public Schools to promote parent and family engagement in accord with Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015. The WPS conducts outreach to parents and family members; implements programs, activities and procedures to involve parents and family members in the Title I programs, and plans and implements such programs, activities and procedures with meaningful consultation with parents and family members. The Office of English Learners and the WPS works with schools, parents and community partners in a variety of ways to facilitate verbal and written communication in a language that family members can understand.</p>
95	66	<p>Opportunities for Parent/Guardian Support Eliminate list and replace with: Please see district website or contact your school for information on community resources available to parents.</p>
96	66	<p>Volunteer Staff Regulations Application Process Change to read: All school volunteers must fill out a volunteer application which can be obtained at the school or on the WPS website. This applies to any individual who volunteers on school property or for school activities, including field trips. All volunteers must go through a screening process prior to beginning service. Eliminate Placement of Volunteers (2 paragraphs)</p>

PAGE		PROPOSED CHANGES
2017-18	2018-19	
97 and inside back cover	67 and inside back cover	WPS District Media Policy
98	69	Telephone Directory SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS – change to HIGH SCHOOLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS Add (Beneath Worcester Arts Magnet) Academic Center for Transition.....(508) 799-3250 MANAGERS' OFFICE change to read <p style="text-align: center;">MANAGERS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP</p> Elementary.....(508) 799-3221 Secondary.....(508) 799-3499
Inside back cover		WPS District Media Policy/Opt Out
Back cover		Policy Handbook Sign Off Change 2017-18 to 2018 – 2019

**Massachusetts School Immunization Requirements
for School Year 2018-19**

	Child Care/Pre-K	Kindergarten	Grades 1-6	Grades 7-12
Hepatitis B	3 doses	3 doses	3 doses	3 doses
DTap/DTP/TD/Tdap	>= 4 doses DTap/DTP	5 doses DTap/DTP	>= 4 doses DTap/DTP or >= 3 doses TD	4 doses DTap/DTP or >= 3 doses TD, plus 1 dose Tdap
Polio	>= 3 doses	4 doses	>= 3 doses	>= 3 doses
Hib	1 to 4 doses	N/A	N/A	N/A
MMR	1 dose	2 doses	2 doses	2 doses
Varicella	1 dose	2 doses	2 doses	2 doses

Worcester Public Schools

Student Handbook



2018—2019

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

www.worcesterschools.org/handbook

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**WORCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOL'S CALENDAR
2018—2019**

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Mayor Joseph M. Petty - Chairman

John L. Foley —Vice-Chairman

Dianna L. Biancheria

Dante A. Comparetto

Molly O. McCullough

John F. Monfredo

Brian A. O'Connell, Esq.

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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

The Worcester Public Schools is pleased to present the 2018-19 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 2018-2019 school year,
Superintendent Maureen F. Binienda

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REGISTRATION

Dr. James L. Garvey Parent Information Center

Open All Year Monday through Friday

8:30 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 and verified:

Verification of:

1. Birth Certificate or Passport
2. Legal Guardianship or a responsible adult party in the household who can serve as an emergency contact.
3. Worcester residence (utility bill, lease, mortgage statement, 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.

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Grades 7 – 12

Students new to our city in grades 7-8 register at the Dr. James L. Garvey Parent Information Center. New students in grades 9-12 have the option to register at their respective high school. Potential English learners must complete registration 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.

**Massachusetts School Immunization Requirements
 for School Year 2018-2019**

	Child Care/ Pre-K	Kindergarten	Grades 1-6	Grades 7-12
Hepatitis B	3 doses	3 doses	3 doses	3 doses
DTap/DTP/ TD/Tdap	>= 4 doses DTap/DTP	5 doses DTap/ DTP	>= 4 doses DTap/DTP or >= 3 doses TD	4 doses DTap/ DTP or >= 3 doses TD, plus 1 dose Tdap
Polio	>= 3 doses	4 doses	>= 3 doses	>= 3 doses
Hib	1 to 4 doses	N/A	N/A	N/A
MMR	1 dose	2 doses	2 doses	2 doses
Varicella	1 dose	2 doses	2 doses	2 doses

Students lacking proper documentation of required immunizations shall be excluded until proof of such immunization is provided (102 CMR 7.07 and CMR 220.00). If a child cannot be immunized due to medical reasons (requires physician documentation yearly) or if a parent refuses to have a child immunized because of religious or philosophical reasons (require a parent-signed letter yearly), the non-immunized student will be excluded from school during outbreaks of diseases for which the student is not immunized (MGL c. 111, § 3, 6, 7, 109, 110, 112 and 105 CMR 300.00).

- **Lead Screening** documentation is required of all students prior to entering Pre-K and/or kindergarten (105 CMR 460).
- **Physicals examination** documentation is required from students entering grades K, 4, 7 and 9 yearly for all student athletes.

An **immunization clinic** is available for students at the Dr. James L. Garvey Parent Information Center (PIC). All state-required immunizations are provided by an RN at no cost. Please refer to the WPS website for hours of operation or call the Parent Information Center at 508-799-3194.

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 five citywide magnet schools are: (1) Chandler Magnet School, (2) City View Discovery School, (3) Jacob Hiatt Magnet School (4) Norrback Avenue School and (5) Worcester Arts Magnet School. Elementary students residing in the North quadrant are eligible to attend the North quadrant magnet school, Roosevelt School, based on space availability. 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:

1. There must be space available in the receiving school.
2. 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:
 - a. 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.
 - b. 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.
 - c. 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.
3. 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:

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- a. 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.
 - b. 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.
 - c. 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.
4. Voluntary transfer requests will be considered for properly documented medical disabilities and other unique circumstances.
 5. 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.
 6. 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.
 7. 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"

1. Applications and a policy statement are available at the Parent Information Center or the Office for Instruction and School Leadership:
 - 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.

2. The application must be filled out and returned to the appropriate office.
 - Parent Information Center or the Office for Instruction and School Leadership.
3. 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.
4. A copy of the application and the approval or denial letter will be kept on file in the Office for Instruction and School Leadership.

III. Hardship Appeals Process

If the parent/guardian disagrees with the decision of the Office for Instruction and School Leadership, 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, Parent Information Center, 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 Office for Instruction and School Leadership. Proceedings of the Hardship Appeals Board will be recorded and maintained by personnel in the Office for Instruction and School Leadership.

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

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 Managers for Instruction and School Leadership 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 Managers for Instruction and School Leadership.

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.

School Choice

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. For the 2018-2019 school year, the School Committee has approved the following:

1. Student enrollment in the Inter-District School Choice program is based on availability and limited preference will be given to young siblings, if space is available.
2. Parent/guardian is responsible for transportation to the district school

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3. All Pre-K to Grade 12 schools participate in the program with the following exceptions:
 - a. Chapter 74 approved programs in the comprehensive high schools
 - b. Chapter 74 approved programs in the Worcester Technical High School
 - c. Alternative Pathways Programs
 - d. Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE) Pathway Programs
4. Students accepted into the Inter-District School Choice program may apply for schools on the same basis as resident students, but the Intra-District Choice Plan (Voluntary Transfer) may give preference to resident students in assigning students to schools.

To obtain information regarding the Inter-District School Choice program, please contact the Parent Information Center at 508-799-3194 or the **Office for Instruction and School Leadership** at 508-799-3499.

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 seeking School Committee approval, a majority of the school council members and the school principal must approve the school's voluntary uniform policy. The principal forwards the request to the Clerk of the School Committee who places it on the agenda for School Committee approval which then allows the school to implement the policy.
3. There will be no disciplinary action if a student does not adhere to the voluntary uniform policy.

STUDENT'S 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.

POLICY REGARDING TELEVISED BROADCASTS

Many times Worcester Public Schools extra curricular activities and programs are broadcast on Charter Channel 191 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.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE

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.

SAFETY AND BEHAVIOR

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.

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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 full 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 web content filters 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 WPS 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

The Worcester Public Schools contracts with a vendor to provide emergency and informational calls, texts and emails. The Telephone Consumer Protection Act of 1991 "TCPA" (and subsequent amendments) was created to prevent consumers from receiving "robo" marketing calls from telemarketers. By signing the parent handbook, you are providing prior express consent for the school district to contact you and your family via phone, email or text message for emergency and informational purposes. If you would like to opt-out of receiving informational messages, you can do so at www.worcesterschools.org/tcpa. Emergency messages will continue to be sent to the contact numbers provided, as authorized under TCPA.

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 5, 2014.

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Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)

The Worcester Public Schools utilizes a number of computer software applications and web-based services to supplement educational services provided by school-based staff. While these tools are reviewed to ensure that they provide students with effective tools for learning, the applications and services are not operated by the district but by 3rd parties. In order for students to use these programs and services, certain personal identifying information – typically the student's name and e-mail address – must be provided to the website/application operator.

Under the federal Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), the websites/application operators must provide parent/guardian notification and obtain consent before collecting personal information from children under the age of 13. The law permits school districts to consent to the collection of personal information on behalf of its students thus eliminating the need for individual parent/guardian to consent directly to individual website/application providers.

A list of the sites used in our classrooms with links to privacy policies and terms of service can be found on the district's website:

<http://www.worcesterschools.org/digitalbackpack>

If a parent/guardian wishes for their child to be removed from specific 3rd party services, an opt-out form can be obtained at the above website. Completed forms should be returned to the school principal.

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:

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

SECURITY MEASURES

Crisis Prevention and De-escalation

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 shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be used only 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, medication restraints and seclusion are prohibited in all public education programs.

The amended regulations may be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr46.html?section=all>

Security Cameras in Schools

The School Committee works to maintain a safe and secure environment for its students, staff, visitors, and facilities. Security means more than having locks and making certain that doors are locked at the proper times. Security also means minimizing fire hazards, reducing the possibility of faulty equipment, keeping records and valuables in a safe place, protection against vandalism and burglary, the prosecution of vandals, and developing crisis plans.

School facilities and their contents, constitute one of the greatest investments of the community. The School Committee believes it to be in the best interest of students and taxpayers for the district to exert every reasonable means to protect the investment adequately.

In pursuit of this objective, the School Committee authorizes the use of security cameras in school district buildings and on its property to ensure the health, welfare and safety of all students, staff and visitors, to deter theft, vandalism and other negative behavior, to safeguard district buildings, grounds and equipment, and to monitor unauthorized individuals in or on school property. Security cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent of Schools in consultation with school officials as well as local law enforcement and emergency response agencies. They may be used in any area, inside or outside of school buildings where there is no reasonable expectation of privacy.

The district shall notify students and staff through student and employee handbooks and appropriate signage that security cameras have been installed and may be used at any time. Students or staff identified on security cameras in violation of School Committee policies will be subject to disciplinary action.

The Superintendent shall ensure that proper procedures are in place and are followed regarding use, viewing, disclosure, retention, disposal and security of video recordings or photographs from security cameras in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. A video recording used for security purposes in school district buildings and/or on school property shall be the sole property of the school district. All video recordings will be stored in their original format and secured to avoid tampering and to ensure confidentiality in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Access to video recordings from security cameras shall be limited to school administrators (Superintendent/designee, School Principal/designee). Law enforcement and emergency response officials shall be granted access to video recordings or the security system after giving prior notice to the School Superintendent/designee.

The Superintendent may, from time to time, issue further guidance that is consistent with current laws and this policy.

Emergency Plans

Advance planning for emergencies and disasters is essential to provide for the safety of students and staff; it also strengthens the morale of all concerned to know that plans exist and that students/staff have been trained in carrying out the plans.

The Superintendent shall review annually the safety plan with local police and fire officials. Building principals will meet all requirements for conducting fire drills and

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Emergency Response drills to give students practice in moving with orderly dispatch to designated areas under emergency conditions, and the staff practice in carrying out their assigned responsibilities for building evacuation.

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, 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.
3. Certain individuals, including school personnel, police, and employees of certain state agencies may be granted access to students in the performance of their official duties. This information can be viewed at www.worcesterschools.org/handbook.

If any court ordered restrictions exist regarding access to your child, it is imperative that you provide the WPS a copy of the order so that we can comply with the order 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. Idling of a motor vehicle engine in excess of 5 minutes is prohibited on school property. Violators will be fined.
4. Students must drive slowly and carefully on or near school grounds, always remembering that pedestrians have the right of way.
5. Cars may not be visited during the school day except with the approval of the principal.
6. 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.

LEGAL POLICIES

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, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity, age, criminal record (inquiries only), handicap (disability), mental illness, retaliation, sexual harassment, sexual orientation, genetics or military service. The Worcester Public Schools provides equal access to a full range of general, occupational and vocational education programs. The Chief Human Resource Officer is responsible for the coordination of Title IX, Section 504 ADA, Title I and Chapter 622 in the Worcester Public Schools

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and will be responsible for coordinating grievance procedures, which can be viewed at www.worcesterschools.org/handbook and by contacting your child's school. For more information relating to Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action contact the Chief Human Resource Officer, 20 Irving Street, Worcester, MA 01609, 508-799-3020.

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:

1. 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
2. The harasser does not have to be the victim's superior.
3. The victim may be the same or opposite sex as the harasser
4. 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.
5. 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, may 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 which can be viewed at www.worcesterschools.org/handbook and by contacting your child's school.

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.

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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.

Child Abuse

MGL c. 119, §§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.

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.

Gun Free School Zones MGL c.269 §10(j)

MGL c. 269 §10(j) prohibits anyone who is not law enforcement from carrying a gun or dangerous weapon on the grounds of any school (elementary, secondary, college or university). This prohibition is applicable *regardless of whether or not an individual possesses a valid license to carry*.

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 and the amendments to this act under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015. The Worcester Public Schools will:

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
4. Follow the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act

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. In keeping with these requirements:

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 student will be enrolled immediately and the 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.

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8. Questions or concerns regarding issues pertaining to homeless students should be referred to the Office of Social and Emotional Learning at (508) 799-3175.

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 course, 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 / 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, 20 Irving 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.

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 Every Student Succeeds Act 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.

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:

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1. 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.
2. To request that a school add information, comments, data or any other relevant written material to the student record. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a conference with the principal. After the conference, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to appeal to the Superintendent and has a further right to appeal to the School Committee.
3. 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):
 - a. School officials with legitimate educational interest
 - b. Other schools to which a student is transferring
 - c. Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes
 - d. Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student
 - e. Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school
 - f. Accrediting organizations
 - g. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena
 - h. Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies and
 - i. State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law

FERPA allows schools to disclose, without consent, "directory" information, which is considered by the Worcester Public Schools to include 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 the Office of School and Student Performance 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.

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:
 - a. Name (student and parent/guardian)
 - b. Address (student and parent/guardian)
 - c. Telephone number (student and parent/guardian)
 - d. Date of birth
 - e. Course titles
 - f. Grades or equivalent
 - g. Course credit
 - h. Grade level completed
 - i. 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:
 - a. Standardized test results (including MCAS results)*
 - b. Class rank
 - c. Extracurricular activities
 - d. Evaluations
 - e. Educational plans
 - f. EP, 504, Regular Education Accommodation, Behavior Support Plans

- and Safety Support Plans
- g. Student Support Process Reports
- h. Individual Student Success Plans
- i. Health records
- j. Attendance
- k. Incident reports involving student suspension or the committing of criminal acts
- l. 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.
 - f. The following persons serving in a parental role shall have access to a student's records:
 - i. The custodial parent(s) (parent with physical custody)
 - ii. The student's guardian
 - iii. 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:
 - i. The parent has been denied legal custody based on a threat to the safety of the child or to the custodial parent or
 - ii. The parent has been denied visitation or has been ordered to supervised visitation or
 - iii. 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.**
4. **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.

5. **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.

EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT

The Worcester Public Schools makes every effort to comply with the regulations and requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), a federal law enacted in 2015. This legislation requires school district personnel to notify parents/guardians of a variety of issues regarding their children's education. Among them is a requirement 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. ESSA 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. 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:

1. Whether the teacher has met the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
2. Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which DESE qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.
3. Whether the teacher is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
4. 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 child(ren)'s Title I school.

In addition, districts are required to provide to each individual parent/guardian information on the child's level of achievement and academic growth of the student, if applicable and available, on each of the state academic assessments required under Title I.

At the beginning of each school year, Title I schools must notify parents/guardians of each child that the parents may request (and the school will provide) in a timely manner information regarding any state or school policy regarding student participation in any assessments mandated by ESSA. Information on each mandated assessment is available on the Worcester Public Schools' website.

No later than thirty days after the beginning of the school year, each Title I school must inform parents/guardians of an English learner identified for participation or participating in a language instruction educational program of the reasons for placement; the child's level of English proficiency and academic achievement; and how the program will address the child's specific needs; and to provide parents/guardians with written guidance detailing the parental rights and options with regard to such a program.

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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 MGL c. 71 §§37H, 37 H½ and 37 H ¾ and 603 CMR 53.00 et seq. which can be viewed on the district's website at www.worcesterschools.org/handbook.

CODE OF CONDUCT

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.

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:

1. Students have a responsibility to conduct themselves in a manner that is in the best interest of the school and its students.
2. Parents/guardians have a responsibility to develop positive attitudes toward study and behavior.
3. Teachers have a responsibility to continue behavior development through teaching and discipline in the classroom.
4. 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, 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 MGL 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 MGL 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 ten (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 MGL c. 71, §37 H, or in section 37H ½ of MGL 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 MGL c. 71 §37H ¾ 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 appropri-

ate, 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 MGL c. 71 §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:

1. 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
2. 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 WPS 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 MGL c. 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. This applies to drug paraphernalia such as scales, grinders, pipes, electronic smoking devices and any and all instruments used for drug products.
- b. Any student who uses or possesses any controlled substance as defined in MGL c. 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. - Excessive Tardiness

A student shall not be tardy from school or class without legitimate cause.

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 school supervision.

Rule 11. - Hazing

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 12. - 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 MGL c. 269, §13). No student shall set a fire in a school building or at a school-sponsored site or situation.

Rule 13. - Smoking and Tobacco Products

Smoking, possession, use, or distribution of tobacco or tobacco products, including e-cigarettes and vaping devices 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 14. - Cell Phones, Electronic Devices, and Laser Pointing Devices

While on school premises or at a school sponsored event during the school day, a student shall not, without expressed permission of appropriate school personnel, use any cell phone, smart phone, tablet, camera or any other type of electronic device which may potentially be disruptive of school activities or a distraction to students. Electronic devices shall include any cell phone, smart phone, tablet or anything powered by electricity and is suitable for communicating any oral, voice, audio or text messages or postings or for recording or communicating any audio, voice, picture, image or video imagery. Students are not permitted to have their cell phones or electronic devices powered while in school.

Use of such devices in violation of this rule may result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, out-of-school suspension time. The School Administration reserves the right to confiscate cellular phones or other electronic devices when a student is believed to be violating this rule.

A student shall not use or possess a laser pointing device of any type on school premises or at a school sponsored event, 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 individual may be considered a weapon for disciplinary purposes including, but not limited to, the possibility of long-term suspension.

Enforcement and Penalties:

This cell phone policy may be enforced by the principal, any teacher (including substitutes) or by any other school official or employee designated by the principal.

Enforcement personnel shall have the right to confiscate any cell phone or electronic device possessed or used in violation of the Code of Conduct.

Penalties for students found in violation of the policy will be as follows:

1. First offense: Student's cell phone/electronic device will be confiscated and returned to the student at the end of the school day.
2. Second and subsequent offenses: Student's cell phone/electronic device will be confiscated and returned only to the student's parents or guardians. Any such parent or guardian may, within five days of any such confiscation, request a hearing to determine the validity of the violation of the Code of Conduct and resulting confiscation of the cell phone/electronic device. In such event the principal shall designate a hearing officer who shall: 1) give the student and/or his or her parents/guardians an opportunity to present their case; 2) hear or review the incident report from the enforcing person and any other person with relevant information; and 3) provide a recommendation to the principal as to whether there is a reasonable basis to conclude that the cell phone policy of the Code of Conduct was violated by the student. Regardless of any request for a hearing, any confiscated cell phone/electronic device shall be returned to the parent/guardian at the first opportunity and shall not be dependent on the scheduling or outcome of any hearing.
3. Student committing repeated violations of this policy may be subject to additional disciplinary action, consistent with the Worcester Public Schools Code of Conduct up to and including suspension from school.

Rule 15. - Policy on Gangs and Obscene Clothing

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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 16. - Students Charged with or Convicted of a Felony

In accordance with MGL c. 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 17. - Disruption of School

1. In addition to complying with Rules 1 through 15 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.
2. Students are not permitted in any area of the school building/grounds without supervision by a staff person of the WPS 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 18. - Bomb Threats

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 19. - 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 20. - 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 21. - 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 22. - Leaving School without Permission

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

Rule 23. - 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.

Rule 24. - Bullying and Harassment

A student shall not engage in conduct that constitutes bullying or harassment in school, at school events or activities, or outside of school if the conduct creates a hostile or disruptive environment at school.

Bullying or Harassment

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 MGL c.71, § 370, 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:

1. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the victim's property;
2. places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
3. creates a hostile environment at school for the victim;
4. infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or
5. 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 one 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, emails, 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. Section 370 of chapter 71 of the MGL) 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/her 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 Com-

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- monwealth 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. Yearlong major courses are equivalent to a Carnegie Unit which is a minimum of 1.0 credits. 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. Incoming 9th graders are exempt from academic requirement for 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 nursing administrative office, 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, VAP pens and all similar devices); marijuana (including synthetic); steroids; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as “NA or near beer”, inhalants (defined as any substance that produces a mind-altering effect when inhaled), and misuse of over-the-counter medications and substances used for the purposes of altering one’s mental state. It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifi-

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cally prescribed for the student's own use by his/her doctor.

If a student who violates this rule is unable to participate in interscholastic sports due to injury or academics, any penalty imposed will not take effect until that 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 6).

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 Student Handbook of the Worcester Public Schools, procedures will be implemented to comply with state and federal law and regulations regarding students with disabilities. Additional information can be found at www.worcesterschools.org/handbook. Or you may

obtain a copy from your child's school or by contacting the WPS 504 coordinator at 508-799-3175.

Students with Disabilities and/or Suspected Disabilities Receiving Special Education Services or 504 Plan

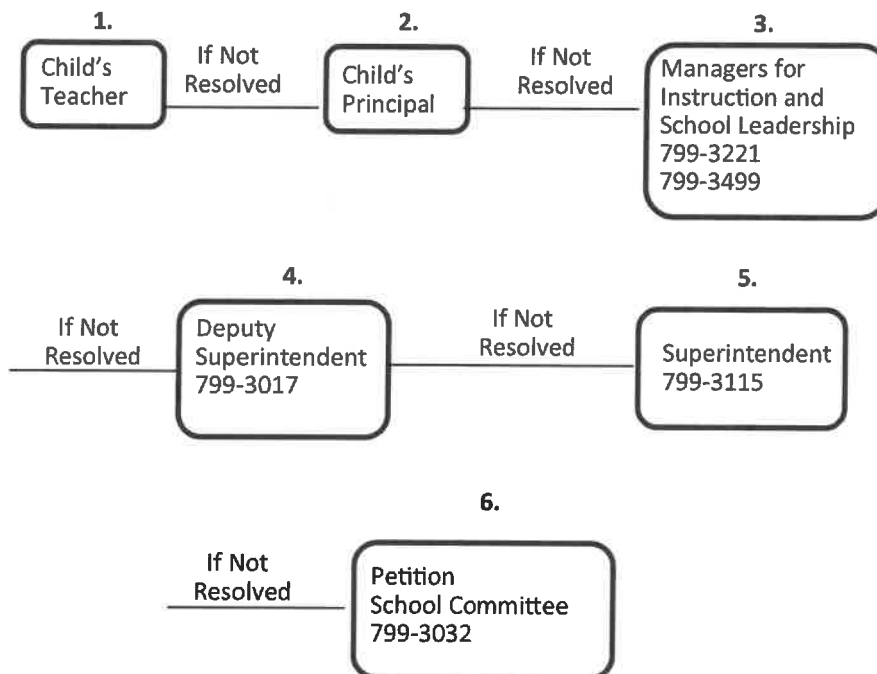
1. The principal or his/her designee will notify the Special Education Office of the suspendable offense of a student with a disability and a record will be kept in the SAGE student management system.
2. When the suspension of a student with a disability accumulates to more than ten (10) days during the school year, or there appears to be a pattern of suspensions, a Manifestation Determination meeting will be held.
 - 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 directly and substantially 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.

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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.

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 Managers for Instruction and School Leadership 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 **all students'** physical, emotional and social well being through the coordinated efforts of all departments and services offered in the Worcester Public Schools. This model calls for a collaborative, coordinated and comprehensive approach to learning and health, and serves as the model for the WPS Wellness Policy and nursing practice.

OVERVIEW OF SCHOOL HEALTH/NURSING SERVICES OFFERED

A coordinated program of accessible health services will be provided to students through the leadership of the Nursing Department, in collaboration with the school Physician Consultant, various school departments, and community agencies, as applicable. The program includes communicable disease prevention and reporting, immunization compliance, health education and wellness promotion, health assessments and screenings, chronic condition (including but not limited to asthma, diabetes, life-threatening allergies, seizures, ADHD) management, counseling, community health referrals, first aid and emergency care. The school nurses collaborate and coordinate with parents and other health care providers to create an Individual Health Care Plan.

School nurses provide **mandated screenings** for students at various grade levels in accordance with MA State laws and the Division of Public Health requirements. Screenings include vision and hearing (grades K-5, 8, 10), scoliosis (grades 5-9) height, weight and BMI (grades 1, 4, 7, 10) and Screening Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment [SBIRT] (grades 7 and 9). All students will receive a form from school for parents/ guardians to choose to opt out of one or more of these preventive screenings.

All school staff throughout the district are trained by school nurses yearly on life threatening allergy awareness education and Epi-Pen administration and basic first-aid. There are also many school staff members who are trained by the Nursing Department in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) use. Every school and outside athletic area has at minimum one AED available and at least one person trained to use it at all times.

The Nursing Administration coordinates and supports other health services available to students including oral health screenings and preventive care such as fluoride and sealant application with referral to a dentist as needed. All high-schools, Burncoat, Worcester East, and Sullivan middle schools, and Elm Park Community, Goddard School of Science and Technology, and Woodland Academy elementary schools have School-Based Health Centers (SBHC) staffed with Nurse Practitioners who can provide more advanced health assessments, diagnoses, and treatment as indicated. Students can also receive physical examinations and immunizations if registered. The Edward Kennedy Health Center (EKHC) and the Family Health Center (FHC) of Worcester operate the SBHCs in the WPSs. Parents/guardians who are interested in this additional health service must register your child/children at the start of every school year, providing consent for treatment.

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School Health Advisory Council

The School Committee recognizes the relationship between student wellness and student achievement. The purpose of the School Health Advisory Council is to recommend, review and help implement school district policies addressing school nutrition, nutrition education, physical activity and related issues that affect student health (105 CMR 215.000). The council is comprised of the Coordinator of Nursing and a variety of community agencies who work together to advocate, develop, implement, monitor, review and revise school health policy as needed/mandated.

See the WPS Nursing and Health website for the complete Wellness Policy and other health-related policies and forms or call your school nurse with any questions.

Suggested Guidelines for Safe Backpack Use

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

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

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 the 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 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.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation Program

Free transportation is granted to students 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 Quinsigamond School, 14 Blackstone River Road (508) 799-3502 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.

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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 16 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.

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:
 - a. Smoke
 - b. Throw any objects on the bus or out the windows
 - c. Disturb the driver or other students
 - d. Litter
 - e. Make loud or unnecessary noises
 - f. Eat food or drink
 - g. Transport items which may endanger the health or safety of any other passengers
 - h. 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.

STUDENT SERVICES

Social Emotional Learning

The Social Emotion Learning 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 Social Emotional Learning Department does not constitute a referral for a Special Education Team Evaluation.**

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Child Study Department services include:

- Collaborative consultation with teachers
- Individual and group counseling
- 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 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
- Delivery of schoolwide social emotional learning supports

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:

1. has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities
2. has a record of such an impairment
3. 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 may be 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 the principal. Please contact your child's school or the Office of Social and Emotional Learning at 508-799-3175 if you have any questions or concerns regarding this notice or Section 504.

Special Education

The mission of the Special Education Department is to provide support, technical assistance and service to schools, staff, students, families and community stake-

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holders as we work collaboratively to promote safe schools to maximize educational outcomes for students with disabilities. Through our efforts we are committed to partnering with families and schools to ensure the fidelity of specialized instruction, inclusion opportunities, professional learning and rigorous outcomes to ensure the individual growth and personal success of students.

The following key areas provides an overview of special education:

Child Find activities includes the district providing screenings and evaluations annually for students to determine eligibility for special education and /or related services. Parental consent is required for all evaluations and completed within 45 school working days after the parent provides the district with written consent. Through the evaluations process the evaluation must assess the child in all areas related to the child's suspected disability. The evaluation results will be used to determine the child's eligibility for special education and/or related services or a 504 Plan.

Special education services provides specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of a child who has a disability. The Federal law, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), in combination with the state's special education law (MGL c.71B) protects students with disabilities who are eligible for special education and guarantees them an Individual Education Program (IEP) designed to meet their unique needs. Special education laws and regulations are meant to protect a student with disabilities to ensure that individualized education program services are designed to make effective progress. **While not every child with a disability will require special education services, every child whose disability affects their school progress is entitled to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE).**

Students are the focus of the special education process as each IEP TEAM must discuss and create a vision for the student. A student at the age of 14 should be encouraged to be an active participant through the TEAM process as this begins the onset of the IEP TEAM to create a Transition Plan. The Transition Planning process should include an interest inventory, transition assessments, post-secondary goals and/or prevocational assessments for all students with a disability who are (14-22) years of age. The completion of the Transition Planning Form (TPF) allows TEAM members to discuss what a student is interested in doing after high school and what supports they need to get there. When the student is 17 years of age, the school district must discuss with both the student and parent the change in rights of the student and the parent(s) that will occur on the student's 18th birthday. In Massachusetts, at age 18 the student reaches the age of majority and thus able to make his or her own medical and education decisions.

Another critical process for students with severe disabilities is the Chapter 688 process. This is not a continuation of special education services and is not an entitlement to services. Special education services provided while a student is in school are entitlements mandated by federal and state law. A 688 referral is to plan for needed adult services for students with severe disabilities. Filing a Chapter 688 referral is discussed by the TEAM at least two years before the student is expected to graduate or turn 22, as part of a transition planning. This process sets in motion a two year planning process for students whose entitlements to special education services will end when they graduate from school or turn 22 years of age. This fil-

ing results in the creation of an Individual Transition Plan (ITP) that describes how the student will connect with needed supports and services beyond school. Additional information about this process can be found at the following link: www.doe.mass.edu/sped/links/transition.html . Parents can also call the Parent Training Information Center at the Federation for Children with Special Needs at 1-800-331-0688, or the Director of the Bureau of Transitional Planning with The Executive Office of Health and Human Services at 617-573-1600.

Referrals are made by contacting the principal, school personnel, or the district's Manager of Special Education when requesting an evaluation for a special education eligibility. The parent must give consent in writing before a special education evaluation can begin. The school must contact the parent within five school days of receiving the referral asking for written permission and/or consent to begin the evaluation process.

Principals at each school are responsible to ensure that individual student's education plans are implemented with fidelity as written. The person responsible for assuring that the district complies with Federal and State guidelines that governs special education regulations is the Manager of Special Education and Intervention Services. Please contact your child's school, evaluation team chairperson or the Special Education Manager if you have any questions or concerns regarding special education and your child's educational program.

Please visit www.worcesterschools.org/handbook for additional information.

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.

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 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.

Home and Hospital Instruction is a service of the Worcester Public Schools and must be requested by a physician in accordance with state regulations. The Home Hospital Department will review and approve request once in receipt of the state-mandated **Physician's Statement Form** which must be completed by the attending

physician and must include, at a minimum, the following information:

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 to assist in the planning the home or hospital educational services

The program begins as soon as the physician requests Home and Hospital Instruction on the Physician's Statement form and the district approves the services. Once the Home and Hospital Department receives the completed Physician's Statement, the parent or guardian will be contacted to coordinate the services and an instructor will be assigned to provide educational services.

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 in advance by the Worcester Public Schools. Students must attend their assigned school until approval has been received. The notifications to homeschool (elementary and secondary versions) are available upon request from the office of the Child Study Department at (508) 799- 3175. To avoid miscommunication and to ensure compliance with the home schooling approval law, parents are requested to give this notice in writing.

Parents are expected to provide evidence of their child's home schooling program once a year. Students completing high school through home schooling programs *are* not eligible for a Worcester Public Schools' Diploma.

A student being educated through Home Schooling may have access to public school activities of an extra-curricular nature (e.g. sports, clubs) with the approval of the Superintendent or designee.

The district reserves the right to allow enrolled students to have precedence or priority over the home schooled student with regard to placement on sports teams and activities that have limited enrollment. With approval of the Superintendent or designee, and in consultation with the principal, a home schooled student may participate in sports teams and activities that have limited enrollment provided that he or she does not displace an enrolled student. Home schooled students applying to participate in district-sponsored sports must follow the athletic eligibility guidelines described on page 36.

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 aca-

ademic 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 and up to one hour for AP classes.

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

tained 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 may receive home or hospital instruction. For more information refer to Home and Hospital Instruction on page 49.

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 and attendance 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 2018-2019 school year, high school students will not receive credit when they exceed the following number of absences:
 - a. Fourteen (14) unexcused class absences per one-credit course
 - b. Seven (7) unexcused class absences for courses less than one credit
2. Administrative Procedure for Loss of Credit
 - a. 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.
 - b. 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.
 - c. A minimum of twenty-four (24) credits is required to graduate.
3. Attendance Buyback Program
During the 2018-2019 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 beyond the school day or 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
 - a. 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
 - b. Appeals for waiver of the policy will be heard by the Principal or his/her designee.
 - c. The parent/guardian may appeal an adverse decision by the Principal or his/her designee to the Managers for Instruction and School Leadership

- d. The parent/guardian may appeal an adverse decision by the Managers for Instruction and School Leadership to the Superintendent
- e. 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.

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 Office for Instruction and School Leadership.

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.

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.

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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 computer-based testing, 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. A description of standardized instruments commonly used in the district can be found at www.worcesterschools.org/handbook.

For Information on 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 the Office of School and Student Performance (508) 799-3592. 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/Assess/> or by contacting the State Office of Student Assessment at (781) 338-3625.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

On February 27, 2018 the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education established an interim passing standard for students in the classes on 2021 and 2022 in the subject areas of English language arts and mathematics. Students in the graduating classes of 2021 and 2022 will need to satisfy one of the following two conditions in both English language arts and mathematics to earn a competency determination.

- meet or exceed the scaled score threshold on the English language arts and mathematics grade 10 MCAS tests administered in 2019 or later that has been determined by the Commissioner to be comparable to the scaled score threshold of 240 on the grade 10 MCAS tests administered before 2019, or
- meet or exceed the scaled score threshold on the English Language Arts and Mathematics grade 10 MCAS tests administered in 2019 or later that has been determined by the Commissioner to be comparable to the scaled score threshold of 220 on the grade 10 MCAS tests administered before 2019 and fulfill the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan.

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 (Effective with the graduating class of 2019, three of the four courses must include Algebra I and II, Geometry or Trigonometry)

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.

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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.
5. Exception Allowances
 - 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.
 - c. Students enrolled in Career/Vocational Technical Programs may substitute foreign language courses for an additional academic elective course plus one of the following options:
 - i. complete at least one full year of study of foreign language or
 - ii. complete a fourth year of study of science and technology/engineering or
 - iii. complete one full year of study for computer science

MCAS Appeals Process

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 Perfor-

mance 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 School and Student Performance (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/>.

Massachusetts State College and University Minimum Required Courses for Admission

English	4 courses
Mathematics	4 courses (Algebra I & II and Geometry or Trigonometry, or comparable coursework) including mathematics during the final year of high school
Sciences	3 courses (from Natural Science and/or Physical Science and/or Technology/ Engineering), including 3 courses with laboratory work
Social Sciences	2 courses (including 1 course in U.S. History)
Foreign Languages	2 courses (in a single language) <i>Note: American Sign Language (ASL) is a foreign language.</i>
Electives	2 courses (from the above subjects or from the Arts & Humanities or Computer Sciences)

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 cost for one Advanced Placement Exam is \$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. For more information on how student grades are weighted visit : www.worcesterschools.org/handbook

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	College of the Holy Cross
Assumption College	Quinsigamond Community College
Becker College	Worcester Polytechnic Institute*
Clark University	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:

- a. Cancellation of school
- b. Delay of one hour in the opening of school
- c. Delay of two hours in the opening of school
- d. 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:

1. reporting time of pupils
2. 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 including daycare are canceled. Early dismissal time is two hours earlier than each school's regular dismissal 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 social media, and an automated phone message will be sent to parents/guardians.

Policy Statement and Procedural Guidelines for Recess

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 Deputy Superintendent 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

The SEPAC provides ongoing professional development and networking to families of students with disabilities and the opportunity to discuss common areas of interest and specific needs regarding the education and well-being of students with disabilities. Parent/guardians meet four times during the school year to engage in various activities or selected topics of interest. These meetings provide opportunities for parents to share and collaborate as they deepen their understanding of the procedural regulations that govern special education, as well as various resources available for students with disabilities and their families.

English Learner Parent Advisory Committee

The English Learner Parent Advisory Committee (EL PAC) will be established in 2018-2019. Its goal will be to enable parents of English learners (ELs) to participate in their children's education and success in school by creating and strengthening effective communication and home-school partnerships. The EL PAC will consist of parents, community members, teacher and district staff members. Meetings will be a venue for meaningful discussions about Dual Language, Transitional Bilingual Education and English as a Second Language, as well as for asking questions about topics related to education, schools, and the district. Parents of English learners are encouraged to attend the numerous meetings that will be held throughout the school year.

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.

Parent and Family Engagement

It is the policy of the Worcester Public Schools to promote parent and family engagement in accord with Title I of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015. The WPS conducts outreach to parents and family members; implements programs, activities and procedures to involve parents and family members in the Title I programs, and plans and implements such programs, activities and procedures with meaningful consultation with parents and family members. The Office of English Learners and the WPS works with schools, parents and community partners in a variety of ways to facilitate verbal and written communication in a language that family members can understand.

Opportunities for Parent/Guardian Support

Please see district website or contact your school for information on community resources available to parents.

Volunteer Staff Regulations

Application Process

All school volunteers must fill out a volunteer application which can be obtained at the school or on the WPS website. This applies to any individual who volunteers in school property or for school activities, including field trips. All volunteers must go through a screening process prior to beginning service. This includes the CORI process.

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.

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 and social media channels; feature stories about student performances or school-wide events in newspapers or on television (the district's Charter Channel 191 WEA-TV or local/national coverage); and photographs and videos of students "in action" on the website and social media channels, 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 and social media channels. 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 and social media channels, 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.

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TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

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 St. Casimir	(508) 799-3245
University Park Campus	(508) 799-3591

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
Challenge and Reach Academies.....	(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	Vernon Hill	(508) 799-3630
Grafton	(508) 799-3478	Wawecus.....	(508) 799-3527
Heard.....	(508) 799-3525	West Tatnuck.....	(508) 799-3596
Hiatt	(508) 799-3601	Woodland Academy...	(508) 799-3557
Lake View	(508) 799-3536	Worcester Arts Magnet	(508) 799-3575
Lincoln	(508) 799-3504	Academic Center for Transition.....	(508) 799-3250
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 FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Elementary	(508) 799-3221
Secondary.....	(508) 799-3499

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 and social media channels; feature stories about student performances or school-wide events in newspapers or on television (the district's Charter Channel 191 WEA-TV or local/national coverage); and photographs and videos of students "in action" on the website and social media channels, 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 and social media channels. 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 2018-19 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)
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(Parent/Guardian Signature)		(Date)
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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)
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Section A

Foundations and Basic Commitments

Section A of the NEPN classification system contains policies, regulations, and exhibits on the district's legal role in providing public education and the basic principles underlying school board governance. These policies provide a setting for all of the School Committee's other policies and regulations.

AA	SCHOOL DISTRICT LEGAL STATUS
AB	THE PEOPLE AND THEIR SCHOOL DISTRICT
AC	NONDISCRIMINATION
ACA	NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX
ACAB	SEXUAL HARASSMENT
ACE	NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF DISABILITY
AD	EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY/SCHOOL DISTRICT MISSION
ADC	SMOKING ON SCHOOL PREMISES
ADDA	CORI REQUIREMENTS
ADF	SCHOOL DISTRICT WELLNESS PROGRAM
AE	COMMITMENT TO ACHIEVEMENT

SCHOOL DISTRICT LEGAL STATUS

The legal basis for public education in the District is vested in the will of the people as expressed in the Constitution of Massachusetts and state statutes pertaining to education.

Under the General Laws of Massachusetts,

"... Every town shall maintain ... a sufficient number of schools for the instruction of all children who may legally attend a public school therein."

The public educational system of Worcester structurally is a department of the town operated under laws pertaining to education and under regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education. The area served by the Worcester Public Schools is coterminous with the City of Worcester.

Established by law

LEGAL REFS.: Constitution of Massachusetts, Part II, Chapter V, Section II
M.G.L. 71:1

CROSS REF.: BB, School Committee Legal Status

Historical Note: Massachusetts has the oldest public school system in the nation. Dating back to 1647, the laws of the Massachusetts Bay Colony required towns to provide for a program of public education.

THE PEOPLE AND THEIR SCHOOL DISTRICT

The School Committee has the dual responsibility for implementing statutory requirements pertaining to public education and local citizens' expectations for the education of the community's youth. It also has an obligation to determine and assess citizens' desires. When citizens elect delegates to represent them in the conduct of public education, their representatives have the authority to exercise their best judgment in determining policies, making decisions, and approving procedures for carrying out the responsibility.

The School Committee therefore affirms and declares its intent to:

1. Maintain two-way communication with citizens of the community. The public will be kept informed of the progress and problems of the school system, and citizens will be urged to bring their aspirations and feelings about their public schools to the attention of this body, which they have chosen to represent them in the management of public education.
2. Establish policies and make decisions on the basis of declared educational philosophy and goals. All decisions made by this Committee will be made with priority given to the purposes set forth, most crucial of which is the optimal learning of the children enrolled in our schools.
3. Act as a truly representative body for members of the community in matters involving public education. The Committee recognizes that ultimate responsibility for public education rests with the state, but individual School Committees have been assigned specific authority through state law. The Committee will not relinquish any of this authority since it believes that decision-making control over the children's learning should be in the hands of local citizens as much as possible.

NONDISCRIMINATION

Public schools have the responsibility to overcome, insofar as possible, any barriers that prevent children from achieving their potential. The public school system will do its part. This commitment to the community is affirmed by the following statements that the School Committee intends to:

1. Promote the rights and responsibilities of all individuals as set forth in the State and Federal Constitutions, pertinent legislation, and applicable judicial interpretations.
2. Encourage positive experiences in human values for children, youth and adults, all of whom have differing personal and family characteristics and who come from various socioeconomic, racial and ethnic groups.
3. Work toward a more integrated society and to enlist the support of individuals as well as groups and agencies, both private and governmental, in such an effort.
4. Use all appropriate communication and action techniques to air and reduce the grievances of individuals and groups.
5. Carefully consider, in all the decisions made within the school system, the potential benefits or adverse consequences that those decisions might have on the human relations aspects of all segments of society.
6. Initiate a process of reviewing policies and practices of the school system in order to achieve to the greatest extent possible the objectives of this statement.

The Committee's policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. If someone has a complaint or feels that they have been discriminated against because of their race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability, their complaint should be registered with the Title IX compliance officer.

Complaints of Discrimination/Harassment should be directed to the following:

Human Resource Manager
20 Irving Street
Worcester, MA 01609
Telephone: (508) 799-3020

LEGAL REFS.: Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964
Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment
Opportunity Act of 1972
Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375
Equal Pay Act, as amended by the Education Amendments of 1972
Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972
Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975
M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)
M.G.L. 76:5; Amended 2011
M.G.L.76:16
BESE regulations 603CMR 26.00 Amended 2012

BESE regulations 603CMR 28.00

File: AC

CROSS REFS.:

ACA- ACE, Subcategories for Nondiscrimination OBA, Equal
Employment Opportunity
JB, Equal Educational Opportunities

NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX

The School Committee, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, declares that the school system does not and will not discriminate on the basis of sex in the educational programs and activities of the public schools. This policy will extend not only to students with regard to educational opportunities, but also to employees with regard to employment opportunities.

The School Committee will continue to ensure fair and equitable educational and employment opportunities, without regard to sex, to all of its students and employees.

The Committee will designate an individual to act as the school system's Title IX compliance officer. All students and employees will be notified of the name and office address and telephone number of the compliance officer.

UPDATED: June 2012

LEGAL REFS.: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
45 CFR, Part 86, (Federal Register, 6/4/75)
M.G.L. 76:5; 76:16 (Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971)
BESE 603 CMR 26:00

CROSS REF.: AC, Nondiscrimination

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

All persons associated with the Worcester Public Schools including, but not necessarily limited to, the Committee, the administration, staff, and students, are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Any person who engages in sexual harassment while acting, as a member of the school community, will be in violation of this policy. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating in an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated.

Since the Worcester School Committee takes allegations of sexual harassment seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints of sexual harassment and where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action, where appropriate.

Please note that while this policy sets forth our goals of promoting a workplace and school environment that is free of sexual harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit our authority to discipline or take remedial action for workplace or school conduct which we deem unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of sexual harassment.

Definition of Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature may constitute sexual harassment where:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a persons' employment or educational development.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or education decisions affecting such individual.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment.

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. The Worcester Public Schools' view of sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following considerations:

- A. A man, as well as a woman, may be the victim of sexual harassment and a woman, as well as a man, may be the harasser.
- B. The harasser does not have to be the victim's supervisor. He/she may also be an agent of the employer, a supervisory employee who does not supervise the victim, a non-supervisory employee (co-worker), or in some circumstances even a non-employee (student, parent).
- C. The victim may be the same or opposite sex as the harasser.
- D. The victim does not have to be the person at 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 of humor or sexual harassment of one female/male employee may create an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or educational environment for another female/male or may unreasonably interfere with an individual's work or educational performance.

- E. Sexual harassment does not depend on the victim's having suffered a concrete economic injury as a result of the harasser's conduct. For example, improper sexual advances which do not result in the loss of a promotion by the victim or the discharge of the victim may, nonetheless, constitute sexual harassment when they unreasonably interfere with the victim's work or education or unreasonably create a harmful or offensive work or educational environment.

The Grievance Officers:

Chief Human Resource Officer
(508) 799-3020
20 Irving Street
Worcester, MA 01609

Instructional Support Personnel Director
(508) 799-3027
20 Irving Street
Worcester, MA 01609

The committee will annually appoint sexual harassment grievance officers who will be vested with the authority and responsibility of processing all sexual harassment complaints in accordance with the procedure set out below:

Complaint Procedure:

1. Any member of the school community who believes that he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment will report the incident (s) to one of the grievance officers. All complaints shall be investigated promptly and resolved as soon as possible.
2. The grievance officer will attempt to resolve the problem in an informal manner through the following process:
 - a. The grievance officer will confer with the charging party in order to obtain a clear understanding of that party's statement of the facts, and may interview any witnesses.
 - b. The grievance officer will then attempt to meet with the charged party in order to obtain his/her response to the complaint.
 - c. The grievance officer will hold as many meetings with the parties as is necessary to establish the facts.
 - d. On the basis of the grievance officer's perception of the situation he/she may:
 - Attempt to resolve the matter informally through reconciliation.
 - Report the incident and transfer the record to the Superintendent or his/her designee, and so notify the parties by certified mail.
3. After reviewing the record made by the grievance officer, the Superintendent or designee may attempt to gather any more evidence necessary to decide the case, and thereafter impose any sanctions deemed appropriate, including a recommendation to the committee for termination or expulsion. At this stage of the proceedings, the parties may present witnesses and other evidence, and may also be represented. The parties, to the extent permissible by law, shall be informed of the disposition of the complaint. All matters involving sexual harassment complaints will remain confidential to the extent possible. If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct.

State and Federal Remedies

Nothing in this policy or procedure shall be deemed to affect a complainant's right to pursue other remedies at law, including administrative appeals or lawsuits. Administrative agencies with jurisdiction in these matters include:

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination ("MCAD")
One Ashburton Place, Room 601
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 727-3990

The U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights
5 Post Office Square 8th Floor
Boston, MA 02109-3921
(617) 289-0111

Massachusetts Department of Education
75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148
(781) 388-3300

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC")
One Congress Street - 10th Floor
Boston, MA 02114
(617) 565-3200

LEGAL REFS.: Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended 45
Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission
Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq. (Title IX)
Board of Education 603 CMR 26:00

SOURCE: WPS

NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF DISABILITY

Title II of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1992 requires that no qualified individual with a disability shall, because the District's facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by individuals with disabilities, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, and activities of the District or be subject to discrimination. Nor shall the District exclude or otherwise deny services, programs, or activities to an individual because of the known disability of a person with whom the individual is known to have a relationship or association.

Definition: A "qualified individual with a disability" is an individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable modification to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by the District.

Reasonable Modification: The District shall make reasonable modification in policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the District can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program or activity.

Communications: The District shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that communications with applicants, participants and members of the public with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. To this end, the District shall furnish appropriate auxiliary aids and services where necessary to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy benefits of, a service, program, or activity conducted by the District. In determining what type of auxiliary aid or service is necessary, the District shall give primary consideration to the requests of the individuals with disabilities.

Auxiliary Aids and Services: "Auxiliary aids and services" includes (1) qualified interpreters, note takers, transcription services, written materials, assisted listening systems, and other effective methods for making aurally delivered materials available to individuals with hearing impairments; (2) qualified readers, taped texts, audio recordings, Braille materials, large print materials, or other effective methods for making visually delivered materials available to individuals with visual impairments; (3) acquisition or modification of equipment or devices and (4) other similar services and actions.

Limits of Required Modification: The District is not required to take any action that it can demonstrate would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a service, program, or activity or in undue financial and administrative burdens. Any decision that, in compliance with its responsibility to provide effective communication for individuals with disabilities, would fundamentally alter the service, program, or activity or unduly burden the District shall be made by the School Committee after considering all resources available for use in funding and operating the program, service, or activity. A written statement of the reasons for reaching that conclusion shall accompany the decision.

Notice: The District shall make available to applicants, participants, beneficiaries, and other interested persons information regarding the provisions of Title II of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and its applicability to the services, programs, or activities of the District. The information shall be made available in such a manner as the School Committee and Superintendent find necessary to apprise such persons of the protections against discrimination assured them by the ADA.

Compliance Coordinator: The District shall designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title II of ADA, including any investigation of any complaint communicated to it alleging its noncompliance or alleging any actions that would be prohibited under ADA. The District shall make available to all interested individuals the name, office address, and telephone number of the employee(s) so designated and shall adopt and publish procedures for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited under the ADA. The school system receives federal financial assistance and must comply with the above requirements. Additionally, the School Committee is of the general view that:

1. Discrimination against a qualified disabled person solely on the basis of disability is unfair; and
2. To the extent possible, qualified disabled persons should be in the mainstream of life in the school community. Accordingly, employees of the school system will comply with the above requirements of the law and policy statements of this Committee to ensure nondiscrimination on the basis of disability.

LEGAL REFS.: Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, as amended
 Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975
 M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)
 Title II, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992, as amended
 Board of Education Chapter 766 Regulations, adopted 10/74, as amended
 through 3/28/78

CROSS REFS.: IGB, Support Services Programs

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY/SCHOOL DISTRICT MISSION

The Worcester Public Schools provides learners with a quality education in a safe and healthy environment. We believe that all students can achieve at high levels as they prepare to become productive citizens in our changing technological world. We are committed to supporting students, parents, educators and citizens in their pursuit of learning.

SOURCE: WPS

SMOKING ON SCHOOL PREMISES

Use of any tobacco products, including, but not limited to: cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco, snuff, electronic cigarettes, electronic cigars, electronic pipes or other similar products that rely on vaporization or aerosolization, within the school buildings, school facilities, on school grounds or school buses, or at school sponsored events by any individual, including school personnel and students is prohibited at all times.

A staff member determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

A student determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the student discipline code.

This policy shall be promulgated to all staff and students in appropriate handbook(s) and publications.

Signs shall be posted in all school buildings informing the general public of the District policy and requirements of state law.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37H; 270-6

CORI REQUIREMENTS

It shall be the policy of the Worcester Public Schools to obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) and Sexual Offender Registry Information (SORI) from the criminal history systems board of prospective employee(s) or volunteer(s) of the school department including any individual who regularly provides school related transportation to children, who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, prior to hiring the employee(s) or to accepting any person as a volunteer. State law requires that school districts obtain CORI/SORI data for employees of taxicab companies that have contracted with the schools to provide transportation to pupils.

The Superintendent, Principal or their certified designees shall periodically, but not less than every three years, obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information from the criminal history systems board on all employees, individuals who regularly provide school related transportation to children, including taxicab company employees, and volunteers who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, during their term of employment or volunteer service.

The Superintendent, Principal or their certified designees may also have access to Criminal Offender Record Information for any subcontractor or laborer who performs work on school grounds, and who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, and shall notify them of this requirement and comply with the appropriate provisions of this policy.

Pursuant to a Department of Education CORI Law Advisory dated February 17, 2003, "Direct and unmonitored contact with children means contact with a child when no other CORI cleared employee of the school or district is present. A person having only the potential for incidental unsupervised contact with children in commonly used areas of the school grounds, such as hallways, shall not be considered to have the potential for direct and unmonitored contact with children. These excluded areas do not include bathrooms and other isolated areas (not commonly utilized and separated by sight or sound from other staff) that are accessible to students."

In accordance with state law, all current and prospective employees, volunteers, and persons regularly providing school related transportation to children of the school district shall sign a request form authorizing receipt by the district of all available CORI data from the criminal history systems board. In the event that a current employee has questions concerning the signing of the request form, he/she may meet with the Principal or Superintendent; however, failure to sign the CORI request form may result in a referral to local counsel for appropriate action. Completed request forms must be kept in secure files. The School Committee, Superintendent, Principals or their designees certified to obtain information under this policy, shall prohibit the dissemination of school information for any purpose other than to further the protection of school children.

CORI is not subject to the public records law and must be kept in a secure location, separate from personnel files and may be retained for not more than three years. CORI may be shared with the individual to whom it pertains, upon his or her request, and in the event of an inaccurate report the individual should contact the criminal history systems board.

Access to CORI material must be restricted to those individuals certified to receive such information. In the case of prospective employees or volunteers, CORI material should be obtained only where the Superintendent has determined that the applicant is qualified and may forthwith be recommended for employment or volunteer duties.

The hiring authority, subject to applicable law, reserves the exclusive right concerning any employment decision made pursuant to Chapter 385 of the Acts of 2002. The employer may consider the following factors when reviewing CORI: the type and nature of the offense; the date of the offense and whether the individual has been subsequently arrested, as well as any other factors the employer deems relevant. Unless otherwise provided by law, a criminal record will not automatically disqualify an applicant. Rather, determinations of suitability based on CORI checks will be made consistent with this policy and any applicable law or regulations.

If a criminal record is received from the Criminal History Systems Board (CHSB), the Superintendent will closely compare the record provided by CHSB with the information on the CORI request form and any other identifying information provided by the applicant, to ensure the record relates to the applicant.

If the district is inclined to make an adverse decision based on the results of the CORI check, the applicant will be notified immediately. The applicant shall be provided with a copy of the criminal record and the district's CORI policy, advised of the part(s) of the record that make the individual unsuitable for the position or license, and given an opportunity to dispute the accuracy and relevance of the CORI record.

The Superintendent shall ensure that on the application for employment and/or volunteer form there shall be a statement that as a condition of employment or volunteer service the school district is required by law to obtain Criminal Offender Record Information for any employee, individual who regularly provides school related transportation, or volunteer who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. Current employees, persons regularly providing school related transportation, and volunteers shall also be informed in writing by the Superintendent prior to the periodic obtaining of their Criminal Offender Record Information.

The Superintendent shall amend employment applications to include questions concerning criminal records (see ADDA-E-2) which the Massachusetts Commission against Discrimination has determined may be legally asked of prospective employees. Any employment application which seeks information concerning prior arrests or convictions of the applicant shall include the following statement: "An applicant for employment with a sealed record on file with the commissioner of probation may answer 'no record' with respect to an inquiry herein relative to prior arrests, criminal court appearances or convictions. An applicant for employment with a sealed record on file with the commissioner of probation may answer 'no record' to an inquiry herein relative to prior arrests or criminal court appearances. In addition, any applicant for employment may answer 'no record' with respect to any inquiry relative to prior arrests, court appearances and adjudications in all cases of delinquency or as a child in need of service which did not result in a complaint transferred to the superior court for criminal prosecution."

Records sealed pursuant to law shall not operate to disqualify a person in any examination, appointment or application for public service on behalf of the Commonwealth or any political subdivision thereof.

The Superintendent shall revise contracts with special education schools and other providers to require a signed statement that the provider has met all the legal requirements of the state where it is located relative to criminal background checks for employees and others having direct and unmonitored contact with children.

As soon as possible after the district obtains the certification from the criminal history systems board to receive CORI data, the Superintendent shall obtain such data for any person then providing volunteer service, as a condition of continued service.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L.71:38R, 151B, 276, §.100A, St.2002, c.385
MCAD Regulations and D.O.E. Advisory on CORI Law (Feb 17, 2003) 803
CMR 3.05 (Chapter 149 of the Acts of 2004)

CROSS REFS: ADDA-R, CORI Requirements
ADDA-E-1, Information Concerning the Process in Correcting a Criminal Record
ADDA-E-2, CORI Requirements

SCHOOL DISTRICT WELLNESS PROGRAM

The School Committee recognizes the relationship between student well-being and student achievement as well as the importance of a comprehensive district wellness program. Therefore, the school district will provide developmentally appropriate and sequential nutrition and physical education as well as opportunities for physical activity. The wellness program will be implemented in a multidisciplinary fashion and will be evidence based.

Wellness Committee

The school district will establish a wellness committee that consists of at least one (1) parent, student, nurse, school food service representative, School Committee member, school administrator, member of the public, and other community members as appropriate. If available, a qualified, credentialed nutrition professional will be a member of the wellness committee. Only employees of the district who are members of the wellness committee may serve as wellness program coordinators. Wellness coordinators, in consultation with the wellness committee, will be in charge of implementation and evaluation of this policy.

Nutrition Guidelines

It is the policy of the school district that all foods and beverages made available on campus during the school day are consistent with School Lunch Program nutrition guidelines. Guidelines for reimbursable school meals will not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to law. The district will create procedures that address all foods available to students throughout the school day in the following areas:

- guidelines for maximizing nutritional value by decreasing fat and added sugars, increasing nutrition density and moderating portion size of each individual food or beverage sold within the school environment;
- separate guidelines for foods and beverages in the following categories:
 1. foods and beverages included in a la carte sales in the food service program on school campuses;
 2. foods and beverages sold in vending machines, snack bars, school stores, and concession stands;
 3. foods and beverages sold as part of school-sponsored fundraising activities; and
 4. refreshments served at parties, celebrations, and meetings during the school day; and
 5. specify that its guidelines will be based on nutrition goals, not profit motives.

Nutrition and Physical Education

The school district will provide nutrition education aligned with standards established by the USDA's National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program in all grades. The school district will provide physical education training aligned with the standards established by the Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education. The wellness program coordinators, in consultation with the wellness committee, will develop procedures that address nutrition and physical education.

Nutrition Education

The following list contains examples of goals your school district may want to consider for inclusion in its policy. Each school district must determine its own goals and include them in its policy.

- Students receive nutrition education that teaches the skills they need to adopt and maintain healthy eating behaviors.
- Nutrition education is offered in the school cafeteria as well as in the classroom, with coordination between the foodservice staff and other school personnel, including teachers.
- Students receive consistent nutrition messages from all aspects of the school program.
- Division health education curriculum standards and guidelines address both nutrition and physical education.
- Nutrition is integrated into the health education or core curricula (e.g., math, science, language arts).
- Schools link nutrition education activities with the coordinated school health program.
- Staff who provide nutrition education have appropriate training.
- The level of student participation in the school breakfast and school lunch programs is appropriate.

Physical Education Activities

The following list contains examples of goals your school district may want to consider for inclusion in its policy. Each school district must determine its own goals and include them in its policy.

- Students are given opportunities for physical activity during the school day through physical education (PE) classes, daily recess periods for elementary school students, and the integration of physical activity into the academic curriculum where appropriate.
- 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.
- Schools work with the community to create ways for students to walk, bike, rollerblade or skateboard safely to and from school.
- Schools encourage parents and guardians to support their children's participation in physical activity, to be physically active role models, and to include physical activity in family events.
- Schools provide training to enable staff to promote enjoyable, lifelong physical activity among students.

Other School-Based Activities

The wellness program coordinators, in consultation with the wellness committee, are charged with developing procedures addressing other school-based activities to promote wellness.

The following list contains examples of goals your school district may want to consider for inclusion in its policy. Each school district must determine its own goals and include them in its policy.

- An adequate amount of time is allowed for students to eat meals in adequate lunchroom facilities.
- All children who participate in subsidized food programs are able to obtain food in a non-stigmatizing manner.
- Environmentally-friendly practices such as the use of locally grown and seasonal foods, school gardens, and non-disposable tableware have been considered and implemented where appropriate.
- Physical activities and/or nutrition services or programs designed to benefit staff health have been considered and, to the extent practical, implemented.

Evaluation

The wellness committee will assess all education curricula and materials pertaining to wellness for accuracy, completeness, balance and consistency with the state and district's educational goals and standards. Wellness program coordinators shall be responsible for devising a plan for implementation and evaluation of the district wellness policy and are charged with operational responsibility for ensuring that schools meet the goals of the district wellness policy. Wellness program coordinators will report to the School Committee annually.

ADOPTED: April 20, 2006

LEGAL REFS.: The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, Section 204,
P.L. 108 -265
The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 1751 - 1769h
The Child Nutrition Act of 1966, 42 U.S.C. §§ 1771 - 1789

CROSS REFS.: EFC, Free and Reduced-Cost Food Services
IHAMA, Teaching About Alcohol, Tobacco and Drugs
KI, Public Solicitations/Advertising in District Facilities

SOURCE: WPS

COMMITMENT TO ACCOMPLISHMENT

The School Committee accepts ultimate responsibility for all facets of school operations. Because it is accountable to residents of the District, the School Committee will maintain a program of accountability consisting of the following elements:

- Clear statements of expectations and purpose as these relate to operations, programs, departments and positions.
- Provisions for the staff, resources and support necessary to achieve stated expectations and purposes, subject to financial support by residents of the District.
- Evaluation of operations and instructional and staff development programs to determine how well expectations and purposes are being met.
- Specific performance objectives to enable individuals to direct their own efforts to the goals and objectives of the District.
- Evaluation of the efforts of employees in line with stated objectives, with the first purpose of evaluation being to help each individual make a maximum contribution to the goals of the District.

Every effort will be made by the School Committee, Superintendent and staff to fulfill the responsibilities inherent in the concept of accountability.

SECTION B - BOARD GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

- BA** SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL GOALS
- BAA** EVALUATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES
- BB** SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGAL STATUS
- BBA** SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES
- BBA - E** SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES
- BBAA** SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER AUTHORITY
- BBBA** SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS/
- BBBA-E** SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS/OATH OF OFFICE/VACANCIES
- BBBC** SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER RESIGNATION
- BBBE** UNEXPIRED TERM FULFILLMENT
- BCA** SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ETHICS
- BCB** CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS
- BDA** ORGANIZATION – MAYOR, VICE CHAIR
- BDB** SCHOOL COMMITTEE OFFICERS
- BDC** APPOINTED COMMITTEE OFFICIALS
- BDD** SCHOOL COMMITTEE-SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIP
- BDE** STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
- BDF** ADVISORY COMMITTEES TO THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
- BDFA** SCHOOL COUNCILS
- BDFA-E-1** CONDUCT OF SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL BUSINESS
- BDFA-E-2** SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
- BDFA-E-3** SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL OF THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
- BDG** SCHOOL ATTORNEYS

BE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

BEC EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

BEDA NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

BEDB AGENDA FORMAT

BEDB-E AGENDA FORMAT

BEDD RULES OF ORDER

BEDF VOTING METHOD

BEDG MINUTES

BEDH PUBLIC COMMENT AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

BEE SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING HEARINGS

BG SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY DEVELOPMENT

BGB POLICY ADOPTION

BGC POLICY REVISION AND REVIEW

BGD SCHOOL COMMITTEE REVIEW OF PROCEDURES

BGE POLICY DISSEMINATION

BGF SUSPENSION OF POLICIES

BHC SCHOOL COMMITTEE-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

BHE USE OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGING BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

BIA NEW SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ORIENTATION

BID SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER COMPENSATION

BJ SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL GOALS

The School Committee is responsible to the people for whose benefit the school system has been established. The Committee's current decisions will influence the course of education in our schools for years to come. The Committee and each of its members must look to the future and to the needs of all people more than the average citizen finds necessary. This requires a comprehensive perspective and long-range planning in addition to attention to immediate problems.

The School Committee's primary responsibility is to establish those purposes, programs, and procedures that will best produce the educational achievement needed by our students. The Committee is charged with accomplishing this while also being responsible for wise management of resources available to the school system. The Committee must fulfill these responsibilities by functioning primarily as a legislative body to formulate and adopt policy, by selecting an executive officer to implement policy, and by evaluating the results. It must carry out its functions openly, while seeking the comments of public, students, and staff in its decision-making processes.

In accordance with these principles, the technique will involve:

1. Periodically setting performance objectives for the School Committee itself and evaluating their accomplishment.
2. Allowing the people responsible for carrying out objectives to have a role in setting them.
3. Establish practical and simple goals.
4. Conducting a concrete and periodic review of performance against these goals.

EVALUATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

The School Committee will periodically establish realistic objectives related to Committee procedures and relationships. At the end of a specified length of time, the Committee will measure its performance against the stated objectives.

The following areas of School Committee operations and relationships are representative of those in which objectives may be set and progress appraised:

1. Communication with the public
2. School Committee - Superintendent relationships
3. School Committee member development and performance
4. Policy development
5. Educational leadership
6. Fiscal management
7. School Committee meetings
8. Performance of subcommittees of the School Committee
9. Interagency and governmental relationships

When the Committee has completed its self-evaluation, the members will discuss the results in detail and formulate a new series of objectives. At the same time, the Committee will set an approximate date on which the next evaluation will be conducted.

Implied in the concept of evaluation is an assumption that individuals and Committees are capable of improvement. The School Committee believes that its performance will be improved if evaluation is carried out systematically in accordance with good planning, conscientious follow-through, and careful assessment of results.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGAL STATUS

The School Committee is the governing board of the city's public school system. Although it functions as a duly elected Committee of city government, the School Committee has, unlike other city boards, autonomous and absolute authority within limitations established by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to carry out the educational policies of the state and guide the educational process. According to the Worcester City Charter, the Committee shall consist of the Mayor, who shall chair the committee, and six members elected at-large. School committee members shall be elected for terms of two years each, beginning on the first secular day of January in the year following their election and shall serve until their successors are qualified.

Established by law

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 41:1 and 71:37 specifically, but powers and duties of School Committees are established throughout the General Laws of Massachusetts Relating to School Committees
Worcester City Charter, Article 4, Section 4-1(a + b.)

CROSS REFS.: AA, School District Legal Status
BBA, School Committee Powers and Duties

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES

The School Committee has all the powers conferred upon it by state law and must perform those duties mandated by the state. These include the responsibility and right to determine policies and practices and to implement its directions for the proper education of the children of the community.

The Committee takes a broad view of its functions. It sees them as:

1. **Legislative or policymaking**. The Committee is responsible for the development of policy as guides for administrative action and for employing a Superintendent who will implement its policies.
2. **Appraisal**. The Committee is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of its policies and their implementation.
3. **Provision of financial resources**. The Committee is responsible for adoption of a budget that will enable the school system to carry out the Committee's policies.
4. **Public relations**. The Committee is responsible for providing adequate and direct means for keeping the local citizenry informed about the schools and for keeping itself and the school staff informed about the needs and wishes of the public.
5. **Educational planning and evaluation**. The Committee is responsible for establishing educational goals and policies that will guide the Committee and staff for the administration and continuing improvement of the educational programs provided by the School District.

Powers and Duties

The Superintendent shall be appointed by vote of the Committee and shall directly report to the Committee as provided by law and perform all the duties that are prescribed by law and such other duties, not inconsistent thereto, as a majority of the Committee may direct.

The School Committee shall appoint, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, Assistant/Associate/Deputy Superintendent(s), School Business Administrator, Special Education Administrator, School Physician and School Nurses. Such positions shall not report directly to the School Committee.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:37 specifically, but powers and duties of School Committees are established throughout the Massachusetts General Laws.
Worcester City Charter Sec. 4-1(d)

REF.: BBA-E, School Committee Powers and Duties

CROSS REF.: BB, School Committee Legal Status

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES

1. At all meetings of the School Committee, four (4) members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE CHAIR

2. The School Committee shall consist of the Mayor, who shall be the Chair, and six (6) members. The six (6) members other than the Mayor shall be elected-at-large for terms of two (2) years each by plurality voting. The biennial election shall take place in every odd numbered year.
3. A Vice-Chair shall be chosen at the meeting in January of the year ensuing, from the members of the School Committee by a viva voice vote, each member present answering to his/her name of the person for whom he/she votes. The Clerk or other proper officer shall record every such vote.
4. The seats of the members, with the exception of the Chair, should be numbered and determined by lottery and they may not be changed unless by permission of the Chair.
5. The Mayor shall be Chair of the City Council and Chair of the School Committee. He/she shall have no power to veto but shall have the same powers as any other member of either such body to vote upon all measures coming before it.
6. The Chair shall call the School Committee to order at the time appointed for the meeting and shall preside and cause the records of the last regular meeting and subsequent special meetings to be presented or read, and if they are found correct, the School Committee shall declare them approved. The Clerk of the School Committee shall create and maintain an accurate record of all meetings of the School Committee and all of its committees, including executive sessions, setting forth the date, time and place, the members present or absent and a summary of the discussions on each subject. The record shall include all documents and other exhibits, such as photographs, recordings or maps, used by the School Committee or any committee thereof at any open session or executive session.
7. The Chair shall sign all diplomas awarded in all schools and shall co-sign all contracts entered into and signed by the Worcester School Department.
8. The Vice-Chair shall perform the duties, except the co-signing of contracts, unless authorized by the Mayor, or the Chair in his/her absence and shall sign all diplomas awarded in all schools.
9. No member of the School Committee, including the Chair, shall exercise authority outside of Committee meetings nor exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the schools unless such authority has been specifically delegated to him/her by statute or is consistent with state statutes.
10. The School Committee by its vote or as individual members of the School Committee shall deal with any School Department employee through the Superintendent, its executive officer, who under the general direction of the Committee, is charged with the care and supervision of the public schools. Individual School Committee members may deal with School Department employees, without notice to the Superintendent, concerning day-to-day matters of a routine nature regarding the administration of the school system, as long as such dealings would not cause any disruption in the course of the performance of that employee's duties. In those situations where the definition of "routine" is in question, that issue may be resolved by the Superintendent.

11. The Chair shall have the power to open the session at the time the School Committee is to meet, by taking the Chair, and calling the members to order; to announce the business in the order in which it is to be acted upon; to recognize members entitled to the floor; to state and to put to vote all questions which are regularly moved and to announce the result of the vote; to enforce on all occasions the observance of order and decorum among the members; deciding all questions of order (subject to an appeal to the committee by any member who submits the question to the entire School Committee). The Chair cannot close debate unless by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members of the School Committee present.
12. The Chair shall observe the following procedures in conducting the meetings:
 - a. recognizing members in order of request to be heard
 - b. acting upon the motion on the floor before other motions are entertained
 - c. discouraging argumentative and repetitive discussion
 - d. relinquishing the Chair when desiring to engage in discussion or debate of the agenda item
13. When a question is under debate the Chair shall receive no motion but:
 - to refer
 - to hold to a certain day/indefinitely
 - to allow debate to continue on a motion to hold
 - to amend
 - to move the question
 - to file
 - to adjourn
14. As a matter of protocol, the Chair while presiding at regular School Committee meetings shall be seated between and flanked by the Superintendent and the Clerk of the School Committee.

RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF MEMBERS

15. Every member, when about to speak, shall respectfully address the Chair, and wait until He/she is recognized, shall confine him/herself to the question under debate and avoid personalities, and speak for no more than five (5) minutes except with the consent by majority vote of the School Committee (excluding Committee reports). Discussion on a single subject at a School Committee meeting will be limited to one hour or until each School Committee member who wishes to speak is given an opportunity to do so.
16. No member speaking shall be interrupted by another, but by calling to order for explanation.
17. Motions shall be carefully worded to avoid confusion and more complicated motions shall be written and submitted to the Clerk to insure that all motions are clearly understood.
18. Agenda items filed by School Committee members shall be concise and specific, shall contain no redundant verbiage or opinions or conclusions and should be worded to avoid confusion.
19. Any member present must vote either "Yea", "Nay" or abstain from voting due to a conflict of interest in which case he/she shall state the nature of the conflict under Chapter 268A of the Massachusetts General Laws.
20. Motions requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote and a roll call of the members of the Committee present shall be as follows:

- a. amend, repeal, rescind or annul any part of the By-Laws or Rules of Order (It also requires previous notice.)
 - b. suspend the Rules
 - c. move the question
 - d. rescind previous vote
 - e. limit or extend one's limit of debate
21. Any action voted by the School Committee shall be effective 48 hours after said meeting.
 22. No action of the School Committee shall be reconsidered unless the motion to reconsider is made within forty-eight (48) hours of the date the vote to be reconsidered was taken, excluding legal holidays, Saturdays and Sundays, with the Clerk of the School Committee. The motion for reconsideration can be made during the meeting at which the action to be reconsidered was taken provided that the motion to reconsider is approved by two-thirds of the members of the School Committee who are present. The reason for reconsideration must be included as part of the backup with the caveat that the entire item would be open for discussion.
 23. An item to be reconsidered shall be the first item on the agenda for action at the next regular meeting. The motion cannot be postponed, amended or referred to Committee.
 24. Items to be reconsidered or held concerning personnel or organizational patterns shall be reconsidered or acted upon within two (2) weeks of the date of the vote to be reconsidered or held was to be taken.
 25. No more than one (1) motion for reconsideration of any vote shall be entertained.
 26. No member of the School Committee shall vote on any question or serve on any committee where his/her private interest is immediately concerned or where a conflict of interest exists as defined by state statutes and/or judicial interpretation.

No Mayor or member of the City Council or School Committee and no Officer or employee of the City shall directly or indirectly make a contract with the City, or receive any commission, discount, bonus, gift, contribution, or benefit from, or any share in, the profits of any person making or performing such contract, unless the Mayor, such member, officer or employee, immediately upon learning of the existence of such contract, or that such contract is proposed, shall notify in writing the Mayor, City Council or School Committee of the nature of his/her interest in such contract, and shall abstain from doing any official act on behalf of the City in reference thereto. In case of such interest on the part of an officer whose duty it is to sign such contract on behalf of the City, the contract may be signed by the Vice-Chair or any other officer of the City duly authorized thereto by the Mayor, provided, that when a contractor with the City is a corporation or a voluntary stock association, the ownership of less than five (5) percent of the stock or shares actually issued shall not be considered as involving an interest in the contract within the meaning of this section, and such ownership shall not affect the validity of the contract, unless the owner of such stock or shares, is also an officer or agent of the corporation or association, or solicits or takes part in the making of the contract.

A violation of any provision of this section shall render the contract in respect to which such violation occurs, voidable at the option of the City. A person violating the provisions of this section shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or by imprisonment for not more than one (1) year, or both.

27. All School Committee meetings shall terminate no later than midnight. Items that are still pending action at that time shall be carried forward as the "First Items of Business" at the next regular or special School Committee meeting.
28. When an item is filed by a member of the School Committee and that item is to be referred either to a Standing Committee, Special/Ad-Hoc Committee or the School Administration, debate will be limited to opposition, amendment, clarification or supplementation of a motion except for the member who filed the item who, in addition to the debate, may also introduce the item.
29. The Clerk of the School Committee will e-mail, on the Wednesday prior to each Friday delivery, copies of the items for each agenda with the names of the makers on them. The School Committee members will then complete a form by checking off the items that they wish to co-sponsor and forward it back to the Clerk of the School Committee on or before Noon on the Thursday prior to each Friday delivery.

COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMITTEES

30. All items, petitions or remonstrances addressed to the School Committee shall be filed with the Clerk and presented by the Chair or by a member in his/her place who may explain the subject thereof. No action shall be taken by the School Committee or one of its Committees on any petition unless the principal petitioner of any petition before the School Committee shall be notified that his/her petition is to be heard and/or final action is to be taken by the School Committee. Reports may be referred to the proper Standing Committee for discussion and recommendation before presenting the reports by a Standing Committee to the full School Committee.
31. All Committees shall be appointed by the Chair unless otherwise ordered by the School Committee. Each School Committee member shall serve on no less than two standing committees. The member first named shall be Chair. A majority of each Committee shall constitute a quorum. All reports made by Committees to the School Committee shall be presented by the Standing Committee Chair. No report of business and items voted shall be made to the School Committee unless agreed to in Committee actually assembled and approved by vote of majority of the members of the Standing/Special Committee. Minority reports may be given by members of the Standing Committee as long as the issues raised were discussed in the Standing Committee.
32. There shall be appointed Standing Committees of the School Committee as follows:
 - a. Accountability and Student Achievement
 - b. Finance and Operations
 - c. Governance and Employee Issues
 - d. Teaching, Learning and Student Supports
33. Each Committee shall consist of no less than three (3) School Committee Members.

34. If an item is referred to a Standing Committee and has no action for two consecutive Standing Committee meetings of the Standing Committee, the maker of the original item has the option to request the Clerk of the School Committee to return the item to the full committee.
35. The principal petitioner of any petition to be heard by a Standing Committee of the School Committee must be notified of the date, time and place at which his/her petition is to be heard. No petition may be voted by a Standing Committee of the School Committee unless the principal petitioner has been notified as specified above.

VACANCIES ON APPOINTED COMMITTEES

36. Whenever a vacancy occurs among School Committee Officers, or in any Committee, the same shall be filled by election or appointment in the same manner and by the authority which first elected the officer or appointed the Committee.
37. When an order, resolution, item or petition relates to a subject which may properly be examined and reported upon by a Standing Committee of the School Committee, such order, resolution, item or petition shall upon presentation be referred to such Committee.
38. All petitions, communications, items or any matter before the School Committee may be referred as follows:
 - a. to a Standing Committee of the School Committee
 - b. to a Special Committee of the School Committee
 - c. to the Superintendent/Administration
39. All items referred to Administration for study and recommendation shall include in the item a suggested date for a report back to the full Committee. The length of time allowed for the study shall be determined by its complexity. The Committee shall be aware of the limited time available for study items during budget preparation and hearing months. The direction, scope and intent to the study shall be specific.
40. On occasion, when there are items of interest involving participation by guests, residents and/or non-residents or groups in the audience, items may be brought forward early in the meeting.
41. A petition, resolution, order, communication or other matter acted upon unfavorably by the School Committee including placing on file such petition, order, or other matter or the substance thereof, shall not again be docketed on the School Committee Calendar for consideration by the School Committee within a period of three (3) months of such unfavorable action unless previously authorized by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the School Committee Members present.

MEETINGS

42. Regularly scheduled meetings may be of two (2) kinds: business and/or educational. The meeting may be held for the purpose of reviewing and evaluating the School program, or the development and discussion of policy, and may be held at various schools throughout the City.
43. Special meetings or emergency meetings may be called by the Chair of the Committee, or in his/her absence or disability by the Vice-Chair, by three (3) members collectively, in the event that the Chair fails to act, upon due notice as specified in the By-Laws. Ordinarily no business shall be transacted except that for which the meeting is called. For special meetings, at least forty-eight (48) hours notice must be given in accordance with the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A §§ 18-25.
44. Recessed/adjourned meetings shall serve as a continuation of a regular meeting, and not as a special or called meeting.
45. The minutes of any open session, whether approved or in draft form, shall be made available upon request by any person within ten (10) days of the request to the extent required by subsection 22(e) of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A §§ 18-25.

The minutes of any executive session, the notes, recordings or other materials used in the preparation of such minutes and all documents and exhibits used at the session, shall be withheld from public disclosure to the extent provided by subsection 22(f) of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A §§ 18-25.

The Mayor shall, at reasonable intervals or as otherwise required by subsection 22(g)(2) of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A §§ 18-25, review any previously unreleased minutes of all executive sessions and determine whether continued non-disclosure under the Open Meeting Law is warranted. In conducting this review the Mayor may seek the advice and assistance of the Superintendent, Clerk of the School Committee, the City Manager or City Solicitor. The Mayor shall file a report containing such determinations at the next regular meeting of the School Committee.

46. All meetings of the School Committee shall be open to the public except for executive sessions as described below:

Executive sessions shall be held in accordance with the provisions of the General Laws of Massachusetts, Chapter 30A §§ 18-25.

No executive session shall be held until the School Committee has first convened in open session for which notice has been duly given, a majority of the members have voted to go into executive session, and the vote of each member is recorded on a roll call vote and entered into the minutes, the Chair has cited the purpose for an executive session, and the Chair has stated before the executive session if the School Committee will reconvene after the executive session.

47. Regular meetings of the School Committee shall be held on the first Thursday and the third Thursday of the month and shall convene at 7:00 p.m., at a place so designated on the School Committee Agenda of business, unless by a majority vote, the School Committee determines another day, time and/or place.
48. If a School Committee Meeting is scheduled during a school vacation period, it will be postponed to the following Thursday.
49. During the months of July and August, meetings will be held as follows:

July meeting:	third Thursday in July
August meeting:	Thursday prior to the opening of school
50. The School Committee shall conduct a public hearing relative to the Minority Deisolation Plan at its first meeting in December each year. At the hearing, the School Committee will review the results concerning the implementation of the plan and will make the necessary changes in an effort to maintain the correct minority/majority percent at each school. The School Committee will vote the revised plans for the schools that require changes and any other amendments necessary prior to the opening of school.
51. Individuals shall have an opportunity to be heard at a meeting of the School Committee in regard to any matter considered thereat; the time allowed for each person shall be limited to five (5) minutes unless the Chair, with the approval of the School Committee, suspends the rules.
52. The conduct of meetings of the business of the School Committee shall be in accordance with the laws of the State, and except as otherwise provided in accordance with the rules of parliamentary practice laid down in Robert's Rules of Order.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

53. An item not on the calendar of a special meeting shall not be considered nor acted upon.

ADJOURNED MEETINGS

54. The School Committee may recess/adjourn any regular or recessed/adjourned regular meeting to a time and place specified in the order of recess/adjournment. Less than a quorum may so recess/adjourn from time to time. If all members are absent from any regular or recessed/adjourned regular meeting, the Clerk of the School Committee may declare the meeting recessed/adjourned to a stated time and place, and he/she shall cause a written notice of the recess/adjournment to be given. When a regular or recessed/adjourned regular meeting is recessed/adjourned, the resulting recessed/adjourned regular meeting, is a regular meeting for all purposes.

55. Any hearing being held, or noticed or ordered to be held, by the School Committee at any meeting, may, by order or notice of continuance, be continued or recontinued to any subsequent meeting of the School Committee provided, that if the hearing is continued to a time less than twenty-four (24) hours after the time specified in the order of hearing, notice shall be posted immediately following the meeting at which the order or declaration of continuance was adopted or made.

56. At every regular meeting of the School Committee the order of business shall be as follows:

Call to Order - Statement of Purpose of Meeting
Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance, National Anthem
Roll Call
Approval of Records
Motion for Reconsideration
Immediate Action
Communications and Petitions
Reports of Standing Committees
Personnel
Report of the Superintendent
General Business
Adjournment

57. An agenda of business shall be prepared on the Thursday prior to the meeting and sent or delivered to each Member of the School Committee the following day. All items of whatever description, including Standing Committee reports which may require action by the School Committee, shall be presented to the Clerk no later than 12 noon on the Wednesday in the week preceding the Thursday meeting. Papers or items presented after that hour on such day will not be considered until the next meeting except as follows:

A supplemental agenda may be prepared following the completion of the regular agenda if the item is of an emergency nature which requires the immediate attention of the School Committee and the item must carry an explanation of the emergency addressed. The Clerk shall prepare a list of all matters in the supplemental agenda to come before the School Committee and shall endeavor to deliver to each School Committee member a copy of the same no later than twenty-four (24) hours prior to said meeting; or,

An item not on the calendar of the regular meeting may be brought up during such meeting only with the consent of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the School Committee present and then only for: 1) routine items introduced for referral to any committee or the Superintendent/Administration; or, 2) items introduced for immediate and final action for which time is of the essence.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

58. The citizens and employees of the City shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard regarding any matter presently under consideration by the School Committee. It will be the responsibility of the chair, as guided by the rules established by the School Committee, to determine citizen participation.

59. All petitions filed, by a citizen, with the School Committee will be heard by the School Committee if requested by the petitioner. That individual will be given up to five minutes to address the committee and may not make a presentation on more than one petition at any single School Committee meeting. The petition, unless approved or filed, will then be referred without debate to the proper standing committee, the administration or other appropriate individual or body for investigation, recommendation or disposition except for clarification, amendment, supplementation or opposition by members of the School Committee. The Clerk of the School Committee, in preparation of the school committee agenda, shall note the recommendation on the agenda. Whenever possible, the body or the individual to whom the petition was referred will make every reasonable effort to complete its work on the petition within sixty (60) days.
60. In those instances where the referral of a petition shall, by its referral, cause to render the petition moot, the School Committee shall allow only the primary petitioner the opportunity to address the School Committee. It shall be the duty of the chair to determine such instances subject to the challenge of the School Committee. Consistent with other School Committee rules the time for that presentation shall not exceed five (5) minutes.
- Once a citizen has been given the opportunity to address the School Committee, members of the School Committee will be allowed to speak guided by the rules of the School Committee governing School Committee participation.
61. On any matter being considered for final disposition by the School Committee, any citizen shall have the opportunity to address the School Committee. Consistent with other School Committee rules the time for that presentation shall not exceed five (5) minutes. When speaking, a citizen shall address all his or her remarks to the chair. He or she shall be requested to state his or her name and residential address prior to addressing the issue under consideration.
62. On all matters appearing on the agenda of the School Committee that will be referred to a standing committee or the administration for investigation, recommendations or disposition and which will, at some subsequent time, appear on the agenda of the School Committee for final disposition, debate will be limited to members of the School Committee and the administration.
63. Any individual, except attorneys at law, appearing before the School Committee and claiming to represent another as agent or otherwise in the matter being heard shall file with the School Committee a written authorization signed by the individual, organization or corporation whose interests such individual represents. Said individual will be given the opportunity to address the School Committee consistent with the rules established in this section.
64. No person will be admitted within the rail in the City Council Chamber at any meeting of the School Committee, except upon permission of the Mayor or as voted by the School Committee.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER AUTHORITY

Authority

Because all powers of the School Committee derived from state laws are granted in terms of action as a group, members of the School Committee have authority only when acting as a Committee legally in session.

The School Committee will not be bound in any way by any statement or action on the part of an individual member except when such statement or action is a result of specific instructions of the Committee.

No member of the Committee, by virtue of his/her office, will exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the schools or command the services of any school employee.

The School Committee will function as a body and all policy decisions and other matters, as required by law, will be settled by an official vote of the Committee sitting in formal session.

Duties

The duties and obligations of the individual Committee member may be enumerated as follows:

1. To become familiar with the General Laws of the Commonwealth relating to education and School Committee operations, regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education, policies and procedures of this School Committee and School Department.
2. To keep abreast of new laws and the latest trends in education.
3. To have a general knowledge of the goals, objectives, and programs of the city's public schools.
4. To work effectively with other Committee members without trying either to dominate the Committee or neglect his/her share of the work.
5. To respect the privileged communication that exists in executive sessions by maintaining strict confidentiality on matters discussed in these sessions, except that which becomes part of the public record, once it has been approved for release.
6. To vote and act in Committee impartially for the good of the students.
7. To accept the will of the majority vote in all cases, and to remember that he/she is one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once they are made.
8. To represent the Committee and the schools to the public in a way that promotes interest and support.
9. To refer questions and complaints to the proper school authorities.
10. To comply with the accepted code of ethics for School Committee members.
11. School Committee members, within 1 year after their initial election or appointment, shall complete at least 8 hours of orientation concerning the responsibilities of their office at no cost to individual School Committee members.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS

In order to serve on the School Committee, an individual must be a registered voter in the City of Worcester from which he/she is elected and must take an oath of office as required by law.

On the first secular day in the New Year, all newly elected School Committee members will take the oath of office before an officer duly qualified to administer oaths prior to entering on his/her official duties as a member of the Committee. From the City Clerk, newly qualified Committee members, by law, receive, and sign a receipt for a copy of the Massachusetts open meeting law governing the conduct of Committee meetings in general and executive sessions in particular.

Each new member will present to the Committee clerk official certification of having sworn the oath before an officer duly qualified to administer oaths prior to entering on his/her official duties as a member of the Committee.

From the Municipal Clerk, newly qualified Committee members, by law, receive, and sign a receipt for, a copy of the Massachusetts open meeting law governing the conduct of Committee meetings in general and executive sessions in particular.

Newly qualified Committee members shall, by law, receive and sign a receipt for, within 30 days of taking office, a copy of the Massachusetts Ethics Commission's Summary of the Conflict of Interest laws. As municipal employees, all School Committee members shall receive a copy of said summary annually. All School Committee members shall, within 30 days of taking office, and every 2 years thereafter, complete the Massachusetts Ethics Commission's online training program. Upon completion of the online training program, members shall provide notice of such completion to be retained for 6 years by the Municipal Clerk.

Membership on a School Committee is not limited to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, gender identity sexual orientation, marital status, disability or homelessness.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS/OATH OF OFFICE/VACANCIES

Section 4-1 Composition. Term of Office and Powers.

- (a) Composition - The School Committee shall consist of the Mayor, who shall chair the Committee and six members elected at-large.
- (b) Term of Office - School Committee members shall be elected for terms of two years each, beginning on the first secular day of January in the year following their election and shall serve until their successors are qualified.
- (c) Eligibility - Any voter shall be eligible to hold the office of School Committee member, provided, however, that he/she shall have resided within the City for one year immediately prior to the election.
- (d) Powers and Duties - The School Committee shall have all the powers which are conferred on school committees by general law and such additional powers and duties as may be provided by the charter, by ordinance, or otherwise. Its powers and duties shall include, but shall not be limited to the following:
 - (1) To take general charge of all the public schools in the city, including the evening schools and evening high schools, and all special programs conducted by the school department.
 - (2) To appoint a Superintendent of the Schools who shall be charged with the day to day administration of the school system, subject to policy directives adopted by the school committee. The School Committee may award a contract to the Superintendent of Schools for a term not to exceed six years, in accordance with section 41 of Chapter 71 of the General Laws.

LEGAL REF.: Worcester City Charter, Article Four, Sec. 4-1d

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER RESIGNATION

A current School Committee member who submits a resignation to the appropriate certifying authority terminates School Committee duties at the time of such resignation unless a later time is stated in the resignation.

Should a School Committee member move out of the city in which he or she holds office, that member shall be deemed to have vacated the office.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 41:2; 41:109

UNEXPIRED TERM FULFILLMENT

When a vacancy on the School Committee occurs for any reason, said vacancy shall be filled in descending order of votes received by the candidate for the office of School Committee who received the largest number of votes from the preceding regular municipal election without being elected, provided such person remains eligible and willing to serve. The City Clerk shall certify such candidate to the office to serve for the balance of the then unexpired term.

LEGAL REFS.: Worcester City Charter Article Four, Sec. 4-6 (a)

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER CODE OF ETHICS

Preamble

The acceptance of a code of ethics implies the understanding of the basic organization of School Committees under the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The oath of office of a School Committee member binds the individual member to adherence to those state laws which apply to School Committees, since School Committees are agencies of the state.

This code of ethics delineates three areas of responsibility of School Committee members in addition to that implied above:

1. Community responsibility
2. Responsibility to school administration
3. Relationships to fellow Committee members

A School Committee member in his/her relations with his/her community should:

1. realize that his/her primary responsibility is to the children.
2. recognize that his/her basic function is to be policy making and not administrative.
3. remember that he/she is one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once they are made.
4. be well informed concerning the duties of a Committee member on both a local and state level.
5. remember that he/she represents the entire community at all times.
6. accept the office as a Committee member as means of unselfish service with no intent to "play politics," in any sense of the word, or to benefit personally from his/her Committee activities.

A School Committee member in his/her relations with his/her school administration should:

1. endeavor to establish sound, clearly defined policies which will direct and support the administration.
2. recognize and support the administrative chain of command and refuse to act on complaints as an individual outside the administration.
3. give the chief administrator full responsibility for discharging his/her professional duties and hold him/her responsible for acceptable results.
4. refer all complaints to the administrative staff for solution and only discuss them at Committee meetings if such solutions fail.

A School Committee in his/her relations with his/her fellow Committee members should:

1. recognize that action at official meetings is binding and that he/she alone cannot bind the Committee outside of such meetings.
2. realize that he/she should not make statements or promises of how he/she will vote on matters that will come before the Committee.
3. uphold the intent of Executive Sessions and respect the privileged communications that exist in Executive Sessions.
4. not withhold pertinent information on school matters or personnel problems, either from members of his/her own Committee or from members of other Committees who may be seeking help or information on school problems
5. make decisions only after all facts on a question have been presented and discussed.

LEGAL REF: Code of Ethics adopted by the Delegate Assembly of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, May 22, 1964.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Section 4-3 Conflict of Interest

Except as otherwise authorized by law, no member of the school committee shall, while a member thereof, hold any other office or position in the school department, the salary or compensation for which is payable out the city treasury.

REF: Worcester City Charter, Section 4-3

ORGANIZATION – MAYOR, VICE CHAIR

1. Organization - The School Committee shall organize on the first secular day of January, in accordance with the procedures set forth for the organization of the city council in section. 2-2.
2. Chair - The Mayor shall serve as chair of the School Committee and shall have the same power to vote on every matter coming before the School Committee, as any other member.
3. Vice Chair - Once the School Committee shall have organized and at that meeting, the Committee shall elect one of its members, by majority vote of all the members elected, to serve as vice-chair. The vice-chair shall preside at all meetings of the Committee at which the Mayor is not present.

LEGAL REF.: Worcester City Charter Section 4-2

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Duties of the Chair

The Chair of the School Committee has the same powers as any other member of the Committee to vote upon all measures coming before it, to offer resolutions and to discuss questions. He/she will perform those duties that are consistent with his/her office and those required by law, state regulations, and this Committee. In carrying out these responsibilities, the Chair will:

1. Sign the instruments, acts, and orders necessary to carry out state requirements and the will of the Committee.
2. Consult with the Superintendent in the planning of the Committee's agendas.
3. Confer with the Superintendent on crucial matters that may occur between Committee meetings.
4. Appoint subcommittees
5. Call special meetings of the Committee as found necessary.
6. Be public spokesperson for the Committee at all times except as this responsibility is specifically delegated to others.
7. Be responsible for the orderly conduct of all Committee meetings.

As presiding officer at all meetings of the Committee, the Chair will:

1. Call the meeting to order at the appointed time.
2. Announce the business to come before the Committee in its proper order.
3. Enforce the Committee's policies relating to the order of business and the conduct of meetings.
4. Recognize persons who desire to speak, and protect the speaker who has the floor from disturbance or interference.
5. Explain what the effect of a motion would be if this is not clear to members.
6. Restrict discussion to the question when a motion is before the Committee.
7. Answer all parliamentary inquiries.
8. Put motions to a vote, stating definitely and clearly the vote and result thereof.

Duties of the Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair of the Committee will act in the absence of the chairperson as presiding officer of the Committee and will perform such other duties as may be delegated or assigned to him/her.

Clerk

The clerk will keep accurate Minutes of all Committee meetings; will comply with state law and Committee policy regarding notification of meetings and will render such reports as may be required by the state or the city.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:36
 Worcester City Charter Article 4 Section 4-2(B&C)

Note: The treasurer of the city serves as treasurer of the School Committee.

APPOINTED COMMITTEE OFFICIALS

The Superintendent shall be appointed by vote of the Committee as provided by law and perform all the duties that are prescribed by law and such other duties, not inconsistent thereto, as a majority of the Committee may direct.

Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the School Committee may also establish and appoint the positions of:

- Assistant or Associate Superintendent
- Business Administrator
- Director of Special Education
- Legal Counsel for General Purposes
- Legal Counsel for Collective Bargaining
- School Physician
- Registered Nurse

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. Ch. 71

SCHOOL COMMITTEE-SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIP

The Committee will leave to the Superintendent all matters of decision and administration that come within his/her scope as executive officer or as professional leader of the school system. While the Committee reserves to itself the ultimate decision of all matters concerning general policy or expenditures of funds, it will normally proceed in these areas after receiving recommendations from its executive officer. Further:

1. The Superintendent may seek guidance from the Committee with respect to matters of operation whenever appropriate. If it is necessary to make exceptions to an established policy, he/she will submit the matter to the Committee for advice and direction.
2. The Superintendent will assist the Committee in reaching sound judgments and establishing policies, and will place before the Committee all relevant facts, information, and reports necessary to keep the Committee adequately informed of situations or business at hand.

STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The Chair of the School Committee appoints the chairs, vice chairs, and members of the following subcommittees for a period of two years:

Accountability and Student Achievement
Finance and Operations
Governance and Employee Issues
Teaching, Learning and Student Supports

These subcommittees are created for a specific purpose and to make recommendations for Committee action.

1. The Standing Committee may make recommendations for Committee action, but it may not act for the School Committee.
2. All Standing Committees of the School Committee are subject to the provisions of the Open Meeting Law.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25

REF. Rules of the School Committee of the City of Worcester #32

CROSS REF.: BEC, Executive Sessions

ADVISORY COMMITTEES TO THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The following general policies will govern the appointment and functioning of advisory committees to the School Committee other than the student advisory committee, which is governed by the terms of the Massachusetts General Laws.

1. Advisory/ad hoc committees may be created by the School Committee to serve as task forces for special purposes or to provide continuing consultation in a particular area of activity. However, there will be no standing overall advisory committee to the School Committee.
2. If an advisory/ad hoc committee is required by state or federal law, its composition and appointment will meet all the guidelines established for that particular type of committee.
3. The composition of task forces and any other advisory/ad hoc committees will be broadly representative and take into consideration the specific tasks assigned to the committee. Members of the professional staff may be appointed to the committee as members or consultants, as found desirable.
4. Appointments to such committees will be made by the Chair of the School Committee; appointment of staff members to such committees will be made by the School Committee upon recommendation of the Superintendent.
5. Tenure of committee members will be one year unless the member is reappointed.
6. Each committee will be clearly instructed as to:
 - a. the length of time each member is being asked to serve.
 - b. the assignment the School Committee wished the committee to fulfill and the extent and limitations of its responsibilities.
 - c. the resources the School Committee will provide.
 - d. the approximate dates on which the School Committee wishes to receive major reports.
 - e. School Committee policies governing citizens, committees and the relationship of these committees to the School Committee as a whole, individual School Committee members, the Superintendent, and other members of the professional staff.
 - f. responsibilities for the release of information to the press.
7. Recommendations of committees will be based upon research and fact.
8. The School Committee possesses certain legal powers and prerogatives that cannot be delegated or surrendered to others. Therefore, all recommendations of an advisory committee must be submitted to the School Committee.
9. Advisory committees created under this policy are subject to the provisions of the Open Meeting Law. The chair will have the sole power to dissolve any of its advisory committees and will reserve the right to exercise this power at any time during the life of any committee.

SCHOOL COUNCILS

The School Committee believes that the school is the key unit for educational improvement and change and that successful school improvement is best accomplished through a school-based decision-making process. By involving those directly affected by any action or decision of the school site council in the process of determining that action or decision, it helps to strengthen the commitment to those decisions by those most affected by its implementation.

Under this policy, the Principal shall have primary responsibility for the management of the school. Decisions which are made at the school level must be aligned with the budget, policies, curriculum, and long-range and short-range goals adopted by the School Committee. In addition, decisions must comply with any state and federal laws and regulations and with any negotiated agreements of the school district.

As enacted by the state legislature in the Education Reform Act of 1993, a school site council shall be established in each school to advise the Principal in specific areas of school operation. The Principal, except as specifically defined in the law, shall have the responsibility for defining the composition of and forming the group pursuant to a representative process approved by the Superintendent and School Committee.

The following guidelines define the role of the school site council:

The School Council shall meet regularly with the Principal of the school and shall assist in:

1. Adoption of educational goals for the school that are consistent with state and local policies and standards.
2. Identification of the educational needs of the students attending the school.
3. Review of the school building budget.
4. Formulation of a School Improvement Plan that may be implemented only after review and approval by the Superintendent.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:38Q, 71:59C

CONDUCT OF SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL BUSINESS

The Principal shall, by law, serve as co-chair of the school site council. The second co-chair will be elected annually by the council members at its first meeting of the school year subsequent to the elections of new council members. The co-chairs will be responsible for the preparation of the agenda for the council meetings.

The school site council shall meet at least once monthly during the school year. Meetings will be held outside of school hours. At its first meeting of the school year, the council will set its calendar of regular meetings for the year. Where circumstances warrant, the council may choose to call additional meetings.

School site councils shall use consensus as the primary method to resolve issues and to formulate recommendations. Votes by majority may be taken at the discretion of the Principal and Robert's Rules of Order shall prevail if there are questions of procedure.

All meetings of the school site council shall conform to the Open Meeting Law, Chapter 30A, Section 18-25, which stipulate that all meetings be open to the public, that meetings be posted at least 48 hours in advance, and that minutes of the meeting shall be maintained as required. The scope of the school site council does not require, and therefore does not qualify for, executive session.

The Superintendent shall receive agendas and minutes of all school site council meetings. The Superintendent shall provide copies of these materials to members of the School Committee upon request.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Principal, in conjunction with the school site council, shall be responsible for preparing a written school improvement plan annually. This plan shall be written with the advice of the school site council and submitted for approval to the Superintendent and review of the School Committee. The plan should be drafted with the following in mind:

1. The educational goals for the school consistent with the goals and standards, including student performance standards, as adopted by the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and by the School Committee.
2. An assessment of the needs of the school in light of the proposed educational goals
3. The means to address student performance
4. Professional development for the school's professional staff
5. The enhancement of parental involvement in the life of the school, safety, and discipline
6. The development of means for meeting the diverse learning needs of every child
7. Any further subjects as the Principal, in consultation with the school site council, shall consider appropriate, except that:
 - a. The council shall have no authority over matters that are subject to Chapter 150E, the collective bargaining law, and
 - b. The council may not expand the scope of its authority beyond that established in law or expressly granted by School Committee policy.

SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL OF THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The written School Improvement Plan shall be submitted by the Principal to the Superintendent for approval and the School Committee for review no later than July 1 of the year in which the plan is to be implemented.

Because the implementation of the plan is dependent on Superintendent approval, it is important that the school site council be aware of certain expectations regarding the School Improvement Plan. The school improvement plan should:

1. focus on improvement of student learning
2. specify expected student outcomes and measurable/observable results
3. align with the mission of the school district and any goals and policies of the school district
4. be consistent with state and federal law, School District policy, established curriculum and negotiated agreements
5. clearly identify actions to be taken on how changes will be implemented
6. include a plan on how to solicit community support for the changes being developed
7. indicate anticipated costs and available funding sources
8. delineate the method of evaluating and reporting progress and results

If the School Improvement Plan is not approved by the Superintendent, it shall be returned to the Principal with specific comments as to the reason(s). The Principal shall revise the plan in cooperation with the school site council, and resubmit it for approval. If the Superintendent does not review the School Improvement Plan within 30 days of its receipt, the plan shall be deemed to have been approved.

SCHOOL ATTORNEYS

The School Committee may use the services provided by the city solicitor, and/or outside legal counsel.

It will be the duty of the counsel for the Committee to advise the School Committee and the Superintendent on the specific legal problems submitted to him/her. He/she will attend meetings upon request and will be sufficiently familiar with Committee policies, practices, and actions under these policies, and with requirements of the school law to enable him/her to offer the necessary legal advice.

A decision to seek legal advice or assistance on behalf of the school system will be made by the Committee. The Superintendent may also take such action at the direction of the Committee.

Many types of legal assistance are routine and do not require specific Committee approval or prior notice. However, when the Superintendent concludes that unusual types or amounts of professional legal service may be required, he/she will advise the Committee and seek either initial or continuing authorization for such service.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37E; 71:37F
 Worcester City Charter

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The School Committee will transact all business at official meetings of the Committee. These may be either regular or special meetings, defined as follows:

1. **Regular meeting**: the usual official legal action meeting, held regularly
2. **Special meeting**: an official legal action meeting called between scheduled regular meetings to consider specific topics.

Every meeting of the School Committee, regular or special, will be open to the public unless an Executive Session is held in accordance with state law.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25

REF.: Rules of the School Committee of the City of Worcester #42

CROSS REFS.: BDE, Standing Committees of the School Committee
BEC, Executive Sessions
BEDA, Notification of School Committee Meetings

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

All meetings of the School Committee are open to attendance by the public and media representatives. However, the Committee has the right to convene in a closed executive session when it meets the following procedural conditions imposed by state law:

1. The Committee will first convene in an open session for which due notice has been given.
2. The Chairperson (or, in his/her absence, the presiding member) will state the purpose for the executive session by stating all subjects that may be revealed without compromising the purpose for which the executive session was called.
3. A majority of the members must vote to enter the executive session, with the vote taken by roll call and recorded in the official minutes.
4. The Chairperson or presiding member will state before entering the executive session whether the Committee will reconvene in open session after the executive session.

The law puts specific limitations on the purposes for which executive sessions may be convened. The Committee may enter executive sessions only to deliberate:

1. the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than the professional competence, of a single individual, or the discipline or dismissal, including the hearing of charges against, a member of the committee, a school department employee or student, or other individual. The individual has certain rights enumerated in the law including requiring the Committee to hold an open session should the individual so request.
2. strategy with respect to non-union negotiations or to conduct collective bargaining sessions with non-union personnel
3. strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation, if an open meeting might have a detrimental effect. Collective bargaining may also be conducted
4. the deployment of security personnel or devices
5. allegations of criminal misconduct or to discuss the filing of criminal complaints
6. transactions of real estate, if an open meeting might be detrimental to the negotiating position of the committee or another party
7. to comply with the provisions of any general or specific law of federal grant-in-aid requirements
8. and to consider and interview applicants for employment by a preliminary screening committee (The only position that the School Committee would be involved in that might qualify would be for the position of Superintendent). This exemption only applies if it can be determined that an open meeting will have a detrimental effect in obtaining qualified applicants. This shall not apply to applicants who have passed a prior preliminary screening.
9. to meet or confer with a mediator with respect to any litigation or public business

10. To discuss trade secrets or confidential competitively-sensitive or other proprietary information conducted by a governmental body as an energy supplier.

Accurate records of the proceedings conducted in Executive Session will be kept and may remain secret only so long as their publication would defeat the purpose of the session.

The School Committee Chair and the Superintendent will review Executive Session minutes for possible declassification on, at least, a quarterly basis and, if necessary, will consult with legal counsel. The School Committee Chair will bring minutes recommended for declassification to the School Committee for a vote either as part of a consent agenda or for individual action. In either case, there shall be an announcement of the declassification of minutes.

When a specific set of Executive Session minutes, not yet declassified, is requested by a member of the public, the School Committee shall render a decision on declassification at its next meeting or within 30 days after the request, whichever occurs first.

All votes taken in Executive Session will be recorded roll call votes, and will become part of the minutes of executive sessions.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:21; 30A:22

CROSS REFS.: BDE, Standing Committees of the School Committee
BE, School Committee Meetings
KE, Public Complaints about School Personnel

NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

As required by law, a minimum of 48 hours' advance notice (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays) will be given for any meeting of the School Committee, including all Standing Committee meetings. The only exception permitted is in case of emergency, which the law defines as "a sudden, generally unexpected occurrence or set of circumstances demanding immediate action."

Notification of the dates, times, and places of regular meetings may be accomplished by periodic publication of the schedule for the ensuing months. However, a minimum of 48 hours prior to each meeting the Committee shall cause to be posted a listing of each subject the Chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting (the agenda). Notification of a change in a regular meeting time, place, or agenda and notification, including agenda, of a special meeting will be filed with the city clerk at least 48 hours in advance, as required by law.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25

CROSS REF.: BE, School Committee Meetings

AGENDA FORMAT

The agenda format shall be in full compliance with policy BBA-E, Paragraph 56.

The Committee will follow the order of business established by the agenda except as it votes to rearrange the order for the convenience of visitors, individuals appearing before the Committee, or to expedite Committee business.

Any School Committee member, staff member, or citizen may suggest items of business. A staff member who wishes to have a topic scheduled on the agenda should submit the request through the Superintendent.

The agenda, together with supporting materials, will be distributed to School Committee members the Friday prior to each meeting or for additional materials or items, 48 hours prior to the meeting, to permit adequate time to prepare for the meeting.

Agendas will be posted and made available to the press.

BEDB-E - AGENDA FORMAT

At regular meetings, the following will be the customary order of business:

1. Call to order
2. Roll call
3. Approval of records
4. Motion for reconsideration
5. Immediate action
6. Report of the Superintendent
7. Communication and petition
8. Reports of the Standing Committees
9. Personnel
10. General business
11. Adjournment

RULES OF ORDER

The School Committee has an approved set of rules that govern the proceedings of the meetings.

If a ruling is needed on a topic being discussed which is not covered under the School Committee's rules, Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised will govern the proceedings.

In accordance with Robert's Rules, the Committee may suspend parliamentary rules of order by a two-thirds vote.

CROSS REF: BBA-E, Rules of the School Committee of the City of Worcester

VOTING METHOD

Open Meeting

Votes of the School Committee will be taken by voice vote or roll call and shall be recorded in the minutes. No vote taken at an open session shall be by secret ballot.

All actions will require a majority vote of all members present and voting except as state law, Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, or Rules of the School Committee require a larger majority. A majority of the members of the School Committee will constitute a quorum.

Motions requiring a two-thirds (2/3) vote and a roll call of the members of the Committee present shall be as follows:

- a. amend, repeal, rescind or annul any part of the By-Laws or Rules of Order (It also requires previous notice.)
- b. suspend the Rules
- c. move the question
- d. rescind previous vote
- e. limit or extend one's limit of debate

Executive Session

A majority of the members of the School Committee must vote to enter into Executive Session, with the vote taken by roll call and recorded in the official minutes.

All votes taken in Executive Session will be recorded roll call votes, and will become part of the minutes of Executive Sessions. Any votes taken to ratify employment contracts or collective bargaining agreements shall be taken in open session.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25;

REF: BBA-E Rules of the School Committee of the City of Worcester

MINUTES

The minutes of a School Committee meeting constitute the written record of Committee actions; they are legal evidence of what the action was. Therefore, the Clerk of the School Committee will be responsible for reporting in the minutes all actions taken by the Committee.

Minutes will include:

1. a statement on the nature of the meeting (regular or special), indicating the time and the place.
2. names of the members present or absent, indicating arrival and departure times.
3. a complete record of official actions taken by the Committee relative to the Superintendent's recommendations, communications, and all business transacted. Motions and votes will be recorded in their exact wording, accompanied by the names of members moving and seconding them. Reports and documents related to a formal motion may be referred to by subject and date.
4. notation of formal adjournment.

Copies of the minutes will be sent to all Committee members at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting at which the minutes are to be approved.

The approved minutes will become permanent records of the Committee. Minutes of public meetings and minutes of Executive Sessions, that have been declassified, will be in the custody of the Clerk of the School Committee who will make them available to interested citizens upon request.

Specific comments and/or discussion should only be included in the minutes as a result of a vote of the Committee. The minutes are not a transcript of the meeting. Audio and/or videotapes of meetings may serve the purpose of preserving a record of discussions. They do not, however, have to be reflected in the minutes.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:22; 66:10

CROSS REF.: KDB, Public's Right to Know

PUBLIC COMMENT AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

All regular and special meetings of the School Committee shall be open to the public. Executive Sessions will be held only as prescribed by the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The School Committee desires citizens of the District to attend its meetings so that they may become better acquainted with the operations and the programs of our local public schools. In addition, the Committee would like the opportunity to hear the wishes and ideas of the public.

In order that all citizens who wish to be heard before the Committee have a chance and to ensure the ability of the Committee to conduct the District's business in an orderly manner, the following rules and procedures are adopted:

1. The citizens and employees of the City shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard regarding any matter presently under consideration by the School Committee. It will be the responsibility of the chair, as guided by the rules established by the School Committee, to determine citizen participation.
2. All petitions filed by a citizen, with the School Committee will be heard by the School Committee if requested by the petitioner. That individual will be given up to five minutes to address the committee and may not make a presentation on more than one petition at any single School Committee meeting. The petition, unless approved or filed, will then be referred without debate to the proper standing committee, the administration or other appropriate individual or body for investigation, recommendation or disposition except for clarification, amendment, supplementation or opposition by members of the School Committee. The Clerk of the School Committee, in preparation of the school committee agenda, shall note the recommendation on the agenda. Whenever possible, the body or the individual to whom the petition was referred will make every reasonable effort to complete its work on the petition within sixty (60) days.
3. In those instances where the referral of a petition shall, by its referral, cause to render the petition moot, the School Committee shall allow only the primary petitioner the opportunity to address the School Committee. It shall be the duty of the chair to determine such instances subject to the challenge of the School Committee. Consistent with other School Committee rules the time for that presentation shall not exceed five (5) minutes.

Once a citizen has been given the opportunity to address the School Committee, members of the School Committee will be allowed to speak guided by the rules of the School Committee governing School Committee participation.

4. On any matter being considered for final disposition by the School Committee, any citizen shall have the opportunity to address the School Committee. Consistent with other School Committee rules the time for that presentation shall not exceed five (5) minutes. When speaking, a citizen shall address all his or her remarks to the chair. He or she shall be requested to state his or her name and residential address prior to addressing the issue under consideration.
5. On all matters appearing on the agenda of the School Committee that will be referred to a standing committee or the administration for investigation, recommendations or disposition and which will, at some subsequent time, appear on the agenda of the School Committee for final disposition, debate will be limited to members of the School Committee and the administration.

6. Any individual, except attorneys at law, appearing before the School Committee and claiming to represent another as agent or otherwise in the matter being heard shall file with the School Committee a written authorization signed by the individual, organization or corporation whose interests such individual represents. Said individual will be given the opportunity to address the School Committee consistent with the rules established in this section.

7. No person will be admitted within the rail in the City Council Chamber at any meeting of the School Committee, except upon permission of the Mayor or as voted by the School Committee.

REF: Rules of the School Committee of the Worcester School Committee

CROSS REF: BBA-E

SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING HEARINGS

In conducting all public hearings required by law, and others, as it deems advisable, the School Committee will:

1. give due and public notice in line with statutory requirements and seek to publicize the meeting in all local media.
2. make available printed information on the topic of the hearing.
3. give all persons an equal opportunity to be heard in accordance with the Committee's policy.

The Chair of the Committee will preside at the hearing.

The public will be informed at the beginning of the hearing of the particular procedure that will be followed in regard to questions, remarks, rebuttals, and anytime limitations or other rules that must be followed to give everyone an opportunity to be heard.

In conformance with customary hearing procedures, statements and supporting information will be presented first by the Committee, or by others for the Committee: to comment Citizens must be recognized by the Chair and all remarks must be addressed to the Chair and be germane to the topic. To assure that all who wish get a chance to speak, the Chair will recognize persons who have not commented previously during the hearing before recognizing persons who wish to speak a second time.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The School Committee will develop policies and put them in writing so that they may serve as guides for the discretionary action of those to whom it delegates authority.

The formulation and adoption of these written policies will constitute the basic method by which the School Committee will exercise its leadership in providing for the successful and efficient functioning of the school system. Through the study and evaluation of reports concerning the execution of its policies, the School Committee will exercise its control over school operation.

The School Committee accepts the definition of policy set forth by the National School Boards Association:

Policies are principles adopted by a School Committee to chart a course of action. They tell what is wanted; they may include why and how much. Policies should be broad enough to indicate a line of action to be followed by the administration in meeting day-to-day problems, yet be specific enough to give clear guidance.

The policies of the School Committee are framed, and are meant to be interpreted in terms of state law, regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education, and other regulatory agencies of the various levels of government.

POLICY ADOPTION

Adoption of new policies or changing existing policies is solely the responsibility of the School Committee. Policies will be adopted and/or amended only by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the School Committee when such action has been scheduled on the agenda of a regular or special meeting.

To permit time for study of all policies or amendments to policies and to provide an opportunity for interested parties to react, proposed policies or amendments will be presented as an agenda item to the Committee in the following sequence:

1. Information item - distribution with agenda
2. Discussion item - reading of the proposed policy or policies; response from Superintendent; report from any advisory Committee assigned responsibility in the area; Committee discussion and directions for any redrafting
3. Action item - discussion, adoption or rejection.

Amendments to the policy at the action stage will not require repetition of the sequence, unless the Committee so directs.

The School Committee may dispense with the above sequence to meet emergency conditions.

Policies will be effective upon the date set by the School Committee. This date will ensure that affected persons have an opportunity to become familiar with the requirements of the new policy prior to its implementation.

POLICY REVISION AND REVIEW

In an effort to keep its written policies up to date so that they can be used consistently as a basis for School Committee action and administrative decision, the Committee will review its policies on a regular basis.

The Committee will evaluate how the policies have been executed by the school staff and will weigh the results. It will rely on the school staff, students, and the community for providing evidence of the effect of the policies it has adopted.

The Superintendent is given the continuing commission of calling to the Committee's attention all policies that are out of date or for other reason appear to need revision.

The School Committee directs the Superintendent to periodically recall all policy and regulations manuals for administrative updating and Committee review.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REVIEW OF PROCEDURES

It is expected that the Superintendent and administrative staff will need to issue procedures implementing policies of the School Committee. Many of these will be routine from year to year; others will arise in special circumstances; some will be drawn up under specific directions from the Committee.

The Committee may review the procedures developed by the Superintendent for the school system whenever they appear inconsistent with policy, goals, or objectives of the District, but it will revise or veto such procedures only when, in the Committee's judgment, they are inconsistent with policies adopted by the Committee.

The Committee will not officially approve procedures except as required by state law or in cases when strong community attitudes, or possible student or staff reaction, make it necessary or advisable for a regulation to have the Committee's advance approval.

Rules Pertaining to Staff and Student Conduct

Under Massachusetts law, the Superintendent is required to publish "rules and regulations pertaining to the conduct of teachers and students which have been adopted." Codes of discipline, as well as procedures used to develop such codes, shall be filed with the Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education for information purposes only. Standards of conduct will be included in staff and student handbooks. These handbooks will be reviewed and approved annually by the School Committee.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:37H

POLICY DISSEMINATION

The Superintendent is directed to establish and maintain an orderly plan for preserving and making accessible the policies adopted by the Committee and the regulations needed to put them into effect.

Accessibility is to extend at least to all employees of the school system, to members of the Committee, and, insofar as conveniently possible, to all persons in the community. A policy concerning a particular group or groups in the schools will be distributed to those groups prior to the policy's effective date.

All policy manuals distributed to anyone will remain the property of the Committee and will be considered as "on loan" to anyone, or any organization, in whose possession they might be at any time. They are subject to recall at any time deemed necessary for purposes of updating.

The School Committee's official policy manual will be considered a public record and will be available for inspection at the School Committee's office.

SUSPENSION OF POLICIES

The operation of any section or sections of School Committee policies not established by law or contract may be temporarily suspended by a two-thirds vote of Committee members present at any regular or special meeting. Any action to suspend policy must be reviewed at the next scheduled meeting and will be so noted on the agenda for the meeting.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

The School Committee wishes to maintain open channels of communication between itself and the staff. The basic line of communication will, however, be through the Superintendent.

Staff Communications to the School Committee

All communications or reports to the Committee or any of its Standing Committees from principals, supervisors, teachers, or other staff members will be submitted through the Superintendent. This procedure does not deny the right of any employee to appeal to the Committee for administrative decisions on important matters, except those matters that are outside of the Committee's legal authority, provided the Superintendent has been notified of the forthcoming appeal and that it is processed in accordance with the Committee's policy on complaints and grievances. Staff members are also reminded that Committee meetings are public meetings. As such, they provide an excellent opportunity to observe first-hand the Committee's deliberations on problems of staff concern.

School Committee Communications to Staff

All official communications, policies, and directives of staff interest and concern will be communicated to staff members through the Superintendent. The Superintendent will develop appropriate methods to keep staff fully informed of the Committee's problems, concerns and actions.

Visits to Schools

Individual School Committee members interested in visiting schools or classrooms will inform the Superintendent of such visits and make arrangements for visitations through the principals of the various schools. Such visits will be regarded as informal expressions of interest in school affairs and not as "inspections" or visits for supervisory or administrative purposes. Official visits by Committee members will be carried on only under Committee authorization.

USE OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGING BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

As elected public officials, School Committee members shall exercise caution when communicating between and among themselves via electronic messaging services including, but not limited to, electronic mail (e-mail), text messages, social media postings, internet web forums, and internet chat rooms.

Under the Open Meeting Law, deliberation by a quorum of members constitutes a meeting. Deliberation is defined as movement toward a decision including, but not limited to, the sharing of an opinion regarding business over which the Committee has supervision, control, or jurisdiction. A quorum may be arrived at sequentially using electronic messaging without knowledge and intent by the author.

School Committee members should use electronic messaging between and among members only for housekeeping purposes such as requesting or communicating agenda items, meeting times, or meeting dates. Electronic messaging should not be used to discuss Committee matters that require public discussion under the Open Meeting Law.

Under the Public Records Law, electronic messages between public officials may be considered public records. Therefore, in order to ensure compliance, the School Committee chairperson, in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools, shall annually designate a member of the central office staff who shall be copied on all electronic mail correspondence between and among members of the School Committee, or the district shall provide district e-mail addresses, which are archived. These copies shall be printed and retained in the central office in the same fashion as any other School Committee records. School Committee members who do not have a computer or access to these messages shall be provided copies on a timely basis.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L.4:7; 30A:18-25, 66:10

NEW SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ORIENTATION

In accordance with the requirements of law, each new School Committee member elected to the School Committee is required to complete, within one year of his/her election or appointment, at least eight hours of orientation training. This orientation shall include, but is not limited to, a review of School Finance, the Open Meeting Law, Public Records Law, Conflict of Interest Law, Special Education Law, Collective Bargaining, School Leadership Standards and Evaluations, and the Roles and Responsibilities of School Committee Members.

The School Committee and Superintendent shall assist each new member to understand the Committee's functions, policies and procedures of the Committee as soon after election as possible. Each new member shall be given or provided direct online access to the following materials:

- A. a copy of the School Committee policy manual
- B. a copy of the Open Meeting Law
- C. a copy of the Ethics/Conflict of Interest Regulations
- D. a copy of the district's budget
- E. collective bargaining agreements and contracts
- F. student and staff handbooks

Each new member shall also receive any other materials the Chair and/or the Superintendent determine to be necessary.

The Chair and/or Superintendent shall also clarify policy:

- A. arranging visits to schools or administrative offices
- B. requesting information regarding school district operations
- C. responding to community requests/complaints concerning staff or programs
- D. handling confidential information

Whether appointed or elected, new members should be advised that they are also members of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Inc. and should be encouraged to utilize the services and resources MASC provides by attending meetings or workshops specifically designed for new Committee members. Their expenses at these meetings or workshops will be reimbursed in accordance with established School Committee policy.

CROSS REF: [BBBA/BBBB](#) School Committee Member Qualifications/Oath of Office

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:36A

SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONFERENCES, CONVENTIONS, AND WORKSHOPS

To provide continuing in-service training and development for its members, the School Committee encourages the participation of all members at appropriate School Committee conferences, workshops and conventions. However, in order to control both the investment of time and funds necessary to implement this policy, the Committee establishes these principles and procedures for its guidance:

1. The School Committee shall be made aware of School Committee conferences, conventions and workshops. The Committee will periodically decide which meetings appear to be most promising in terms of producing direct and indirect benefits to the school system.
2. Funds for participation at such meetings will be budgeted for on an annual basis. When funds are limited, the Committee will designate which of its members would be the most appropriate to participate at a given meeting.
3. Reimbursement to Committee members for their travel expenses will be in accordance with the travel reimbursement policy.
4. When a conference, convention, or workshop is not attended by the full Committee, those who do participate will be requested to share information, recommendations and materials acquired at the meeting.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5

CROSS REFS.: BID, School Committee Member Compensation and Expenses
DKC, Expense Reimbursements

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER COMPENSATION

The School Committee shall be compensated in accordance with the provisions of the Worcester City Charter.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:52
Worcester City Charter, Article 4, Section 4

SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

1. The School Committee, as an agent of the state, must operate within the bounds of state and federal laws affecting public education. If the Committee is to meet its responsibilities to the residents and students of this community, it must work vigorously for the passage of new laws designed to advance the cause of good schools and for the repeal or modification of existing laws that impede this cause. The Committee will keep itself informed of pending legislation and actively communicate its concerns and make its position known to elected representatives at both the state and national level.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

The Committee may maintain memberships in the national, state and regional School Committees (boards) associations and take an active part in the activities of these groups.

It may also maintain institutional memberships in other educational organizations, which the executive officer and Committee find to be of benefit to members and personnel.

The materials and benefits of institutional memberships will be distributed and used to the best advantage of the Committee and the staff.

SECTION C - GENERAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

[CA](#) - ADMINISTRATION GOALS

[CB](#) - SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

[CBD](#) - SUPERINTENDENT'S CONTRACT

[CBI](#) - EVALUATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

[CCB](#) - LINE AND STAFF RELATIONS

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[CH](#) - POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

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[CHD](#) - ADMINISTRATION IN POLICY ABSENCE

[CL](#) - ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

[CM](#) - SCHOOL DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT

ADMINISTRATION GOALS

The District employs qualified personnel to administer the school system efficiently and requires the Superintendent to organize the administration in a manner that will make clear the functions of each position and the relationships among them.

The Superintendent will establish clear lines of communication, both vertically and horizontally, and will form any staff councils or committees needed to provide for efficient conduct of school business.

For the schools to operate effectively, each administrative officer will be responsible and accountable for making a plan of development for all staff assigned to his/her area of operation.

File: CB

SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

The Committee shall employ a Superintendent of Schools and set his/her compensation. The Superintendent shall act in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws and shall perform such other duties consistent with this section as the Committee may determine.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. [71:59](#), [72:3](#)

SUPERINTENDENT'S CONTRACT

The Committee, upon the appointment of a candidate to be Superintendent, will enter into a written contract with the Superintendent which will meet the requirements of law and will protect the rights of both the Committee and the Superintendent. In accordance with said contract or, in the absence of specific contract language, by vote of the members, the Committee may choose to negotiate a successor contract with an incumbent Superintendent.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:41](#); [71:42](#)

EVALUATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Evaluation can serve the purpose of helping educators and educational leaders continually improve their practice.

Through evaluation of the Superintendent, the School Committee will strive to accomplish the following:

1. Ensure the efforts of the Superintendent are focused on district goals and the standards of professional practice established by state regulation are met.
2. Ensure all Committee members and the Superintendent are in agreement and clear on the role of the Superintendent and the immediate priorities among his/her responsibilities.
3. Provide excellence in administrative leadership of the school district.
4. Develop a respectful and productive working relationship between the School Committee and Superintendent.

The School Committee and Superintendent will periodically develop a set of performance objectives based on the needs of the school district and in keeping with state regulations for evaluation of the Superintendent. The Superintendent's performance will be reviewed in accordance with specified goals and standards. Additional objectives will be established according to the evaluation cycle agreed upon with the Superintendent.

All School Committee discussion and deliberation related to the Superintendent's performance evaluation shall be conducted in open session in accordance with the open meeting law.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. [30A:18](#)-25

603 CMR [35.00](#)

LINE AND STAFF RELATIONS

Personnel will be expected to refer matters requiring administrative action to the administrator to whom they are responsible. The administrator will refer such matters to the next higher administrative authority when necessary.

It is expected that the established lines of authority will serve most purposes. But, all personnel will have the right to appeal any decision made by an administrative officer through established grievance procedures.

Additionally, lines of authority do not restrict in any way the cooperative, sensible working together of all staff members, at all levels, in order to develop the best possible school programs and services. The established lines of authority represent direction of authority and responsibility. When the staff is working together, the lines represent avenues for a two-way flow of ideas to improve the program and operations of the school system.

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCILS, CABINETS AND COMMITTEES

The Superintendent may establish such permanent or temporary councils, cabinets, and committees as he/she deems necessary for assuring staff participation in decision making, for implementing policies and procedures and for the improvement of the educational program.

Functioning in an advisory capacity, all councils, cabinets and committees created by the Superintendent may make recommendations for submission to the School Committee through the Superintendent. Such groups will exercise no inherent authority. Authority for establishing policy remains with the Committee. Authority for implementing policy remains with the Superintendent.

The membership, composition and responsibilities of administrative councils, cabinets and committees will be defined by the Superintendent and may be changed at his/her discretion.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The Superintendent has responsibility for carrying out, through procedures, the policies established by the School Committee.

The policies developed by the Committee and the procedures developed to implement policy are designed to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the school system. Consequently, it is expected that all School Committee employees and students will carry them out.

Administrators and supervisors are responsible for informing staff members in their schools, departments, or divisions of existing policies and procedures and for seeing that they are implemented in the spirit intended.

DEVELOPMENT OF PROCEDURES

The Superintendent will be responsible for specifying required actions and designing the detailed arrangements under which the school system will be operated in accordance with School Committee policy. These detailed arrangements will be designed to implement policies, goals, and objectives of the Committee and will be one of the means by which the school system will be governed.

In the development of procedures, the Superintendent may involve at the planning stage those who would be affected by the procedures, including staff members, students, parents/guardians, and the public. He/she must weigh with care the counsel given by representatives of staff, student, and community organizations. He/she will inform the Committee of such counsel in presenting pertinent reports of procedures and in presenting procedures for Committee approval.

As long as the Superintendent operates within the guidelines of policy adopted by the Committee, he/she may issue procedures without prior Committee approval unless Committee action is required by law, or the Committee has specifically asked that certain types of procedures be given Committee approval, or the Superintendent recommends Committee approval in light of strong community attitudes or probable staff reactions.

PROCEDURES DISSEMINATION

It will be the responsibility of the Superintendent to see that the procedures developed to implement Committee policies and administer the school system are appropriately coded and included as procedures in the School Committee's policy manual.

A procedure concerning a particular group or groups in the schools will be distributed to the group(s) prior to the effective date of the procedure.

APPROVAL OF HANDBOOKS AND DIRECTIVES

The District shall prepare and distribute to each student a handbook setting forth the rules pertaining to conduct of students. The District shall review the handbook each spring to consider changes in the disciplinary policy to take effect in September.

It is essential that the contents of the District and individual school handbooks conform to School Committee policies. It is also important that all handbooks bearing the name of the school system or one of its schools be of a quality that reflects credit on the school department.

Committee approval will be necessary for any handbooks that pertain to required standards of conduct for employees or students so that their contents may be accorded the status of Committee approved policy or regulation. The Superintendent will use his/her judgment as to whether other specific handbooks need Committee approval. However, all handbooks published will be sent to the Committee for informational purposes.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:37H](#)

APPROVAL OF HANDBOOKS AND DIRECTIVES

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, all student handbooks shall contain the following provisions:

1. 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 or a controlled substance, may be subject to expulsion from school by the Principal.
2. Any student who assaults any employee of the School District may be subject to expulsion from school by the Principal.
3. Any student who is charged with a violation of either (1) or (2) above shall be notified in writing of their opportunity for a hearing, provided, however that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the Principal. After said hearing, the Principal may decide to suspend rather than expel a student.
4. Any student who has been expelled shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent.
5. When a student is expelled under the provisions listed above and applies for admission to another school for acceptance, the Superintendent or his/her designee of the sending school shall notify the Superintendent of the receiving school of the reasons for the pupil's expulsion.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:37H](#)

File: CHD

ADMINISTRATION IN POLICY ABSENCE

When action must be taken within the school system where the Committee has provided no guides for administrative action, the Superintendent will have the power to act.

File: CL

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

The School Committee will require reports from the Superintendent concerning conditions of efficiency and needs of the schools.

Upon receipt of the Superintendent's reports, the Committee will take steps to appraise the effectiveness with which the schools are achieving the educational purposes of the school system.

File: CM

SCHOOL DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT

An annual report covering the diversified activities of the school system and the administration's recommendations for their improvement will be prepared by the Superintendent and presented to the School Committee. Upon Committee approval, the report will be made available to the public and used as one means for informing the parents/guardians, citizens, Commissioner of Education and others of the programs and conditions of the cities public schools.

Established by law and Committee policy

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [72:4](#)

SECTION D - FISCAL MANAGEMENT

- DA FISCAL MANAGEMENT GOALS**
- DB ANNUAL BUDGET**
- DBC BUDGET DEADLINES AND SCHEDULES**
- DBD BUDGET PLANNING**
- DBJ BUDGET TRANSFER AUTHORITY**
- DD FUNDING PROPOSALS AND APPLICATIONS**
- DGA AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES**
- DH BONDED EMPLOYEES AND OFFICERS**
- DI FISCAL ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING**
- DIE AUDITS**
- DJ PURCHASING**
- DJA PURCHASING AUTHORITY**
- DJE PROCUREMENT REQUIREMENTS**
- DK PAYMENT PROCEDURES**
- DKC EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS**

FISCAL MANAGEMENT GOALS

The district's fiscal management goals are based on a Seven Point Financial Plan for Advancing Student Achievement and Program Sustainability. This policy is a guiding document around the promise to the community on delivery high expectation and outstanding results for all students, and a framework document for resource allocation and budget planning

1. **Long Term Budget Planning:** The annual budget document will continue to conform to the Meritorious Budget Award criteria of the Association of School Business Officials, International. Included in the budget document will be three years of actual student enrollment and five years of projected student enrollment (in total and by school) as well as a five-year history and projection on revenues and expenditures. This will allow the public an opportunity to look at enrollment and spending trends as well as provide the community with budget trends that eliminates any budget status surprises when done only on an annual basis. The long-term budget planning also allows for the strategic allocation of resources over a multi-year period.
2. **Annual Budget Review:** The district will continue to utilize a "Zero-Based" budget development process. This budget building technique starts with each department, school, and division budget at zero and adds the cost of essential programs up to an established funding limit. Each year the process begins at zero again prompting scrutiny and prioritization of costs. This process allows the district to meet the existing and emerging needs of students and allows the district to reallocate resources accordingly in a very timely manner.
3. **Transparent Budget Process:** The budget process and method of instructional funding allocation will continue to be included in the annual budget document. This allows all readers to understand how staff is assigned to schools based on enrollment and student needs. The transparency ensures fairness in funding across the city while recognizing differentiated funding for schools based on their particular needs. The budget will continue to show budgeted expenses in detail by school or location. The Administration will make frequent budget presentations and updates to the School Committee and community throughout the budget planning and development phase in order to solicit input and priorities from as many stakeholders as possible. In order to promote frequent dialogue with the Worcester City Council, the Standing Committee of Finance and Operations will continue to meet with the City Council's Education Committee on a regular basis as determined by the Chairs of the Committees.
4. **Quarterly Financial Reporting:** Continuous on-going public review of current year spending and expenditure trends is an important component of the transparent budget process. On a quarterly basis, the Administration will present to the School Committee's Subcommittee on Finance and Operations, a detailed review of the current year budget and recommended adjustments in order to end each fiscal year balanced within the appropriation set by the Worcester City Council. The quarterly budget review occurs at

File: DA

televised meetings and the financial reports are available to the public through the district's website.

5. **Supplemental & Sustainable Programs:** The district will predominantly utilize state and federal grant funds to provide supplemental academic support to students, as well as high quality staff development opportunities. Any new programs or initiatives developed, supported, or otherwise funded by the district will include a multiyear budget as well as a stated source of funding to ensure program sustainability in future years.
6. **Cap Administrative Spending:** The state's education funding formula calculates a "foundation budget" (a minimum spending level) for school districts using a differentiated per pupil amount based upon student grade or program and provides additional funds for low income and English language learners. The per pupil formula is comprised of allocations for an adequate level of teachers, professional development, instructional equipment, guidance and student support, operations and maintenance, employee benefits, special education tuition, instructional leadership, and administration. This funding formula indicates that 4% of the district's operating budget is allocated to District Administration. The district will continue to demonstrate a commitment of placing as many dollars of the budget for direct instructional services but the budget must also realistically recognize that important administrative functions are needed to lead, manage, and operate one of the largest school districts in the Commonwealth and one of the largest employers in the city. As a result, a spending cap of no more than **1.5%** of the district's foundation budget will be allocated on Administration (in accordance with DESE chart of account format) from the School Committee's general fund budget.
7. **Target on New Revenues:** All new revenues from the School Committee's general fund appropriation will be earmarked for instructional, student or school support, school safety, building maintenance, or student transportation cost areas, except to address increases in health insurance, retirement assessments, unemployment, or workers compensation, or other areas for statutory compliance. All other new spending within the other areas of the budget will only be achieved through the reallocation of existing funds or cost savings identified through operational or programmatic efficiencies.

The Worcester Public Schools is committed to delivering on high expectations and outstanding results for all students. Using strong fiscal discipline, collaborative budget planning, and the alignment of resources results in a student-centered financial plan in order to support student achievement and prepare students for college and career readiness

SOURCE: Adopted, Worcester School Committee, ros #4-5, May 1, 2014

ANNUAL BUDGET

Article 5 of the City of Worcester Home Rule Charter and MGL Chapter 44, Section 32 governs the municipal budget process. According to the Home Rule Charter, the “City Manager is required to submit to the City Council an annual budget which shall be a statement of the amounts recommended by him/her for proposed expenditures of the city for the next fiscal year. The annual budget shall be classified and designated so as to show separately with respect to each city agency or undertaking for which an appropriation is recommended, to include a recommendation for the Worcester Public Schools.” In accordance with state law, the City Manager is required to submit an annual budget to the City Council within one hundred and seventy days after the annual organization of the city government. The annual budget shall be classified and designated so as to show separately with respect to each department the appropriation is recommended:

- Ordinary maintenance, which shall also include debt and interest charges matured and maturing during the next fiscal year, and shall be subdivided as follows:
 - Salaries and wages of officers, officials and employees other than laborers or persons performing the duties of laborers; and
- Ordinary maintenance not included under (a); and
- Proposed expenditures for capital equipment with an estimated cost that exceeds one thousand dollars.

The City Council may, by majority vote, make appropriations for the purposes recommended and may reduce or reject any amount recommended in the annual budget, but except on recommendation of the City Manager, shall not increase any amount in or the total of the annual budget, nor add thereto any amount for a purpose not included therein, except as provided in section 33 of chapter 44 of the MGL.

MGL Chapter 71, Section 34 requires that “every city and town shall annually provide an amount of money sufficient for the support of the public schools as required by this chapter, provided however, that no city or town shall be required to provide more money for the support of the public schools than is appropriated by vote of the legislative body of the city or town. In acting on appropriations for educational costs, the city or town appropriating body shall vote on the total amount of the appropriations requested and shall not allocate appropriations among accounts or place any restriction on such appropriations. The superintendent of schools in any city or town may address the local appropriating authority prior to any action on the school budget as recommended by the school committee notwithstanding his place of residence. The city or town appropriating body may make nonbinding monetary recommendations to increase or decrease certain items allocating such appropriations.”

“The vote of the legislative body of a city or town shall establish the total appropriation for the support of the public schools, but may not limit the authority of the school committee to determine expenditures within the total appropriation.”

File: DB

Once the City Manager recommends an amount for the Worcester Public Schools, the Superintendent prepares a recommended budget that is submitted to the Worcester School Committee no later than the Friday before the first Thursday in June in order for the School Committee to hold budget hearings open to the public.

MGL Chapter 71, Section 38N requires each school committee in Massachusetts to “hold a public hearing on its proposed annual budget not less than seven days after publication of a notice thereof in a newspaper having general circulation in such city, town or district. Prior to such public hearing said committee shall make available to the public at least one copy of said proposed budget for a time period of not less than forty-eight hours either at the office of the superintendent of schools or at a place so designated by said committee. At the time and place so advertised or at any time or place to which such hearing may from time to time be adjourned all interested persons shall be given an opportunity to be heard for or against the whole or any part of the proposed budget. Such hearing shall be conducted by a quorum of the school committee. For the purposes of this section a quorum shall consist of a majority of the members of said school committee.”

The School Committee typically holds two public budget hearings: the first and third Thursdays in June (with the fiscal year beginning on July 1st).

During the budget hearings, the School Committee reviews the recommended budget as presented by the Superintendent and approves line items or makes adjustments to the recommendations, subject to majority vote of the Committee.

Legal Ref: City Charter and M.G.L 71:34; 71:37; and 71:38N

File: DBC

BUDGET DEADLINES AND SCHEDULES

The Superintendent shall prepare a budget calendar for the development process of the annual budget and the calendar shall include the approximate date for the budget submission to the School Committee and the dates for final adoption of the recommended budget.

Using the total dollar amount as recommended by the City Manager and presented to the City Council for the Worcester Public Schools, as well as any other amounts from other special revenue sources, the Superintendent shall develop and present a budget for the proposed expenditures for the school district for the next fiscal year.

The School Committee will also observe the statutory requirement of holding a public hearing on the proposed budget not less than seven days after the notice for this hearing has been published in a local newspaper.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:38N](#)
City of Worcester Home Rule Charter, Article 5, Section 5-1

BUDGET PLANNING

The budget is a financial planning tool that allocates resources based upon strategic analysis of student achievement, enrollment, mandated services, high quality teaching and learning, and community values. The budget shall be a comprehensive document that reflects all sources of revenue and explains the purpose for which those funds will be used.

In the budget planning process for the school system, the Superintendent is charged with:

1. Engaging in thorough advance planning, with staff and community involvement, in order to develop budgets and guide expenditures in a manner that will achieve the greatest educational returns and contributions to the educational program in relation to dollars expended.
2. Establishing levels of funding that will provide high quality education for all students of the Worcester Public Schools.
3. Using the best available techniques for budget development and management.

The Superintendent will have overall responsibility for budget preparation, including the construction of, and adherence to, a budget calendar.

File: DBJ

BUDGET TRANSFER AUTHORITY

The School Committee shall consider revisions to the adopted budget throughout the fiscal year as recommended by the Superintendent. The Committee wishes to be kept abreast of the need for these adjustments so that it may act promptly and to expedite financial record keeping for the school system.

All requests for transfers between the general fund accounts adopted as part of the budget must be submitted to the School Committee for approval.

The School Committee may authorize the Superintendent to transfer funds at the close of the fiscal year to balance all surplus and deficit accounts. This request for transfer authority will be submitted to the School Committee on an annual basis for consideration. All funds in the general account not expended by the close of the fiscal year will be returned to the municipality.

FUNDING PROPOSALS AND APPLICATIONS

In accordance with state law, the School Committee shall review and accept grants and donations to the Worcester Public Schools.

Generally, there are five different grant types that are administered by the Worcester Public Schools: (1) Federal Entitlement, (2) State Allocation, (3) Competitive, (4) Continuation, and (5) Other grants. These grants are defined as follows:

1. **Federal Entitlement** grants are awarded to recipients on the basis of formulas set forth in laws or regulations. Recipients are entitled to receive funds if they comply with the programmatic requirements outlined in the RFP.
2. **State Allocation** grants are awarded to recipients based on formulas developed to promote Department priorities. The programmatic requirements outlined in the RFP must be met before the grant will be awarded.
3. **Competitive** grants are open to applicants that meet eligibility criteria listed in the RFP. Reading teams and rating sheets are used in the review process to ensure a fair and open competition among eligible applicants.
4. **Continuation** grants are those in which the recipients of grants in one year are awarded funds at the same level for the following year. These are grants that were initially competitive and are funded for multiple years on a continuation basis.
5. **Other** grants are awarded on a first come, first served basis, or to a limited number of recipients based on certain eligibility criteria, or on a continuation basis to the same recipients but at a higher level of support

All federal entitlement and state allocation grants shall be included in the annual budget document for review and approval by the School Committee. The annual budget document includes all general fund appropriation recommendations and the School Nutrition revolving fund, and already includes most of the federal entitlement and state allocation grants.

The Administration will provide an annual report to the School Committee through a budget update memo (once the grant budget allocations are known) on the status and funding for all continuation grants if they are not contained in the annual budget document.

All competitive or other grants will be placed on the School Committee agenda for acceptance at the time the funding authority notifies that Worcester Public Schools of the award of the grant.

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES

The City Manager shall authorize the Superintendent and other designees as recommended by the Superintendent to sign payrolls, timecards, cash advances, stop payments, data changes, MTRS forms, journal entries, intergovernmental charge forms, direct payment requests, purchase orders, refunds and appropriation forms, and all warrants as presented for approval.

The City Auditor shall keep and have charge of all of the accounts of the city and shall perform such duties as may be prescribed by the city council or by law. The city has established an auditing department, in part, “to perform the pre-audit of financial transactions of municipal departments, boards, commissions and committees of the city, including the school department.”

The City Treasurer signs all checks drawn against school department funds. No other signature is valid.

LEGAL REF.: City of Worcester, City Charter, Article Two, Section 2-8(b)

City of Worcester Revised Ordinance, Part Two, Article 11, Section 2

City of Worcester Revised Ordinance, Part Two, Article 11, Section 9

File: DH

BONDED EMPLOYEES AND OFFICERS

Each employee of the school system who is assigned the responsibility of receiving and dispensing school funds will be bonded individually or covered by a blanket bond. The district will pay the cost of the bond.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [40:5](#)

FISCAL ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING

The Superintendent is responsible for receiving and properly accounting for all funds of the school system.

The accounting system used will conform with state requirements and good accounting practices, providing for the appropriate separation of accounts, funds, and special monies.

The School Committee will receive periodic financial statements from the Superintendent showing the financial condition of the school department. Such other financial statements as may be determined necessary by either the Committee or the administration will be presented as found desirable.

LEGAL REF.: Board of Education 603 CMR [10:00](#)

AUDITS

As a department of the City of Worcester, all aspects of the financial operation of the Worcester Public Schools are subject to an annual review by external auditors. This review is conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. This audit considers the City's internal control over financial reporting. As part of this review, the auditors generally make recommendations for strengthening internal controls and operating efficiency.

Worcester Public Schools' general ledger chart of accounts follows the format and numbering of the City's chart of accounts which is defined by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue under the Uniform Massachusetts Accounting System (UMAS) structure. The UMAS account structure was most recently updated in August 2007 and is applicable to all political subdivisions in the Commonwealth.

End of Year Financial Compliance Report: Every Massachusetts school district is required to, within nine months of the close of its fiscal year, arrange for and undergo an independent audit of its financial records, to include using the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education Compliance Supplement, and submit the report of this audit to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE). Each city, town and regional school district is required to submit an End-of-Year Financial Report (EOYR) to the DESE on or before September 30 of each year. The EOYR must be consistent with Department Regulations and Guidelines. The EOYR consists of several schedules as follows:

- Schedule 1 Revenue and Expenditure Summary
- Schedule 3 Instructional Services by School
- Schedule 4 Special Education Expenditures by Placement
- Schedule 7 Pupil Transportation
- Schedule 19 Annual School Budget

GASB 34: As a department of the City of Worcester, the revenue and expenditures of the Worcester Public Schools are part of these governmental financial statements. GASB 34 requires a report on overall financial health, not just on individual funds. It requires more complete information on the cost of delivering services and value estimates on public infrastructure assets, such as bridges, roads, sewers, etc. It also requires the presentation of a narrative statement analyzing the government's financial performance, trends and prospects for the future.

Federal Grant Audits: Since Worcester spends above certain thresholds in federal grant awards, these federal grants received by the Worcester Public Schools are subject to the Single Audit Act; a federal law that establishes audit guidelines of the various federal agencies from which grants have been received.

Student Activity Account Agreed upon Procedures: The Worcester Public Schools annually engages the services of an independent auditor to evaluate the systems of internal controls and

File: DIE

compliance with the Massachusetts Student Activity Law (Massachusetts General Law [MGL] Chapter 71, Section 47) related to the department's student activity funds.

In addition, the Committee may request a private audit of the school system's accounts at its discretion.

Legal Ref: City Charter and M.G.L 72:3; 71:47

PURCHASING

It shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent:

- A. To procure materials, supplies, equipment, or services at the lowest possible cost consistent with the quality necessary for the proper operation of the various departments, thereby attaining the maximum value for each public dollar spent.
- B. To maintain the City's reputation for fairness and integrity and to promote impartial and equal treatment to all who wish to conduct business with the City.
- C. To encourage a mutually cooperative relationship with requesting departments recognizing that successful purchasing is a result of team planning and effort.
- D. To promote social and economic goals such as encouraging small, minority and women-owned businesses to participate in bidding of City purchases.

The acquisition of materials, equipment and services will be centralized within the central administration of the school system.

The Superintendent will designate the district's purchasing agent. He/she will develop and administer the purchasing program for the schools in keeping with legal requirements and with the adopted school budget.

School purchases will be made only on official purchase orders approved for issuance by the appropriate unit head and signed by an authorized administrator.

PURCHASING AUTHORITY

Authority for the purchase of materials, equipment, supplies, and services is extended to the Superintendent through the funding appropriated as part of the budget process.

All contracts made by any city agency where the amount involved is two thousand dollars or more shall be in writing, and no such contract shall be deemed to have been made or executed until the approval of the city manager and also of the officer or the head of the department or of the chair of the board, as the case may be, making the contract is affixed thereto.

The purchase of items and services requires no further School Committee approval except when such approval is mandated by law or other Committee policy.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [30B](#)
City of Worcester Home Rule Charter, Article Five, Section 5-7

File: DJE

PROCUREMENT REQUIREMENTS

All purchases of materials and equipment and all contracts for construction or maintenance for the Worcester Public Schools will be based upon competitive bidding in accordance with state law and City of Worcester purchasing policies.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [7:22A](#); [7:22B](#); [30B](#)

PAYMENT PROCEDURES

All claims for payment from school department funds will be processed in accordance with regulations developed by the Superintendent. Payment will be authorized against invoices properly supported by approved purchase orders, with properly submitted vouchers, or in accordance with salaries and salary schedules approved by the School Committee.

As an operating procedure, the Committee will receive monthly lists of bills (warrants) for payment from school department funds. The lists will be certified as correct and approved for payment by the School Committee and then forwarded to the municipal auditor for processing and subsequent payment by the municipal treasurer. Actual invoices, statements, and vouchers will be available for inspection by the School Committee." This is mandated by Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 41, Section 56, and nothing in the City Charter or City of Worcester Revised Ordinances Part Two, Article Eleven, Section 2 (attached) affects this requirement. Until we make this part of our policies and practices, we are in violation of Massachusetts law.

The Superintendent and authorized designees shall submit invoices or payrolls for payment to the City Auditor to perform a pre-audit of financial transactions for municipal departments, including the school department.

The Superintendent will be responsible for assuring that budget allocations are observed and that total expenditures do not exceed the amount allocated in the budget for all items.

The school building administrators will be responsible for observing budget allocations in their respective schools.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [41:41](#); [41:52](#)

City of Worcester Revised Ordinances, Part Two, Article 11, Section 2

EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS

Personnel and school department officials who incur expenses in carrying out their authorized duties will be reimbursed by the school department upon submission of a properly completed and approved voucher and any supporting receipts required by the Superintendent.

When official travel by a personally owned vehicle is authorized, mileage payment will generally be made at the rate currently approved by the Committee.

To the extent budgeted for such purposes in the school budget, approval of travel requests by School Committee members must have prior approval of the School Committee. Staff travel requests within budgetary limits may be approved by the Superintendent. Staff travel requests that exceed budgetary limits will require the approval of the School Committee and the identification of funding sources by administration. Each request will be judged on the basis of its benefit to the school district.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [40:5](#); [44:58](#)

SECTION E - SUPPORT SERVICES

- EB** SAFETY PROGRAM
- EBAB** PEST MANAGEMENT POLICY
- EBB** FIRST AID
- EBC** EMERGENCY PLANS
- EBCD** EMERGENCY CLOSINGS
- EC** BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS MANAGEMENT
- EC-1** BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS MANAGEMENT
- ECA** BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS SECURITY
- ECAC** VANDALISM
- ECAF** SECURITY CAMERAS IN SCHOOLS
- EDC** AUTHORIZED USE OF SCHOOL-OWNED MATERIALS
- EEA** STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES
- EEAE** SCHOOL BUS SAFETY PROGRAM
- EEAEA** BUS DRIVER EXAMINATION AND TRAINING
- EEAEA-1** DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING FOR SCHOOL BUS AND
COMMERCIAL VEHICLE DRIVERS
- EEAEC** STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES
- EEAJ** MOTOR VEHICLE IDLING ON SCHOOL GROUNDS
- EFC** SCHOOL MEAL AND CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM

SAFETY PROGRAM

Accidents are undesirable, unplanned occurrences that can result in tragic consequences--bodily harm, loss of school time, property damage, legal action, and even fatality. The School Committee will guard against such occurrences by taking precautions to protect the safety of all students, employees, visitors and others present on school property or at school-sponsored events.

The Committee will comply with safety requirements established by governmental authorities and will insist that its staff adhere to recommended safety practices as these pertain, for example, to the school plant, special areas of instruction, student transportation, school sports and occupational safety.

The practice of safety will also be considered a facet of the instructional program of the schools. Instruction will include accident prevention as well as fire prevention; emergency procedures; traffic, bicycle, and pedestrian safety.

The Superintendent will have overall responsibility for the safety program of the school system. It will be the responsibility of the Superintendent to see that appropriate staff members are kept informed of current state and local requirements relating to fire prevention, civil defense, sanitation, public health, and occupational safety.

Efforts directed toward the prevention of accidents will succeed only to the degree that all staff members recognize that preventing accidents is a daily operational responsibility.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:55C](#)
[603 CMR 36:00](#)

CROSS REFS.: [EEAE](#), School Bus Safety Program
[GBGB](#), Staff Personal Security and Safety
[IHAM](#), Health Education
[JLI](#), Student Safety

PEST MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Worcester Public Schools are committed to providing a safe and properly maintained environment for all staff, students and visitors. To achieve this end, the school district will implement integrated pest management procedures for its buildings and grounds.

The integrated pest management procedures shall include implementation of appropriate prevention and control strategies, notification of certain pesticide and herbicide uses, record keeping, education and evaluation.

Integrated pest management procedures will determine when to control pests and what method of control to choose. Strategies for managing pest populations will be influenced by the pest species, location and whether and at what population level its presence poses a threat to people, property or the environment. The full range of action alternatives, including no action, will always be considered.

I. OVERVIEW AND GOALS

- A. The Worcester Public Schools has developed and implemented an integrated pest management program.
- B. An integrated pest management program is a pest control approach that emphasizes using a balanced combination of tactics (cultural, mechanical, biological, chemical) to reduce pests to a tolerable level while using pesticides and herbicides as a last resort to minimize health, environmental and economic risks.
- C. Pesticides and herbicides will be used only as a last resort, based on a review of all other available options.
- D. The integrated pest management program shall strive to:
 - 1. Reduce any potential human health hazard.
 - 2. Reduce loss or damage to school structures or property.
 - 3. Minimize the risk of pests from spreading in the community.
 - 4. Enhance the quality of facility use for school and community.
 - 5. Minimize health, environmental and economic risks.

II. RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF PESTICIDES AND HERBICIDES

- A. When pesticides or herbicides are used, they must be classified as an EPA Category III or IV. Application of any pesticide or herbicide may be performed only by certified applicators.
- B. Application of pesticides and herbicides may only be accomplished during a school break or when the building will be clear of students for at least 48 hours.

III. NOTIFICATION OF PESTICIDE AND HERBICIDE USE

- A. When pesticides or herbicides are used outdoors, notice of their use will be provided to parent/guardians, staff and students and will also be posted in a common area.
- B. When pesticides and herbicides are used in a building, the site will provide a 48-hour pre-notification in the form of posting the product name, purpose, application date, time and method and the Material Safety Data Sheet on all entrance doors. A contact person will also be listed.
- C. In the event of an EPA registered pesticide or herbicide application in or around a building site during the school year or summer session, a notice (including the product name, purpose, contact person, and application date, time and method), will be sent home in writing with students in the affected building at least 5 days prior to application.

IV. RECORD-KEEPING

- A. The District will keep a record of pesticides and herbicides used, amounts and locations of treatments and will keep any Material Safety Data Sheets, product labels and manufacturer information on ingredients related to the application of the pesticides or herbicides.
- B. All records of pesticides and herbicides used and correspondence will be available for public review upon notice and during normal school hours.

V. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES AND EDUCATION

- A. Designated staff (School Nutrition, Buildings and Grounds, etc.) will participate in sanitation and pest exclusion procedure appropriate to their roles. For example: keeping doors closed, repairing cracks, removing food waste within 12 hours, keeping lids on garbage receptacles and keeping vegetation properly cut.
- B. Ongoing education of all appropriate District staff will be a priority to ensure a safe and clean environment.

LEGAL REF.: Chapter 85 of the Acts of 2000, "An Act to Protect Children and Families from Harmful Pesticides."

FIRST AID

The district attempts to provide a safe environment. If an accident or sudden illness occurs, school personnel will administer first aid and, if warranted, call emergency medical services. In the case of illness that may include an infectious disease the school physician shall be notified in accordance with law.

First aid is defined as the immediate and temporary care given in case of an accident or sudden illness, which enables the child to be taken safely home or to a physician. It does not include diagnosis or treatment. Any care beyond first aid will not be given.

At each school, procedures will be developed for the proper handling of an injury to, or sudden illness of, a child or staff member. These will be made known to the staff and will incorporate the following requirements:

1. The school nurse or another trained person will be responsible for administering first aid.
2. When the nature of an illness or an injury appears in any way serious, every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian and/or family physician immediately.
3. In extreme emergencies, the school nurse, school physician or Principal may make arrangements for immediate transport to a hospital of injured or ill students, contacting parent or guardian in advance if at all possible.
4. The teacher or other staff member to whom a child is responsible at the time an accident occurs will make out a report on an official form providing details about the accident. This will be required for every accident for which first aid is given.
5. All accidents to students and staff members will be reported as soon as possible to the Superintendent and, if the Superintendent deems appropriate, to the School Committee.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:55A](#); [71:56](#)

CROSS REF.: [JLC](#), Student Health Services and Requirements

EMERGENCY PLANS

Advance planning for emergencies and disasters is essential to provide for the safety of students and staff; it also strengthens the morale of all concerned to know that plans exist and that students and staff have been trained in carrying out the plans.

The Superintendent will develop and maintain plans that meet the requirements of state law for preparedness in case of fire, civil emergencies, and natural disasters.

The Superintendent shall develop, in consultation with school nurses, school physicians, athletic coaches, trainers, and local police, fire and emergency personnel, an Emergency Medical Response Plan for each school in the district.

Each Plan shall include:

1. A method establishing a rapid communications system linking all parts of the school campus, including outdoor facilities, to local Emergency Medical Services along with protocols to clarify when EMS and other emergency contacts will be called.
2. A determination of EMS response times to any location on the campus.
3. A list of relevant contacts with telephone numbers and a protocol indicating when each person shall be called, including names of experts to help with post-event support.
4. A method to efficiently direct EMS personnel to any location on campus, including the location of available rescue equipment.
5. Safety precautions to prevent injuries in classrooms and on the school campus.
6. A method of providing access to training in CPR and first aid for teachers, athletic coaches, trainers, and other school staff which may include CPR training for High School students; Provided that School Committees may opt out of instruction in CPR pursuant to [Section 1 of Chapter 71](#).
7. In the event the school possesses Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs), the location of all available AEDs, whether the location is fixed or portable, and a list of personnel trained in its use.

The Superintendent shall annually review the response sequence with local police and fire officials. Plans shall be submitted to local police and fire officials and the DESE at least every 3 years by September 1 or when changes occur. Plans must be updated in the case of new construction or other physical changes to the school campus.

Building Principals will meet all requirements for conducting fire drills and Emergency Response drills (at least once per year) to give students practice in moving with orderly dispatch to designated areas under emergency conditions, and the staff practice in carrying out their assigned responsibilities for building evacuation.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. [69:8A](#)
Section 363 of Chapter 159 of the Acts of 2000

CROSS REF.: [EBCD](#), Emergency Closings
[JL](#), Student Welfare
[JLC](#), Student Health Services and Requirements

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

The Superintendent may close the schools, delay opening, or dismiss them early in the event of hazardous weather or other emergencies that threaten the health or safety of students and personnel. While it may be prudent, under certain circumstances, to excuse all students from attending school, to delay the opening hour or to dismiss students early, the Superintendent has the responsibility to see that as much of the administrative, supervisory and operational activity is continued as may be possible. Therefore, if conditions affect only a single school, only that school will be closed.

In making the decision to close schools, the Superintendent will consider many factors, including the following principal ones relating to the fundamental concern for the safety and health of the children:

1. Weather conditions, both existing and predicted.
2. Driving, traffic, and parking conditions affecting public and private transportation facilities.
3. Actual occurrence or imminent possibility of any emergency condition that would make the operation of schools difficult or dangerous.
4. Inability of teaching personnel to report for duty, which might result in inadequate supervision of students.

Students, parents and staff will be informed through local media, school-to-home communications, social media, and district website about school closings, delays, or early dismissals. School-year staff members will follow collective bargaining procedures on these emergency non-school days and other full-year staff members will follow the direction of the Superintendent about reporting to work.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:4](#); [71:4A](#)

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS MANAGEMENT

A proper physical environment that is safe, clean, sanitary, and as comfortable and convenient is an important part of learning environment for students and staff.

The supervision over the care and safekeeping of property used by the school department will be the general responsibility of the Superintendent. He/she will develop a comprehensive and well-defined plan for the proper maintenance, cleanliness, and safekeeping of all school buildings and grounds to ensure that each school is equally well maintained, equipped, and staffed.

The Superintendent will establish procedures and employ such means as may be necessary to provide accurate information in regard to the nature, condition, location, and value of all property used by the school department; to safeguard the property against loss, damage, or undue depreciation; to recover and restore to usefulness any property that may be lost, stolen or damaged; and to do all things necessary to ensure the proper maintenance, cleanliness and safekeeping of school property.

Within the separate schools, the building administrator will be responsible for proper care, maintenance, and cleanliness of buildings, equipment and grounds.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:68](#)

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS SECURITY

Public school buildings and grounds are one of the greatest investments of the city. It is deemed in the best interest of the school department and city to protect the investment properly.

Security should mean not only maintenance of a secure (locked) building, but protection from fire hazards and faulty equipment, and safe practices in the use of electrical, plumbing, and heating equipment. The Committee expects close cooperation with fire and law enforcement departments and with insurance company inspectors.

Access to school buildings and grounds outside of regular school hours will be limited to personnel whose work requires it. An adequate key control system will be established, which will limit access to buildings to authorized personnel and will safeguard against the chance of entrance to buildings by unauthorized persons.

Funds and valuable records should be kept in a safe place and under lock and key.

Protective devices designed to be used as safeguards against illegal entry and vandalism will be installed when appropriate to the individual situation. Employment of security personnel may be approved in situations where special risks are involved.

VANDALISM

The School Committee recognizes that acts of vandalism committed against public and private property are costly and require positive action through educational programs. Consequently, the Committee will support various programs aimed at reducing the amount of vandalism.

Every citizen of the city, staff members, students, and members of the police department are urged by the School Committee to cooperate in reporting any incidents of vandalism to property under control of the school department, and the name(s) of the person or persons believed to be responsible. Each employee will report to the Principal of the school every incident of vandalism known to him/her and, if known, the names of those responsible.

The Superintendent is authorized to sign a criminal complaint and to press the charges against perpetrators of vandalism against school property, and is further authorized to delegate, as he/she sees fit, authority to sign such complaints and to press charges.

Parents and students will be made aware of the legal implications involved. Reimbursement will be sought for all or part of any damages.

SECURITY CAMERAS IN SCHOOLS

The School Committee works to maintain a safe and secure environment for its students, staff, visitors, and facilities. Security means more than having locks and making certain that doors are locked at the proper times. Security also means minimizing fire hazards, reducing the possibility of faulty equipment, keeping records and valuables in a safe place, protection against vandalism and burglary, the prosecution of vandals, and developing crisis plans.

School facilities and their contents, constitute one of the greatest investments of the community. The School Committee believes it to be in the best interest of students and taxpayers for the district to exert every reasonable means to protect the investment adequately.

In pursuit of this objective, the School Committee authorizes the use of security cameras in school district buildings and on its property to ensure the health, welfare and safety of all students, staff and visitors, to deter theft, vandalism and other negative behavior, to safeguard district buildings, grounds and equipment, and to monitor unauthorized individuals in or on school property. Security cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent of Schools in consultation with school officials as well as local law enforcement and emergency response agencies. They may be used in any area, inside or outside of school buildings where there is no reasonable expectation of privacy.

The district shall notify students and staff through student and employee handbooks and appropriate signage that security cameras have been installed and may be used at any time. Students or staff identified on security cameras in violation of School Committee policies will be subject to disciplinary action.

The Superintendent shall ensure that proper procedures are in place and are followed regarding use, viewing, disclosure, retention, disposal and security of video recordings or photographs from security cameras in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. A video recording used for security purposes in school district buildings and/or on school property shall be the sole property of the school district. All video recordings will be stored in their original format and secured to avoid tampering and to ensure confidentiality in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Access to video recordings from security cameras shall be limited to school administrators (Superintendent/designee, School Principal/designee). Law enforcement and emergency response officials shall be granted access to video recordings or the security system after giving prior notice to the School Superintendent/designee.

The Superintendent may, from time to time, issue further guidance that is consistent with current laws and this policy.

Adopted: August 2015

AUTHORIZED USE OF SCHOOL-OWNED MATERIALS

The School Committee wishes to be of assistance, whenever possible, to other city departments and community organizations. Therefore, permission to use school equipment may be granted by the Superintendent upon request by responsible parties or organizations.

School equipment may be used by staff members when the use is related to their school employment, and by students when the equipment is to be used in connection with their studies or extracurricular activities.

Proper controls will be established by the Superintendent to assure the user's responsibility for, and return of, all school equipment.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

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.

Students will be entitled to transportation to and from school at the expense of the public schools when such transportation conforms to applicable provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws.

Exceptions to these guidelines apply particularly to students in grade K - 6 who must travel in a hazardous area to and from school where a crossing guard is not available. These students will be transported regardless of the mileage limits listed.

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 a designated school site 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.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5; 71:7A; 71:68; 71B:5

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY PROGRAM

The safety and welfare of student riders will be the first consideration in all matters pertaining to transportation. Safety precautions will include the following:

1. Children will be instructed as to the proper procedure for boarding and exiting from a school bus and in proper and safe conduct while aboard.
2. Emergency evacuation drills will be conducted by properly licensed school bus drivers at least twice a year to acquaint student riders with procedures in emergency situations.
3. All vehicles used to transport children will be inspected periodically for conformance with state and federal safety requirements.
4. Classroom instruction on school bus safety will be provided.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 90:7b as amended by Ch. 246 Acts of 1986 M.G.L. 90:1 et seq.; 713:2;
713:7L Highway Safety Program Standard No. 17

CROSS REF.: EB, Safety Program

BUS DRIVER EXAMINATION AND TRAINING

The Superintendent reserves the right to approve or disapprove persons employed by bus contractors to drive school transportation vehicles.

1. Courteous and careful drivers will be required.
2. Each driver will file with school officials a medical certificate and proof of freedom from tuberculosis.
3. No person under 18 years and only persons of high character will be allowed to operate school buses.
4. Only persons who are properly licensed by the state and have completed the driver-training program will be permitted to drive school buses.
5. The contractor will furnish the Superintendent with a list of names of drivers and their safety records for the last three years.
6. The contractor will notify school officials as soon as possible of any change of bus drivers.

LEGAL REFS.: Highway Safety Program Standard No. 17 M.G.L. 90:7B; 90:8A; 90:8A ½

DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING FOR SCHOOL BUS AND COMMERCIAL VEHICLE DRIVERS

The District shall adhere to federal law and Department of Transportation regulations requiring a drug and alcohol-testing program for school bus drivers and commercial vehicle drivers. Such testing will be conducted for five different situations: pre-employment, randomly, following an accident, following an authorization to return to duty, and upon reasonable suspicion that a driver is under the influence of alcohol or using drugs.

The District will comply with Department of Transportation protocols regarding the collection and testing necessary to establish whether alcohol or drugs are present in the driver's system, and regulations will be established for the steps to be taken in the event that test results are positive.

This program shall comply with the requirements of the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 49, Section 382 et seq. The Superintendent or designees shall adopt and enact procedures consistent with the federal regulations, defining the circumstances and procedures for testing.

LEGAL REF.: 49 U.S.C. sec. 2717 et seq. (Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991)

49 C.F.R. Part 40 Procedures for Transportation Workplace and Drug and Alcohol Testing Programs

49 C.F.R. Part 382 Controlled Substance and Alcohol Use and Testing

49 C.F.R. Part 391 Qualification of Drivers

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

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.

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

File: EEAEC

- 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.

MOTOR VEHICLE IDLING ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

No person shall cause, suffer, allow or permit the unnecessary operation of the engine of a motor vehicle while said vehicle is stopped for a foreseeable period of time in excess of five minutes. This section shall not apply to (a) vehicles being serviced, provided that operation of the engine is essential to the proper repair thereof, or (b) vehicles engaged in the delivery or acceptance of goods, wares, or merchandise for which engine assisted power is necessary and substitute alternate means cannot be made available, or (c) vehicles engaged in an operation for which the engine power is necessary for an associate power need other than movement and substitute alternate power means cannot be made available provided that such operation does not cause or contribute to a condition of air pollution. Whoever violates any provision of this section shall be punished by a fine of not more than one hundred dollars for the first offense, nor more than five hundred dollars for each succeeding offense.

NO IDLING

PENALTIES OF \$100 FOR FIRST OFFENSE AND \$500 FOR SECOND AND SUBSEQUENT OFFENSES

M.G.L. C. 90, § 16A AND 540 CMR 27.00

It shall be the responsibility of the school administration to ensure that each school bus driver employed by the Worcester Public Schools District and not by a school bus contractor shall, upon employment and at least once per year thereafter, sign a document acknowledging the receipt of copies of M.G.L. c. 90, § 16A and 540 CMR 27.00. The prohibitions contained in M.G.L. c. 90, § 16A shall be enforced by state or local law enforcement agencies.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. c. 71:37H, c. 90:16A and 540 CMR 27.00

SCHOOL MEAL AND CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM

The school system will take part in the National School Lunch Program and other food programs that may become available to assure that all children in the schools receive proper nourishment.

In accordance with guidelines for participation in these programs, and in accordance with the wishes of the Committee, no child who a teacher believes is improperly nourished will be denied a lunch or other meal simply because proper application has not been received from his/her parents or guardians.

As required by state and federal regulations, the School Committee approves this policy statement pertaining to eligibility and access to the school meal programs.

LEGAL REFS.: National School Lunch Act, as amended (42 USC 1751-1760)

Child Nutrition Act of 1966

P.L. 89-642, 80 Stat. 885, as amended

M.G.L. [15:1G](#); [15:1L](#); [69:1C](#); [71:72](#)

SECTION F - FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT

FA FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT GOALS

FCB RETIREMENT OF FACILITIES

FE NAMING NEW FACILITIES

FFA MEMORIALS

FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The School Committee believes that an educational program is influenced greatly by the environment in which it functions. The development of a quality educational program and of school facilities that help implement that program must go hand in hand.

Therefore, it is the Committee's goal to provide the facilities needed for the number and educational requirements of students in the school system and to provide the kind of facilities that will best support the educational program. To best use local resources, it is the Committee's intent, wherever possible, to partner with the Worcester City Manager, Worcester City Council, and/or the Massachusetts School Building Authority on school renovation or replacement projects.

Recognizing that school facilities are long-term community investments, the Committee will work with the aforementioned partners to develop projects that reflect cost-effective designs, are consistent with good engineering practice, and use high quality construction, with attention to current and future technological practices for students, faculty, and school staff. Sites will be chosen to meet the educational need, maximize the use of any available community resources, and minimize any possible adverse education, environmental, social, or economic impacts on the community.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 70B

963 CMR 2.00

City of Worcester, Home Rule Charter, Article 5, Section 5-5, Capital Outlay Program

RETIREMENT OF FACILITIES

When a school building becomes inadequate by virtue of age, condition, size of site, lack of need, or other overriding limitations, and cannot reasonably and economically be brought up to the current educational standards, the building should be considered for a comprehensive closing study. The Superintendent will recommend to the School Committee, which facilities appear to justify further analysis.

The School Committee may seek both professional advice and the advice of the community in making its recommendations as to the retirement of any school facility. This will permit the public, which originally acquired the property, to benefit from its recycling or retirement.

A closing study will include direct involvement by those neighborhoods considered in the study and will be concerned with all or some of the following factors:

1. Age and current physical condition of the facilities, its operating systems, and program facilities
2. Adequacy of site, location, access, surrounding development, traffic patterns, and other environmental conditions
3. Reassignment of children, including alternative plans according to Committee policy
4. Transportation factors, including numbers of children bused, time, distance, and safety
5. Alternative uses of the building or transfer of ownership to the City Manager.
6. Cost/Savings
 - a. Personnel
 - b. Plant Operation
 - c. Transportation
 - d. Capital Investment
 - e. Alternative Use
7. Continuity of instructional and community programs

NAMING NEW FACILITIES

Naming a school facility is an important matter that deserves thoughtful attention. Personal prejudice or favoritism, political pressure, or temporary popularity should not be an influence in choosing a name for a school, a portion of a school, or a portion of school grounds. Whenever possible, the wishes of the community, including parents and students, should be considered in naming school facilities.

The School Committee has the authority to approve the naming and renaming of buildings, structures, and facilities located on school property. The School Committee also has the authority to name subsections of existing structures or facilities, such as classrooms, auditoriums, and gymnasiums.

Names and/or wording associated with school facilities shall be consistent with school district policies and promote messages aligned with the mission, vision and goals of the school district. To the extent possible, names and/or wording should be designed not to restrict the use of a space or inhibit changing the function of the space should that become necessary in the future.

When the opportunity to name or dedicate a new school or school related property, structure or facility is forthcoming, an orderly procedure will be communicated at a School Committee meeting. The Committee's agendas should clearly reflect the intent to consider, review, and vote on naming opportunities.

Submission of a name for a school space may be made by any resident or by the Superintendent, in writing, and should be made to the School Committee. If a name is being initiated at the local school level, the Principal must take reasonable steps to include the School Council in the nomination of the name before submission to the School Committee.

The written request should specify the intent of the requestor and the reasons why this particular name would fit the facility. It should offer appropriate background information on the person or organization after which the facility will be named. An offer of a financial contribution to the School District may accompany the naming request, but the School Committee is not obligated to accept or reject a name based upon financial considerations alone. Philanthropic contributions in support of the School District are encouraged by the School Committee. The School Committee may acknowledge generous donors by designating appropriate spaces within the School District's facilities consistent with the level of financial commitment.

Following the submission of a naming request, the School Committee Chair will specify a consideration period that allows for public comment, following which the Committee will deliberate and vote on the name.

File: FFA

MEMORIALS

The School Committee recognizes that the death of a student, member of the staff, or prominent community member is deeply felt by the school community. As places designed primarily to support learning, school sites should not serve as the main venue for permanent memorials.

Permanent memorials within the schools shall be limited in form to perpetual awards or scholarships and can be erected as deemed appropriate.

Any permanent memorials in existence before the adoption of this policy can only be removed by a vote of the School Committee.

SECTION G - PERSONNEL

Proposed

- GA** PERSONNEL POLICIES GOALS
- GBA** EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY
- GBEA** STAFF ETHICS/CONFLICT OF INTEREST
- GBEB** STAFF CONDUCT
- GBEBC** GIFTS TO AND SOLICITATIONS BY STAFF
- GBEC** DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY
- GBED** TOBACCO USE ON SCHOOL PROPERTY BY STAFF MEMBERS
- GBGB** STAFF PERSONAL SECURITY AND SAFETY
- GBGF** FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE
- GBI** STAFF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES
- GBJ** PERSONNEL RECORDS
- GBK** STAFF COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES
- GCA** PROFESSIONAL STAFF POSITIONS
- GCBA** PROFESSIONAL STAFF SALARY SCHEDULES
- GCBB** EMPLOYMENT OF PRINCIPALS
- GCBC** PROFESSIONAL STAFF SUPPLEMENTARY PAY PLANS
- GCE** PROFESSIONAL STAFF RECRUITING/ POSTING OF VACANCIES
- GCF** PROFESSIONAL STAFF HIRING
- GCG** SUBSTITUTE PROFESSIONAL STAFF EMPLOYMENT
- GCIA** PHILOSOPHY OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT
- GCJ** PROFESSIONAL TEACHER STATUS
- GCK** PROFESSIONAL STAFF ASSIGNMENTS AND TRANSFERS
- GCO** EVALUATION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF
- GCQD** RESIGNATION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS
- GCQE** RETIREMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS
- GCQF** SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS

GCRD TUTORING FOR PAY

GDA SUPPORT STAFF POSITIONS

GDB SUPPORT STAFF CONTRACTS AND COMPENSATION PLANS

GDD SUPPORT STAFF VACATIONS AND HOLIDAYS

GDO EVALUATION OF SUPPORT STAFF

GDQC RETIREMENT OF SUPPORT STAFF

GDQD SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

File: GA

PERSONNEL POLICIES GOALS

The School Committee recognizes that an efficient staff dedicated to education is necessary to maintain a constantly improving educational program.

The District's specific personnel goals are:

1. To develop and implement those strategies and procedures for personnel recruitment, screening, and selection that will result in the employment and retention of individuals with the highest capabilities, strongest commitment to quality education, and greatest probability of effectively implementing the district's learning program.
2. To develop a general staff assignment strategy that will contribute to the learning program, and to use it as the primary basis for determining staff assignments.
3. To provide positive programs of staff development that contribute both to improvement of the learning program and to each staff member's professional development.
4. To develop and use for personnel evaluation positive processes that contribute to the improvement of both staff capabilities and the learning program.

File: GBA

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The School Committee subscribes to the fullest extent to the principle of the dignity of all people and of their labors and will take action to ensure that any individual within the District who is responsible for hiring and/or personnel supervision understands that applicants are employed, assigned, and promoted without regard to their race, creed, color, age, sex, gender identity, national origin, disability or sexual orientation. Every available opportunity will be taken in order to assure that each applicant for a position is selected on the basis of qualifications, merit and ability.

If you believe the adverse employment action happened to you because of your race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity, age, criminal record (inquiries only), disability, sexual orientation, genetics, active military personnel, or past involvement in a discrimination complaint, it could be discrimination.

LEGAL REF: [M.G.L. 151B](#), (civil rights)

[M.G.L. 151B Sec. 3A](#), (sexual harassment)

[M.G.L. 149 Sec 105D](#), (Parental Leave)

File: GBEA

STAFF ETHICS / CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All employees of the Worcester Public Schools are required to adhere to the requirement of Massachusetts General Law 268A (Conflict of Interest Law). This law addresses issues such as but not limited to restrictions on acceptance and giving of gifts; political activities; and awarding contracts.

Additionally, many professional associations have codes of conduct for their members, and the School Committee expects members of its professional staff to be familiar with these codes of ethics as they apply to their profession and to adhere to it in their relationships with students, parents, coworkers, and officials of the school system.

No employee of the district will engage in or have a financial interest in, directly or indirectly, any activity that conflicts or raises a reasonable question of conflict with his duties and responsibilities in the school system. Nor will any staff member engage in any type of private business during school time or on school property.

Employees will not engage in work of any type where information concerning customer, client, or employer originates from any information available to them through school sources.

Moreover, as there should be no conflict of interest in the supervision and evaluation of employees, at no time may any administrator responsible for the supervision and/or evaluation of an employee be directly related to him/her.

Every 2 years, all current employees, including School Committee members, must complete the State Ethics Commission's online training. New employees must complete this training within 30 days of beginning employment and every 2 years thereafter. Upon completing the program, employees should print out the completion certificate and keep a copy for themselves. Employees will be required to provide a copy of the completion

certificate to the municipal or district Clerk through the Superintendent's office.

In order to avoid the appearance of any possible conflict, it is the policy of the School Committee that when an immediate family member, as defined in the Conflict of Interest statute, of a School Committee member or district administrator is to be hired into or promoted within the School District, the Superintendent shall file public notice with the School Committee and the City Clerk at least two weeks prior to executing the hiring.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:52](#); [268A:1](#) et seq.

File: GBEB

STAFF CONDUCT

All staff members have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with and abide by the laws of the State as these affect their work, the policies of the School Committee, and the procedures designed to implement them.

In the area of personal conduct, the School Committee expects that teachers and others will conduct themselves in a manner that not only reflects credit to the school system but also sets forth a model worthy of emulation by students.

All staff members will be expected to carry out their assigned responsibilities with conscientious concern.

Essential to the success of ongoing school operations and the instructional program are the following specific responsibilities, which will be required of all personnel:

1. Faithfulness and promptness in attendance at work.
2. Support and enforcement of policies of the School Committee and their implementing regulations and school rules in regard to students.
3. Diligence in submitting required reports promptly at the times specified.
4. Care and protection of school property.
5. Concern for and attention to their own and the school system's legal responsibility for the safety and welfare of students, including the need to ensure that students are under supervision at all times.

File: GBEBC

GIFTS TO AND SOLICITATIONS BY STAFF

Gifts

The acceptance of gifts worth \$50 or more by school personnel in a calendar year when the gift is given because of the position they hold, or because of some action the recipient could take or has taken in his or her public role, violates the conflict of interest law. Acceptance of gifts worth less than \$50, while not prohibited by the conflict of interest law, may require a written public disclosure to be made.

In keeping with this policy, no employee of the school district will accept a gift worth \$50 or more that is given because of the employee's public position, or anything that the employee could do or has done in his or her public position. Gifts worth less than \$50 may be accepted, but a written disclosure to the employee's appointing authority must be made if the gift and the circumstances in which it was given could cause a reasonable person to think that the employee could be improperly influenced. The value of personal gifts accepted is aggregated over a calendar year (4 gifts of \$20 value is the same as 1 gift of \$80 if given in the same calendar year).

In general, homemade gifts without retail value are permissible because a reasonable person would not expect an employee would unduly show favor to the giver, so no disclosure is required. Such gifts could include homemade food items (cookies, candy, etc.), handpicked flowers, and handmade gifts worth less than \$10 (ten) dollars.

Class Gifts

There is a specific exception to the prohibition against accepting gifts worth \$50 or more, when the teacher knows only that the gift is from the class, not from specific donors. A single class gift per calendar year valued up to \$150 or several class gifts in a single year with a total value up to \$150 from parents and students in a class may

be accepted provided the gift is identified only as being from the class and the names of the givers and the amounts given are not identified to the recipient. The recipient may not accept an individual gift from someone who contributed to the class gift. It is the responsibility of the employee to confirm that the individual offering such gift did not contribute to the class gift.

Gifts for School Use

Gifts given to a teacher solely for classroom use or to purchase classroom supplies are not considered gifts to an individual employee and are not subject to the \$50 limit. However, an employee who accepts such gifts must keep receipts documenting that money or gift cards were used for classroom supplies.

File: GBEBBC

Solicitations

In spirit, the School Committee supports the many worthwhile charitable drives that take place in the community and is gratified when school employees give them their support. However, the solicitation of funds from staff members through the use of school personnel and school time is prohibited by the conflict of interest law. Therefore, no solicitations of funds for charitable purposes should be made among staff members. Staff members of course remain free to support charitable causes of their own selection.

Legal Ref: M.G.L. [268A:3](#); [268A:23](#); 930 CMR [5.00](#)

File: GBEC

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

The School District will provide a drug-free workplace and certifies that it will:

1. Put all employees on notice, via this policy, that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance, is prohibited in the District's workplace. Violations of this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.
2. Make it a requirement that each employee whose employment is funded by a federal grant be given a copy of the statement as required.
3. Notify the employee in the required statement that as a condition of employment under the grant, the employee will abide by the terms of the statement, and will notify the District of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five days after such conviction.
4. Notify the federal agency within ten days after receiving notice from an employee or otherwise receiving notice of such conviction.
5. Take one of the following actions within 30 days of receiving notice with respect to any employee who is so convicted; take appropriate personnel action against such an employee, up to and including termination; or require such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a federal, state or local health law enforcement, or other appropriate agency.
6. Make a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of all the provisions of this policy.

CROSS REFS.: [IHAMB](#), Teaching about Alcohol, Tobacco and Drugs
[JICH](#), Drug and Alcohol Use by Students

File: GBED

TOBACCO USE ON SCHOOL PROPERTY BY STAFF MEMBERS PROHIBITED

Use of any tobacco products, including, but not limited to: cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco and snuff and electronic cigarettes, electronic cigars, electronic pipes or other similar products that rely on vaporization or aerosolization, within the school buildings, school facilities, on school grounds or school buses, or at school sponsored events by any individual, including school personnel, is prohibited at all times. Staff members who violate this policy will be referred to their immediate supervisor.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:37H](#)

File: GBGB

STAFF PERSONAL SECURITY AND SAFETY

Through its overall safety program and various policies pertaining to school personnel, the School Committee will seek to assure the safety of employees during their working hours.

Applicants offered a position in the district must successfully pass a pre-employment physical examination prior to the date of employment.

The Superintendent may require an employee to submit to a physical examination by a physician appointed by the school system whenever that employee's health appears to be a hazard to children or others in the school system or when a doctor's certificate is legally required to verify need for sick leave.

The district provides an employee assistance program for the benefit of its employees.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:54](#); [71:55C](#)

File: GBGF

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

The School System shall comply with the mandatory provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993. The Superintendent shall issue, and from time to time amend, procedures setting forth the rights and procedures granted by the Act, and shall ensure compliance with those procedures either personally or by delegation, or by some combination of personal oversight and delegation.

LEGAL REFS.: P.L. 103-3, "Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993"

File: GBI

STAFF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

The School Committee recognizes that employees of the school system have the same fundamental civic responsibilities and privileges as other citizens. Among these are campaigning for an elective public office and holding an elective or appointive office.

In connection with campaigning, an employee will not: use school system facilities, equipment or supplies; discuss his/her campaign with school personnel or students during the working day; use any time during the working day for campaigning purposes. Under no circumstances, will students be pressured into campaigning for any staff member.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:44](#)

File: GBJ

PERSONNEL RECORDS

Information about staff members is required for the daily administration of the school system, for implementing salary and other personnel policies, for budget and financial planning, for responding to appropriate inquiries about employees, and for meeting the district's education reporting requirements. To meet these needs, the Superintendent will implement a comprehensive and efficient system of personnel records maintenance and control under the following guidelines:

1. A personnel folder for each present and former employee will be accurately maintained in the central administrative office. In addition to the application for employment and references, the folders will contain records and information relative to compensation, payroll deductions, evaluations, and any other pertinent information. Personnel records will be maintained in compliance with state regulations.
2. The Superintendent will be the official custodian for personnel files and will have overall responsibility for maintaining and preserving the confidentiality of the files within the provisions of the law.
3. Personnel records are considered confidential under the law and will not be open to public inspection. Access to personnel files will be limited to persons authorized by the Superintendent to use the files for the reasons cited above.
4. Each employee will have the right, upon written request, to review the contents of his/her own personnel file.

5. Employees may make written objections to any information contained in the file. Any written objection must be signed by the staff member and will become part of the employee's personnel file. Further, no negative comment will be placed in a staff member's file unless it is signed by the person making the comment and the staff member is informed of the comment and afforded the opportunity to include his/her written response in the file.

6. Lists of school system employees' names and home addresses will be released only to governmental agencies as required for official reports or by the laws.

LEGAL REFS.: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Sec. 438, P.L. 90-247

Title IV, as amended

88 Stat. 571-574 (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and regulations

M.G.L. [4:7](#); [71:42C](#)

CONTRACT REF.: All Agreements

CROSS REF.: [KDB](#), Public's Right to Know

File: GBK

STAFF COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

The School Committee will encourage the administration to develop effective means of resolving differences that may arise among employees and between employees and administrators; reduce potential areas of grievances; and establish and maintain recognized channels of communication between the staff, administration, and School Committee. It is the School Committee's desire that grievance procedures provide for prompt and equitable adjustment of differences at the lowest possible administrative level, and that each employee be assured opportunity for an orderly presentation and review of complaints and concerns.

Channels established will provide for the following:

1. That teachers and other school employees may appeal a ruling of a Principal or other administrator to the Superintendent.
2. That all school employees may appeal a ruling of the Superintendent to the School Committee, except in those areas where the law has specifically assigned authority to the Principal and/or the Superintendent and School Committee action would be in conflict with that law.
3. That all hearings of complaints before the Superintendent or School Committee be conducted in the presence of the administrator who made the ruling that is the subject of the grievance.

The process established for the resolution of grievances in contracts negotiated with recognized employee bargaining units will apply only to "grievances" as defined in the particular contract.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [150E:5](#) and [8](#)

CONTRACT REFS.: All Contract Agreements

File: GCA

PROFESSIONAL STAFF POSITIONS

All professional staff positions in the school system will be created initially by the Superintendent and approved by the School Committee. It is the School Committee's intent to activate a sufficient number of positions to accomplish the school system's goals and objectives and to provide for the equitable staffing of each school building. Although such positions may remain temporarily unfilled, only the School Committee may abolish a position it has created.

Each time a new position is established, the Superintendent will present for the School Committee's information a job description for the position, which specifies the jobholder's qualifications and the job's performance responsibilities. The Superintendent will maintain a comprehensive set of job descriptions for all positions.

File: GCBA

PROFESSIONAL STAFF SALARY SCHEDULES

Teachers

The School Committee will adopt a salary schedule for regular teaching personnel as part of the contract negotiated with the teachers' bargaining unit. The schedule will be designed to recognize and reward training and experience and encourage additional study for professional advancement.

Principals

Salaries will be reviewed annually prior to July 1. The School Committee, with the advice of the Superintendent, will establish levels of compensation for each position based on the circumstances, dynamics, and requirements of each position. Consideration may be given to individuals for exceptional performance as a basis for establishing merit increases for Principals. It is the responsibility of the Superintendent to present evidence to the School Committee to support recommendations for salary increases.

Administrators

Salaries will be reviewed annually prior to July 1. The Superintendent may, upon the request of the School Committee, survey other school systems to determine salaries being paid for comparable positions in each system. The survey will include the effective date of the specified salary.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:40](#); [71:43](#)

CONTRACT REF.: Teachers' Agreement

File: GCBB

EMPLOYMENT OF PRINCIPALS

Principals shall be employed by the School District under individual contracts of employment. Said contracts shall be submitted to the School Committee for their approval of all terms concerning compensation/benefits, prior to the presentation of a contract of employment to the Principal. The compensation/benefit levels, above referenced, may be exceeded only with the approval of the School Committee.

Initial contracts issued to Principals may be up to three years in length, and may be reissued by the Superintendent at levels of compensation/benefits, determined by the School Committee, provided that the Superintendent may employ a Principal under the terms and conditions of the previous contract of employment.

The length of second and subsequent contracts of employment for Principals shall be in accordance with state law.

As a condition of employment, each Principal must maintain current certification, adhere to the policies and goals of the School Committee, and the directives of the Superintendent and annually must submit, with the school council, the educational goals and school improvement plan for the school building(s) under his/her direction.

LEGAL REF: MGL [71:41](#); [71:59B](#)

File: GCBC

PROFESSIONAL STAFF SUPPLEMENTARY PAY PLANS

Certain assignments require extra responsibility or extra time over and above that required of other staff members who are on the same position on the basic salary schedule. When such supplemental assignments require extra time and responsibility beyond that regularly expected of teachers, they will be rewarded with extra compensation. Any recommendations for the creation or elimination of a position must be approved by the School Committee.

Assignments that are to be accorded extra compensation will be designated by the School Committee through collective bargaining when such extra compensation is articulated in the collective bargaining agreement or by the Superintendent for assignments which are not subject to the collective bargaining agreement.

Appointments to these positions will be made by the Superintendent for District-wide positions or by the Principal with the approval of the Superintendent for building based personnel. The amount of compensation for the position will be established by the School Committee at the time the position is created.

A teacher who is offered and undertakes a supplementary pay assignment will receive a supplementary contract specifying the pay, duration and terms of the assignment. If a teacher will not be extended the assignment for the following school year but will remain on the teaching staff, he or she will be so notified in writing prior to the expiration of the contract. Upon termination of the assignment, the supplementary pay will cease.

LEGAL REF.: Collective Bargaining Agreement

File: GCE

PROFESSIONAL STAFF RECRUITING/POSTING OF VACANCIES

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent, with the assistance of the administrative staff, to determine the personnel needs of the school system and it is the responsibility of the Principal, in consultation with the Superintendent, to determine the personnel needs of the individual schools. In addition, school councils may review personnel requirements as a means of evaluating the needs of a school. Any recommendations for the creation or elimination of a position must be approved by the School Committee.

The search for teachers and other professional employees will extend to a wide variety of educational institutions and geographical areas. It will take into consideration the characteristics of the town and the need for a heterogeneous staff from various cultural backgrounds.

Recruitment procedures will not overlook the talents and potential of individuals already employed by the school system. Any current employee may apply for any position for which he or she has certification and meets other stated requirements.

Openings in the schools will be posted in sufficient time, before the position is filled, to permit current employees to submit applications.

LEGAL REFS.: Collective Bargaining Agreements

File: GCF

PROFESSIONAL STAFF HIRING

Through its employment policies, the District will strive to attract, secure, and hold the highest qualified personnel for all professional positions. The selection process will be based upon awareness to candidates who will devote themselves to the education and welfare of the children attending the schools.

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent, and of persons to whom he or she delegates this responsibility, to determine the personnel needs of the school system and to locate suitable candidates. No position may be created without the approval of the School Committee. The district's goal is to employ and retain personnel who are motivated, will strive always to do their best, and are committed to providing the best educational environment for the children.

It will be the duty of the Superintendent to see that persons considered for employment in the schools meet all certification requirements and the requirements of the School Committee for the type of position for which the nomination is made.

The following guidelines will be used in the selection of personnel:

1. There will be no discrimination in the hiring process due to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, genetic information, ancestry, military status, or disability.
2. The quality of instruction is enhanced by a staff with a wide variation in background, educational preparation, and previous experience.
3. The administrator responsible for the hiring of a staff member (in the case of District-wide positions, for the position of Principals, it is the Superintendent; for building-based personnel, it is the Principal) is directed to establish a representative screening committee. The administrator has the final say in determining who will be hired but it is recommended that the screening committee's input will be a factor in the decision. For those positions where the

hiring authority rests with the School Committee a representative screening committee may be established by the School Committee or the School Committee may direct the Superintendent to establish a screening committee to assist the Superintendent in making his/her recommendation to the School Committee.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [69:6](#); [71:38](#); [71:39](#); [71:45](#)

BESE Regulations 603 CMR [7:00](#), [26:00](#), and [44:00](#)

File: GCG

SUBSTITUTE PROFESSIONAL STAFF EMPLOYMENT

The school system will employ as substitute teachers, to the extent possible, persons who meet the requirements for teacher appointments and will assign teachers substitute-teaching positions on the basis of their areas of competence. When the supply of potential substitutes in a particular subject area is too limited to meet school department needs, there will be active recruitment for substitutes in those areas. All substitute teachers will be expected to provide educational services, rather than to assume merely a student-supervisory role. They will be provided with as much support as possible by building administrators and teachers.

The School Committee will set the daily rate of pay for substitute teachers, including extended-term substitutes. The latter will be granted such additional benefits as approved by the School Committee.

File: G CIA

PHILOSOPHY OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT

All staff members will be encouraged in and provided with suitable opportunities for the development of increased competencies beyond those they may attain through the performance of their assigned duties and assistance from supervisors.

The Superintendent will have authority to approve or deny released time for conferences and visitations and reimbursements for expenses, provided such activities are within budget allocations for the purpose.

File: GCJ

PROFESSIONAL TEACHER STATUS

Teachers and certain other professional employees who have served in the School District for three school consecutive years under a valid Massachusetts teaching license shall be entitled to professional teacher status. The school year shall count towards professional teacher status if the teacher is hired and has begun working by September 15 of the school year. The Superintendent, upon recommendation of the Principal, may award such status to a teacher who has served in the Principal's school for not less than one year or a teacher who has obtained such status in any other public school district in the Commonwealth. The Superintendent will base his/her decisions on the results of evaluation procedures conducted according to School Committee policy.

At the end of each of the first three years of a teacher's employment, it will be the responsibility of the Superintendent to notify each employee promptly in writing of the decision on reappointment. Notification to a teacher not being reappointed must be made by June 15.

A teacher who attains professional teacher status will have continuous employment in the service of the school system subject to satisfactory evaluations. A teacher with professional teacher status whose position is abolished by the School Committee may be continued in the employ of the school system in another position for which he/she is legally qualified in accordance with the language of the collective bargaining agreement.

Nothing in these provisions will be considered as restricting the Superintendent from changing teaching assignments or altering or abolishing supervisory assignments except that, by law, no teacher may be assigned to a position for which he/she is not legally qualified.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:38](#); [71:38G](#); [71:38H](#); [71:41](#); [71:42](#); [71:43](#)

File: GCK

PROFESSIONAL STAFF ASSIGNMENTS AND TRANSFERS

The basic consideration in the assignment of professional staff members will be the needs of the students and the instructional program.

Therefore, the assignment and transfer of professional staff members will be accomplished by the Superintendent in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement and on the basis of the employee's qualifications, the needs of the school system, and the employees' expressed desires.

Care will be exercised by the Superintendent to assure that all schools are staffed with effective teachers.

Within an individual school, the building administrator will have the authority to assign classes and courses, provided this is done with full regard for the teacher's area of certification and the policies delineated above.

CONTRACT REF.: Teachers' Agreement

File: GCO

EVALUATION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF

In order to assure a high quality of teacher and administrator performance and to advance the instructional programs of the schools, a continuous program for teacher and administrator evaluation will be established by the School Committee. Regular reports will be made to the Superintendent concerning the outcomes of these evaluations.

Teachers and Administrators of the Worcester Public Schools shall be evaluated in accordance with regulations set forth by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Copies of the written document will be signed by both parties and incorporated into the personnel files of the teacher or administrator. The signature should indicate that the evaluation has been read and discussed.

The written evaluation should be specific in terms of the person's strengths and weaknesses. Those areas where improvement is needed should be clearly set forth and recommendations for improvement should be made. Subsequent evaluations should address themselves to any improvement or to any continuing difficulty that is observed.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [69:1B](#); [71:38](#); [71:38Q](#); [150E](#); [152B](#)

603 CMR [35:00](#)

CONTRACT REF.: Teachers' Agreement

File: GCQD

RESIGNATION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS

Professional staff members may discontinue their service in the school system during the school year by submitting a written notice of intent to resign to the appropriate hiring authority.

Such written notice of intent to resign will be given to the Superintendent. The staff member will be notified in writing of the Superintendent's action on the resignation.

When a resignation is accepted by the Superintendent the employee may be expected to continue in service at his or her assigned duties in accordance with his/her employment contract; or, for a period of 30 days after submission of the resignation when such time period is not otherwise specified.

File: GCQE

RETIREMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS

Annually, the Superintendent will inform the School Committee of the professional staff members who have indicated their intention to retire. No further School Committee action is necessary unless approval is needed for the payment of or participation in continued local benefits.

LEGAL REF.: Age Discrimination in Employment Law, P.L. 95-256

CONTRACT REF.: Teachers' Contract

File: GCQF

SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS

The Superintendent will strive to assist personnel to perform their duties efficiently. However, the Superintendent may dismiss any employee in accordance with state law. Further, the School Committee recognizes the constitutional rights of the District's employees and assures them the protection of due process of law. To guarantee such rights, a system of constitutionally and legally sound procedures will be followed in each case of suspension or dismissal of an employee.

When the Superintendent or a Principal determines that sufficient cause exists that a professional employee be suspended or dismissed from service in the school system, he or she will:

1. Be certain that each such case is supported by defensible records.
2. Determine if the individual is to be suspended immediately with the understanding that the suspension will be subject to restoration of salary and position if an appeal is decided in favor of the individual.
3. Follow the procedures for dismissal or suspension that are contained in applicable laws as well as those included in the current agreement with the teachers' bargaining unit.
4. Provide the individual involved with a written statement that will:
 - a. Indicate whether the action the Superintendent is taking is dismissal or suspension.
 - b. State the reason for the suspension or dismissal.
 - c. Guarantee that due process will be accorded to the individual.

d. Inform employees who have a right to request a hearing under appropriate laws that they may be represented at such a hearing by counsel of their choice.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:42](#); [71:42D](#)

File: GCRD

TUTORING FOR PAY

Definition: "Tutoring" means giving private instruction or help to an individual or group for which the teacher receives remuneration other than through the School Committee.

A teacher cannot recommend that one of his or her own students get tutoring, and then be paid to tutor that same student in a second job.

A teacher may not tutor students who are currently in his/her class. Even if the teacher does not recommend that the current student receive private tutoring, the teacher should not tutor current students.

Teachers and other public employees may not approach a student, or the student's parents, seeking private tutoring work. A teacher may provide tutoring when the relationship is initiated by the parents or a student, but, if the student is, or in the future may be, under the teacher's authority, the teacher will need to provide a written disclosure.

A teacher cannot use school resources such as classrooms or materials in connection with a private tutoring business. A public school employee cannot use a school or district website to advertise private tutoring services. Schools cannot send home brochures for a particular tutoring service with the children.

Tutoring is not to be recommended for a student unless the appropriate teacher of the student involved is consulted and agrees that it will be of real help. If tutoring seems advisable, the Principal may give the parents a list of persons who are willing to tutor. This list may include teachers, but not the student's teacher of the subject in which he or she is to be tutored.

LEGAL REF: M. G. L. [268A](#) Mass. Ethics Commission FAQs for Public School Teachers

File: GDA

SUPPORT STAFF POSITIONS

Education is a cooperative enterprise in which all employees of the school system must participate intelligently and effectively for the benefit of the children. This school system will employ support staff members in positions that function to support the education program.

All support staff positions will be established initially by the School Committee. In each case, the Superintendent will submit for the School Committee's consideration and action a job description or job specifications for the position.

Although positions may remain temporarily unfilled or the number of persons holding the same type of position reduced in event of de-staffing requirements, only the School Committee may abolish a position it has created.

File: GDB

SUPPORT STAFF CONTRACTS AND COMPENSATION PLANS

In establishing rates of pay and levels of compensation for support staff personnel, the School Committee will take into account the responsibilities of the position, the qualifications needed, past experience of the individual, and years of service in the school department.

The School Committee will set the rates of pay for personnel not covered by collective bargaining agreements.

Overtime

Non-exempt support staff employees will be paid overtime wages for work performed in excess of 40 hours in a work week. All overtime must be pre-approved by the employee's supervisor.

Every effort must be made to minimize overtime by scheduling duties during the regular workday. Overtime will be authorized only by the Superintendent or his/her designee. All such work will be assigned in accordance with the collective bargaining agreements or in the best interest of the district.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:38](#)

CONTRACT REFS.: All Contracts

File: GDD

SUPPORT STAFF VACATIONS AND HOLIDAYS

Holidays

The school calendar, as adopted by the School Committee, establishes holidays and school recess periods for the employees who work on teacher and/or student days.

Employees who work on a 12-month basis will be granted paid holidays on all legal holidays and such other holidays as designated by the School Committee. They will also be expected to report to work during school recess periods unless days during these periods are considered official and designated as paid holidays by the School Committee.

To qualify for holiday pay, the employee must be at work on the day before and the day following the holiday, unless his absence is approved on the basis of current leave policies.

Vacations

All 12-month employees will be eligible for paid-vacations in accordance with the appropriate collective bargaining agreement or individual employment agreement.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [4:7](#); [136:12](#)

CONTRACT REFS. All support staff contracts

File: GDO

EVALUATION OF SUPPORT STAFF

A program of continuous observation and evaluation will be developed to find the right employees to fill vacancies, determine assignments and equitable workloads, and establish wage and salary policies that encourage employees to put forth their best efforts.

The evaluation will cover the major areas of the employee's responsibilities and their job descriptions.

Each employee will be informed of the basis upon which he/she is to be evaluated in advance of evaluation.

CONTRACT REFS.: All support staff agreements

File: GDQC

RETIREMENT OF SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

All full-time non-instructional personnel are required to participate in a public pension system.

Periodically, the Superintendent will present to the School Committee the names of support staff members who have indicated their intentions to retire.

LEGAL REFS.: Age Discrimination in Employment Law, P.L. 95-256

File: GDQD

SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

Support staff employed by the School District may be terminated by the Principal of the building in which they serve, with the approval of the Superintendent. However, employees may request the Superintendent to review the circumstances of their termination.

In the event of failure to perform as required, the Superintendent may immediately suspend or terminate employment depending upon agreement language.

Support staff employees may or may not be given prior notice of their dismissal depending upon the circumstances.

The Superintendent, or the Principal, with the approval of the Superintendent, may also suspend/remove employees from their individual assignments.

SECTION H - NEGOTIATIONS

[HA](#) **NEGOTIATIONS GOALS**

[HB](#) **NEGOTIATIONS LEGAL STATUS**

[HF](#) **SCHOOL COMMITTEE NEGOTIATING AGENTS**

NEGOTIATIONS GOALS

The School Committee recognizes that education is a public trust; it therefore is dedicated to providing the best possible educational opportunities for the young people of this community. In negotiations, this objective may be best attained if there is a climate of mutual trust and understanding between the negotiating parties.

The School Committee believes that the best interests of public education will be served by establishing procedures that provide an orderly method for the School Committee and representatives of the staff to discuss matters of common concern.

It is further recognized that nothing in negotiations will compromise the School Committee's legal responsibilities nor will any employee's statutory rights and privileges be impaired.

NEGOTIATIONS LEGAL STATUS

All negotiations between the School Committee and recognized employee groups are conducted subject to Massachusetts General Laws. The legal status of negotiations is defined in part by Section 2 of that chapter, as follows:

"shall have the right of self-organization and the right to form, join, or assist any employee organization for the purpose of bargaining collectively through representatives of their own choosing on questions of wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment, and to engage in lawful, concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection, free from interference, restraint, or coercion. An employee shall have the right to refrain from any or all of such activities, except to the extent of making such payment of service fees to an exclusive representative as provided in section twelve."

Basic to all employer/employee negotiations is the concept of "bargaining in good faith." It is the legal responsibility of both the School Committee and employee organizations to bargain in good faith as they conduct negotiations. However, such obligation does not compel either party to agree to a proposal or make a concession.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 150E:l et seq.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE NEGOTIATING AGENTS

The School Committee is responsible for negotiations with recognized employee bargaining units. However, because of the expertise and time required for negotiations, the Committee may hire a negotiator to bargain in good faith with recognized bargaining units to help assure that mutually satisfactory agreements on wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment will be developed.

1. The School Committee will appoint the negotiator and the fee or salary for his services will be established in accordance with the law at the time of appointment.
 - a. The duties of the negotiator will be as follows:
 - b. To negotiate in good faith with recognized bargaining units to arrive at a mutually satisfactory agreement on wages, hours, and working conditions of employees represented by the units.
 - c. The negotiator may recommend members of the administration to serve on the negotiation team. They will not be members of any unit that negotiates with the Committee, and their participation in negotiations must be recommended by the Superintendent and approved by the Committee.
 - d. He/she will direct accumulation of necessary data needed for negotiations, such as comparative information.
 - e. He/she will follow guidelines set forth by the Committee as to acceptable agreements and will report on the progress of negotiations.
 - f. He/she will make recommendations to the Committee as to acceptable agreements.
2. The negotiator will interpret the signed negotiated contracts to administrators and may be called upon to offer advice on various aspects of contract administration during the terms of the contracts with employee organizations.

LEGAL REF.: M.G .L. 71:37E

SECTION I - INSTRUCTION

IB ACADEMIC FREEDOM

IC/ICA SCHOOL YEAR/SCHOOL CALENDAR

ID SCHOOL DAY

IE ORGANIZATION OF INSTRUCTION

IGA CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

IGB SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAMS

IGD CURRICULUM ADOPTION

IHA BASIC INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

IHAI OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION

IHAM HEALTH EDUCATION

IHAM-R HEALTH EDUCATION

IHAMA PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION

IHAMB TEACHING ABOUT ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUGS

IHB SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACCOMMODATIONS

IHBA PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

IHBAA OBSERVATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

IHBD COMPENSATORY EDUCATION

IHBEA ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

IHBF HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

IHBG HOME SCHOOLING

IHBG-R HOME SCHOOLING

IHBH ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAMS

IHCA SUMMER SCHOOLS

IJ INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

IJ-R RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

IJL LIBRARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

IJLA LIBRARY RESOURCES

IJND ACCESS TO DIGITAL RESOURCES

IJNDB EMPOWERED DIGITAL USE POLICY

IJNDC INTERNET PUBLICATION

IJNDD POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

IJOA FIELD TRIPS

IJOB COMMUNITY RESOURCE PERSONS/SPEAKERS

IJOC SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

IK ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

IKE PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

IKF GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

IL EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

ILD STUDENT SUBMISSION TO EDUCATIONAL SURVEYS AND RESEARCH

IMA TEACHING ACTIVITIES/PRESENTATIONS

IMB TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES/ CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKERS

IMD SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES

IMG ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The School Committee seeks to educate students in the democratic tradition, to foster recognition of individual freedom and social responsibility, to inspire meaningful awareness of and respect for the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Fairness in procedures will be observed both to safeguard the legitimate interests of the schools and to exhibit by appropriate example the basic objectives of a democratic society as set forth in the Constitutions of the United States and the Commonwealth.

LEGAL REF: Constitution of the Commonwealth of MA

SCHOOL YEAR/SCHOOL CALENDAR

The school calendar for the ensuing year will be prepared by the Superintendent and submitted to the School Committee for approval annually. The number of days or instructional hours scheduled for the school year will be determined in accordance with the following standards set by the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education:

1. Elementary school will operate for a minimum of 180 days. Schools shall ensure that every elementary school student is scheduled to receive a minimum of 900 hours per school year of structured learning time, as defined in regulation. Time which a student spends at school breakfast and lunch, passing between classes, in homeroom, at recess, in non-directed study periods, receiving school services, and participating in optional school programs shall not count toward meeting the minimum structured learning time requirement for that student.
2. Secondary schools will operate for a minimum of 180 days. Schools shall ensure that every secondary school student is scheduled to receive a minimum of 990 hours per school year of structured learning time, as defined in regulation. Time which a student spends at school breakfast and lunch, passing between classes, in homeroom, at recess, in non-directed study periods, receiving school services, and participating in optional school programs shall not count toward meeting the minimum structured learning time requirement for that student.

According to the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education: Per 603 CMR 27.05, school districts are encouraged to schedule high school graduation as close as possible to the scheduled closing date of the high school, and graduation may be held up to twelve days before the regularly scheduled closing date. The earliest permissible release day for seniors is twelve school days prior to the regularly scheduled closing date of the school, which means that high schools operating on a 180 day year for students may release the seniors as early as the 168th day of school. If the date for high school graduation has been set and subsequently a few more days are added to the school year to make up for snow days or other emergencies, the original graduation date does not need to be changed, as long as it is no more than twelve school days before the originally scheduled closing date for the school year.

For the information of staff, students, and parents, the calendar will set forth the days schools will be in session; holidays and vacation periods; in service days; and parent conferences.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 4:7; 69:1G; 71:1; 71:4A; 71:73; 136:12
603 CMR 27.00.

The category "School Year" is designed for policies about the year for students, rather than the working year for teachers and other staff members.

SCHOOL DAY

The length of the school day is established in the collective bargaining agreements with the various school unions. The specific opening and closing times of the schools will be recommended by the Superintendent and set by the Committee.

The Superintendent is authorized to make minor changes in opening and closing times to simplify transportation scheduling; however, major changes in schedules will be subject to Committee approval.

Parents and guardians will be informed of the opening and closing times set by the Committee. To help insure the safety of all children, parents will also be notified that students will not be admitted into the school building until the start of the official day unless bus schedules require earlier admittance.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 15:1G; 69:1G; 71:59
603 CMR 27.00

ORGANIZATION OF INSTRUCTION

The District offers a diversified educational program compatible with the needs of the community and state standards.

The organizational plan is designed to facilitate the philosophy of educating every student, each to his/her fullest potential.

The structure will consist of multiple levels (for example, Primary/Elementary, Middle and Secondary levels).

At the elementary level, students may receive instruction in Pre-K to 6 and K to 6 schools. At the middle school level, students may receive instruction at grade 6 – 8 and 7 – 8 schools. At the secondary level, students may receive instruction at 7 – 12 and 9 – 12 schools.

Special education services are integrated across each grade level in all schools with specialized programs located at selected schools Pre-K to 12.

The organization is designed to meet the standards established within the Curriculum Frameworks as required by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Time and Learning regulations, and to serve the needs of all students.

CROSS REFS: IC/ICA School Year / School Calendar

LEGAL REFS: 603 CMR 27.00

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Constant adaptation and development of the curriculum is necessary if the District is to meet the needs of the students in its schools.

Faculty and administration will regularly evaluate the education program to recommend modifications of practice and changes in curriculum content as well as the addition or deletion of courses to the instructional program.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 69:1E

SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAMS

The Student Services staff will work in cooperation with building staff and the administration of the District in the coordination and the supervision of the curriculum implementation of the instructional program, and support services programs.

CROSS REF.: ACE, , Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap

CURRICULUM ADOPTION

Professional staff will design and implement instructional programs and courses of study that will forward the educational goals of the school system.

The Superintendent will have authority to approve new programs and courses of study after they have been thoroughly studied and found to support educational goals. The Committee itself will consider, and officially adopt, new programs and courses when they constitute an extensive alteration in instructional content or approach.

The Committee wishes to be informed of all new courses and substantive revisions in curriculum. It will receive reports on changes under consideration. Its acceptance of these reports, including a listing of the high school program of studies, will constitute its adoption of the curriculum for official purposes.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:1; 69:1E

BASIC INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

State law requires that schools:

....shall give instruction and training in orthography, reading, writing, the English language and grammar, geography, arithmetic, drawing, music, the history and Constitution of the United States, the duties of citizenship, health education, physical education and good behavior...

The law further states that American history and civics, including the Constitution of the United States, the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, local history and government will be taught as required subjects in the public schools.

Physical education is compulsory for all students, except that no student will be required to take part in physical education exercises if a physician certifies in writing that such exercises would be injurious to the student.

The Fundamental Skills

The business of schools is to equip all children with the skills, tools, and attitudes that will lay the basis for learning now and in the future. This means giving highest priority to developing skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and solving numerical problems.

The first claim of the community's and School Committee's resources will be made for the realization of these priorities.

CROSS REFS: ADF, School District Wellness Program

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:1,2,3: 71:13

603 CMR 26:05

OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION

The School Committee recognizes that students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 should:

Be afforded the opportunity to be informed about the world of work.

Be aware of the many vocations available to them.

Develop a respect for the dignity of work.

Be allowed the opportunity to develop an understanding regarding the technical, consumer, occupational, recreational and cultural aspects of industry and technology; they should also be afforded the opportunity to develop skills related to such aspects through creative problem solving experiences.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37K; 71:38A through 71:38F; 74:1 et seq.

603 CMR 4:00

HEALTH EDUCATION

Good health depends upon continuous life-long attention to scientific advances and the acquisition of new knowledge.

The School Committee believes that the greatest opportunity for effective health education lies within the public schools because of their potential to reach children at the age when positive, lifelong health habits are best engendered and because the schools are equipped to provide qualified personnel to conduct health education programs.

The School Committee is committed to a sound, comprehensive, research-based health education program as an integral part of each student's general education.

The health education program will emphasize a contemporary approach to the presentation of health information, skills, and the knowledge necessary for students to understand and appreciate the functioning and proper care of the human body. Students also will be presented with information regarding complex social, physical and mental health problems, which they might encounter in society. In an effort to help students make intelligent choices on alternative behavior of serious personal consequence, health education will examine the potential health hazards of social, physical and mental problems existing in the larger school-community environment.

In order to promote a relevant, dynamic approach to the instruction of health education, the School Committee will continue to stress the need for curricular, personnel, and financial commitments that are necessary to assure the high quality of the system's health education program.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:1

HEALTH EDUCATION

(Exemption Procedure)

Exemption will be granted from a specific portion of health education curriculum on the grounds that the material taught is contrary to the religious beliefs and/or teachings of the student or the student's parent/guardian.

A request for exemption must be submitted in writing to the Principal in advance of instruction in that portion of the curriculum for which the exemption is requested. The request must state the particular conflict involved.

The Principal will confer with the teacher to determine the length of time a student will be exempt. The teacher will develop an alternative activity for which the student will receive credit.

The Principal will inform the parent/guardian of disposition of the request within a reasonable number of school days of receipt of the request.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:1

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION

In accordance with law, the School Committee has adopted this policy on the rights of parents and guardians of our students in relation to curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues.

At the beginning of each school year, all parents/guardians of students in our schools will be notified in writing of the courses and curriculum that primarily involve human sexual or human sexuality issues. The Superintendent of Schools will determine the administrator(s) responsible for sending the notice(s). Parents/guardians of students who enroll in school after the start of the school year will be given notice at the time of enrollment. If planned curricula change during the school year, to the extent practicable, parents/guardians will be notified of this fact in a timely manner before implementation.

Each such notice 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 sexual issues, without penalty to the student, by sending a letter to the school Principal requesting an exemption. Any student who is exempted by request of the parent/guardian under this policy may be given an alternative assignment.
2. Inspect and review program instruction 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 other locations that may be determined by the Superintendent of Schools.

A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with a decision of the Principal concerning notice, access to instructional materials, or exemption for the student under this policy may send a written request to the Superintendent for review of the issue. The Superintendent or designee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within two weeks of the request. A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with the Superintendent's decision may send a written request to the School Committee for review of the issue. The School Committee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within four weeks of the request. A parent/guardian who is still dissatisfied after this process may send a written request to the Commissioner of Education for review of the issue in the dispute.

The Superintendent of Schools will distribute a copy of this policy to each Principal by September 1 of each year.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:32A

TEACHING ABOUT ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUGS

In accordance with state and federal law, the District shall provide age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, evidence-based alcohol, tobacco, and drug prevention education programs in grades K – 12.

The alcohol, tobacco, and drug prevention program shall address the legal, social, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use, with emphasis on nonuse by school-age children. The program also shall include information about effective techniques and skill development for delaying and abstaining from using, as well as skills for addressing peer pressure to use alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.

The objectives of this program, as stated below, are rooted in the Committee's belief that prevention requires education, and that the most important aspect of the policies and guidelines of the District should be the education of children and youth on healthy decision-making:

- To prevent, delay, and/or reduce alcohol, tobacco, and drug use among children and youth.
- To increase students' understanding of the legal, social, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarette, and drug use.
- To teach students self-management skills, social skills, negotiation skills, and refusal skills that will help them to make healthy decisions and avoid alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarette, and drug use.

The curriculum, instructional materials, and outcomes used in this program shall be recommended by the Superintendent and approved by the School Committee.

This policy shall be posted on the district's website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents in accordance with state law. Additionally, the district shall file a copy of this policy with DESE in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:1, 71:96

CROSS REFS: GBEC, Drug Free Workplace Policy
JICH, Drug and Alcohol Use by Students

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACCOMMODATIONS

(PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES)

The requirements of law and regulation will be followed in the identification of students with disabilities, in referrals for their evaluation, in prescribing for them suitable programs and in assessing their educational progress. In keeping with state requirements, all students with disabilities between the ages of three and twenty-two who have not attained a high school diploma or its equivalent will be eligible for special education services.

The School Committee believes that most students with disabilities can be educated in the regular school program if they are given special instruction, accommodations and the support they need. Students with disabilities should also be given the opportunity to participate in the school system's non-academic and extracurricular activities.

The Committee recognizes that the needs of certain children are so great that special programs, special classes or special schools may be necessary. When appropriate programs, services or facilities are not available within the public schools, the Committee will provide students with access to schools where such instruction and accommodations are available.

It is the desire of the Committee that the schools work closely with parents in designing and providing programs and services to students with disabilities. Parents will be informed, and conferred with, whenever a child is referred for evaluation. In the event of any disagreement concerning diagnosis, program plan, special placement, or evaluation, the parents will be accorded the right of due process.

The District will secure properly trained personnel to work with the children requiring special needs services. Since the financial commitment necessary to meet the needs of all of these children is extensive, the Committee will make every effort to obtain financial assistance.

LEGAL REFS: The Individuals with Disabilities Ed. Act (PL 108-446, adopted 12/03/04)
Rehabilitation Act of 1973

M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq.

603 CMR 28:00 inclusive

PROGRAMS FOR STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES

In keeping with the intention of the state of Massachusetts to offer educational opportunities to all students that will enable them to lead fulfilling and productive lives, the District shall provide appropriate educational opportunities to all resident students in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes.

LEGAL REF.: Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504

OBSERVATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

1. Parent/guardian requests to observe their child(ren), current program, or a potential placement must be made at least five days in advance with the Special Education Director or designee and/or Principal.
2. The Special Education Director or designee shall contact the parent/guardian(s) for initial scheduling conversation within five (5) days of receipt of the parents' request.
3. When a parent/guardian requests an observation of a student with disabilities or program, the Special Education Director or designee will seek approval from the Director of Special Education and the building principal before it is processed. Such approval may only be withheld for those reasons outlined within law and DESE regulation.
4. The Special Education Director or designee and/or Principal will work with the classroom teacher and the observer to set up the specifics of the observation (including, but not limited to, scheduling and placement of the observer in the classroom).
5. The number, frequency, and duration of observation periods will be determined on an individual student basis in accordance with law and regulation. The start and end time of observation periods and a schedule of observation periods will be stated in advance. In order to minimize classroom or student disruption, the length of individual observation periods may be limited.
6. If the observer is not the parent/guardian, the parent/guardian must sign a release for the individual to observe.
7. The number of observers at any one time may be limited.
8. The observer will be informed that he/she is not to interfere with the educational environment of the classroom. If his/her presence presents a problem, he/she will be asked to leave. This notice is particularly important, since the presence of parents can influence both the performance of their child(ren) and those of others.
9. The observer will be asked to submit his/her report of the observation in advance of any follow-up TEAM meeting.
10. The observer will be informed that he/she is there to evaluate the appropriateness of a specific educational program to meet the needs of an individual child. He/she is not there to evaluate a teacher's ability to perform his/her contractual job duties.
11. The observer will be instructed regarding the disclosure of confidential or personally identifiable information relating to other children. Staff must be mindful of removing materials which may be part of students' records from plain view. In the event that removal is not possible the observer may be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement.
12. A school administrator, or designee, also will observe at the same time and take notes as to what is observed, paying particular attention to note anything that is non-typical concerning the period. This observation summary will be placed in the student's file and provided to the parent/guardian(s) prior to any follow-up TEAM meeting.

LEGAL REF.: MGL 71B:3

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2009-2 dated January 8, 2009.

CROSS REF.: KI, Visitors to Schools

ADOPTED: September 2009

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

The District shall provide suitable research-based language instructional programs for all identified English language learners in grades Kindergarten through 12 in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes and Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education regulations and guidance.

The District shall identify students whose dominant language may not be English through home language surveys that identify a primary home language is other than English, observations, intake assessments, and recommendations of parents, teachers and other persons. Identified students shall be assessed annually to determine their level of proficiency in the English language.

The District shall certify to the Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education each year those students whose dominant language is not English, including specification of the number of non-English languages identified as dominant languages and the number and percent of students who speak each non-English language as their dominant language.

The District shall provide additional information as required by the Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education to comply with federal law.

LEGAL REFS.: PL114-95 Every Student Succeeds Act
42 U.S.C. 2000d (Title VI of the Civil rights Act of 1964)
603 CMR 14.00

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

The schools may furnish homebound instruction to those students who are unable to attend classes for at least two consecutive weeks due to a physical injury, medical situation, or a severe emotional problem. The instruction is designed to provide maintenance in the basic academic courses so that when a student returns to school he/she will not be at a disadvantage because of the missed school days.

To qualify for the program, the student needs a written statement from a medical doctor requesting the homebound instruction, stating the reasons why, and estimating the time the student will be out of school. This statement needs to be sent to the school principal.

Homebound instruction is offered in basic elementary subjects and in secondary subjects which do not require laboratories and special equipment, subject in all cases to the availability of qualified teachers. Certified teachers shall be assigned to homebound instruction by the Superintendent or designee.

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 in advance 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.

Parents are expected to provide evidence of their child's Home Schooling Program once a year. Students completing high school through Home Schooling Programs are not eligible for a Worcester Public Schools' Diploma.

A student being educated through Home Schooling may have access to public school activities of an extra-curricular nature (e.g. sports, clubs) with the approval of the Superintendent or designee.

The district reserves the right to allow enrolled students to have precedence or priority over the home schooled student with regard to placement on sports teams and activities that have limited enrollment provided that he or she does not displace an enrolled student. Home schooled students applying to participate in district-sponsored sports must follow the Worcester Public Schools athletic eligibility guidelines.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [69:1D](#): [76:1](#). Care and Protection of Charles

Care and Protections of Charles - MASS. Supreme Judicial Court 399 Mass. 324 (1987)

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Some children have great difficulty coping with the conventional school program and as a result will drop out of school. Some children require more support and direct supervision than is reasonably available in conventional school settings.

The School Committee will provide alternative education programs where these needs have been identified, where establishment of such programs is feasible, and where the proposed programs fall within the function normally associated with the public school system.

These alternative educational programs will seek to provide an appropriate structured academic setting to aid these young people either to reenter the regular school system, move into another educational setting, or prepare them for successful employment.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37I; 71:37J

603 CMR 17.00

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The School Committee believes that materials appropriate to the needs of the school program must be available to each student and teacher. These will be furnished by the School Committee subject to budgetary constraints.

The task of selecting instructional materials for programs will be delegated to the professional staff of the school system. Because instructional programs and materials are of great importance, only those that meet the following criteria will be approved by the Committee:

1. They must present balanced views of international, national, and local issues and problems of the past, present and future.
2. They must provide materials that stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic and ethical values.
3. They must help students develop abilities in critical reading and thinking.
4. They must help develop and foster an appreciation of cultural diversity and development in the United States and throughout the world.
5. They must provide for all students an effective basic education that does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, physical disabilities or sexual orientation.
6. They must allow sufficient flexibility for meeting the special needs of individual students and groups of students.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30B:7; 71:48; 71:49; 71:50

BESE regulations 603 CMR [26.00](#)

CROSS REF.: [KEC](#), Public Complaints about the Curriculum or Instructional Materials

RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

Material that is challenged usually belongs to one of the three basic categories: religion, ideology, or profanity/obscenity. Board policies regarding these areas shall be as follows:

Religion -- Factual, unbiased material on religions has a place in school libraries.

Ideologies -- Libraries should, with no thought toward swaying reader judgment, make available a balanced collection of primary and factual material, on the level of their students on various ideologies or philosophies which exert or have exerted a strong force, either favorably or unfavorably, in government, current events, politics, education and other phases of life.

Profanity/obscenity -- Materials shall be subjected to a test of literary merit and reality in context using the criteria established.

When a problem concerning instructional resources in a school arises, the disposition of the problem will be made in a reasonable period of time using District adopted procedures.

In accordance with the statement of philosophy, no questioned materials shall be removed from the school pending a final decision. Pending the outcome of the request for reconsideration, however, access to questioned materials can be denied to the child of the family making the complaint, if they so desire.

If the decision of the School Committee is that the questioned instructional resource be retained, the District will not convene a Review Committee relative to the same complaint for a period of three years. If a substantially different point of view is advanced, it will be investigated. (The period of three years does not apply in this instance).

If an individual or a group undertakes action to keep material from the shelves by checking it out and failing to return it, or by taking turns in keeping it checked out so that it is not available for student use, the Superintendent shall request, in writing, the return of the material. If it is not returned within thirty (30) days, a bill for the current replacement cost of the item shall be rendered to the party holding the item.

After the School Committee has adopted new materials or approved certain methods, that decision will not be reconsidered for a period of three years beginning with the end of the school year when the adoption is made.

LIBRARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

The School Committee endorses the School Library Bill of Rights, as adopted by the American Library Association, which asserts that the responsibility of the school library is to:

1. Provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of the students served.
2. Provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards.
3. Provide a background of information that will enable students to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives.
4. Provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that young citizens may develop under guidance the practice of critical reading and thinking.
5. Provide materials representative of the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contributions to our American heritage.
6. Place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate for the users of the library.

Initial purchase suggestions for library materials may come from all personnel, teachers, coordinators, and administrators. Students will also be encouraged to make suggestions. The librarian will recommend materials to be included in the school library. Final approval and authority for distribution of funds will rest with the building Principal subject to the approval of the Superintendent.

Gifts of library books will be accepted in keeping with the above policy on selection. Complaints about library books will be handled in line with Committee policy on complaints about instructional materials.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR [26:05](#)

CROSS REF.: [KEC](#), Public Complaints about the Curriculum or Instructional Materials

LIBRARY RESOURCES

The primary objective of the library/media center is to implement its resources to enrich and to support the educational program of the school.

Definition of Library Resources

Library resources are those print, non-print, and digital materials found in school libraries which support curricular and personal information needs.

Criteria for Selection of Library Resources

The criteria for selection of library resources in the District are:

- Needs of the individual student

Based on knowledge of students

Based on requests of parents and students

- Needs of the individual school

Based on knowledge of the curriculum of the school

Based on requests from the professional staff

- Provision of a wide range of materials on many levels of difficulty with a diversity of appeal and the presentation of different points of view.
- Provision of materials of high artistic quality.
- Provision of materials with superior format.
- Reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids are consulted as guides.

In accordance with the District's policy of providing instructional materials on opposing sides of controversial issues, it should be noted that neither the media centers nor the District serve as advocates for the ideas expressed in any materials, nor does the presence of any material indicate automatic endorsement of the ideas expressed therein.

Disclosure of Information/Privacy of Circulation Records

Circulation records shall not be made available to anyone except pursuant to such process, order, or subpoena as may be authorized by law.

Re-evaluation (Weeding) of Library Resources

The continuous review of library/media center materials is necessary as a means of maintaining a useful and active collection. As new materials are selected and added, some older materials are withdrawn. The responsibility for determining which materials are to be withdrawn rests with the professional staff.

Among the reasons for withdrawing an item are the following:

- Curricular changes have rendered some materials superfluous (or multiple copies of materials) formerly used but no longer in demand.
- Some materials contain factual material that is no longer accurate nor current.

- Some materials intended for recreational reading have become dated or unattractive and are no longer in demand. (Some such books, which are deemed "standards" or "classics", will be retained even though they rarely circulate).
- Some materials have become worn out, damaged or physically deteriorated and have lost utility and/or appeal.
- Some materials have been superseded by newer items, which present the same information, but in superior format.

Withdrawn library/media center materials are processed in one or more of the following ways:

- Made available to be used as resource or supplementary material by teachers.
- Offered to other media centers in the District, as it is possible that a material, which lacks utility in one building, may have some usefulness in another.
- Contributed to appropriate charitable or educational agencies.
- Discarded, when warranted.

Continuing evaluation is closely related to the goals and responsibilities of library/media centers and is a valuable tool of collection development. This procedure is not to be used as a convenient or expedient means to remove materials presumed to be controversial or likely to be disapproved by segments of the community. Materials are not to be proscribed or removed because of actual or potential partisan or doctrinal disapproval, nor because of the origin, background or views of those contributing to their creation.

ACCESS TO DIGITAL RESOURCES

The School Committee supports the right of students, employees, and community members to have reasonable access to digital resources and believes it is incumbent upon users to utilize this privilege in an appropriate manner.

Safety Procedures and Guidelines

The Superintendent or designee will develop and implement appropriate procedures to provide guidance for access to digital resources. Guidelines will address ethical use of digital resources and issues of privacy versus administrative review of electronic files and communications. In addition, guidelines will prohibit use of digital resources for prohibited or illegal activities or damaging or destroying programs or data.

Internet safety measures shall be implemented that effectively address the following:

- Controlling access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA);
- Safety and security of minors when they are using e-mail, instant messaging applications, and other forms of direct electronic communications;
- Preventing unauthorized access, including hacking, viruses, and other unlawful activities by minors online;
- Unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information regarding minors.

Annually the district will provide the Committee with an update of its student acceptable use policy to be published in the student handbook. The Committee will review this policy in conjunction with the student handbook.

PERMISSION/AGREEMENT FORM

All students and faculty must agree to and sign the Student Handbook prior to being granted independent access to digital resources and district networks. The required form, which specifies guidelines for using digital resources and district networks, must be signed by the parent or legal guardian of minor students (those under 18 years of age) and also by the student. The document will be kept on file as a legal, binding document. All staff must agree to and sign the Employee Acceptable Use form.

Employee Use

Employees will use email, district devices, and district networks for work related activities only.

Community Use

The Superintendent or designee will determine when and which computer equipment, software, and information access systems will be available to the community.

Disregard of Rules

Individuals who refuse to sign the student handbook or Employee Acceptable Use form, or who violate district rules governing the use of district technology or networks will be subject to loss or restriction of the privilege of using equipment, software, information access systems, and/or other computing and telecommunications technologies.

Responsibility for Damages

Individuals may be responsible for the repair or replacement of any district property lost, stolen, damaged, or vandalized while under their care.

Responding to Concerns

School officials will apply the same educational suitability criteria used to review other educational resources when questions arise concerning access to digital resources.

LEGAL REFS: 47 USC § 254

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Purpose

The Worcester Public Schools will provide access for employees and students to interactive technology, including but not limited to, access to external networks for appropriate educational purposes. Educational purposes will be defined as classroom activities, career and professional development, and high quality self-discovery activities of an educational nature. The purpose of the system/network is to assist in preparing students for success in life and work by providing access to a wide range of information and the ability to communicate with others. The system/network will be used for communication (staff, parent, and student), productivity, and to assist staff in upgrading existing skills and acquiring new skills through a broader exchange of information. The system/network will also be used to provide information to the community, including parents, governmental agencies, and businesses.

Availability

The Superintendent or designee shall implement, monitor, and evaluate the district's information systems and network for instructional and administrative purposes.

Access to the information systems and network, including external networks, will be made available to employees and students for instructional and administrative purposes in accordance with administrative regulations and procedures.

Access to the information systems and network is a privilege, not a right. All users will be required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of all administrative regulations and procedures governing use of the system and will agree in writing to comply with such regulations and procedures. Noncompliance with applicable regulations and procedures may result in suspension or termination of user privileges and other disciplinary actions consistent with the policies of the Worcester Public Schools. Violations of law may result in criminal prosecution as well as disciplinary action by the Worcester Public Schools.

Acceptable Use

The Superintendent or designee will develop and implement administrative regulations, procedures, and user agreements, consistent with the purposes and mission of the Worcester Public Schools as well as with applicable law.

Monitored Use

Official emails, documents, and other district digital resources used by students and staff will not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time by designated staff to ensure appropriate use for instructional and administrative purposes.

Liability

The Worcester Public Schools will not be liable for users' inappropriate use of electronic resources or violations of copyright restrictions, users' mistakes or negligence, or costs incurred by users. The Worcester Public Schools will not be responsible for ensuring the accuracy or usability of any information found on external networks.

WEB PAGE PUBLICATION

Purpose

The Worcester Public Schools has established a district-wide website for district, school, and program use. The district maintains these web pages for educational, informative purposes, and support only, in furtherance of its educational mission. In addition, the district maintains a social media presence on several platforms to expand the district communication reach where the public at large consumes online media.

Supervision and Approval of Web Pages and Social Media Posts

Only those web pages and posts maintained in accordance with Committee policy and established procedures will be recognized as official representations of the district or individual schools. All information on a school or district web page or social media site must accurately reflect the mission, goals, policies, program, and activities of the school and district. Web pages and posts must have a purpose that falls within at least one of three categories:

1. Support of curriculum, instruction, and employees – intended to provide educational and employee resources and information.
2. Public information – intended to communicate information about the schools, community, and district to students, staff, parents, community, and the public at large.
3. District technology support – intended to provide and respond to instructional and administrative technology needs of students and staff.

The Superintendent (or designee) may select the person or persons (the Online Media Specialist) responsible for overseeing the district's web pages/posts and maintaining the web pages/posts in a manner consistent with this policy and Policy IJND: Access to Digital Resources. The Online Media Specialist must approve all links from the main district web pages/post to other sites on the Internet. The Online Media Specialist will review the links to ensure the links fall within the categories specified above.

Staff members may publish web pages related to their school, class, or courses on their school's website. Building principals or managers must periodically review staff members' online material for appropriate content.

Student or staff work (for example, audio, video, written material, musical pieces, and graphic or other artwork) may be published on district web pages, as detailed below.

Content Standards

All web page/posts are expected to be accurate, grammatically correct, and free of spelling errors. Student work may deviate from this standard depending upon the age and grade level of the student. Web pages/posts should be well organized and professional in appearance. Web pages/posts must not contain copyrighted or trademarked material belonging to others unless written permission to display such material has been obtained from the owner and the owner is credited on the district's website.

The district is ultimately responsible for any post that appears on the district, school web pages or official social media site. Concern about the content of any page(s) created by students or staff should be directed to the principal, manager, or to the Superintendent's office.

Safety Precautions

1. Student photographs
 - A. Student photographs will be published only with the written consent of the student's parent or guardian.
 - B. Student photographs will not be accompanied by identifying information about the student(s).
2. Student work
 - A. Student work (for example, audio, video, written material, musical pieces, and graphic

or other artwork) may be published only with the written consent of the student's parent or guardian.

3. Staff photographs, identifying information and work
 - A. Photographs of staff members, accompanied by the staff member's full name, may be published only with the staff member's written consent.
 - B. Staff work, (for example, audio, video, written material, musical pieces, and graphic or other artwork), may be published only with the staff member's written consent.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION/SOCIAL MEDIA

The Superintendent and principals will annually remind staff members and orient new staff members concerning the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the on-line, digital world as well as in person. Employees must conduct themselves in ways that do not distract from or disrupt the educational process. The orientation and reminders will give special emphasis to:

1. Improper fraternization with students and any/all other Internet sites or social networks, or via cell phone, texting, or telephone
 - A. Teachers may not list current students as "friends" on networking sites
 - B. All electronic communication with students should be through the district's official communication system and telephone system, except in emergency situations
 - C. Teachers will not give out their private cell phone or home phone numbers without prior approval of the district
 - D. Inappropriate contact via any means of communication is prohibited
2. Inappropriateness of publicly posting items with sexual content
3. Inappropriateness of publicly posting items exhibiting or advocating use of illegal or inappropriate substances, including but not limited to drugs, alcohol, tobacco or e- cigarette products, and prescription/over-the-counter/herbal medications
4. Monitoring and penalties for improper use of district computers, tablets, and all relevant digital resources
5. The possibility of penalties, including dismissal from employment, for failure to exercise good judgment in on-line conduct
6. The importance of professionalism in all communication
7. Adherence to student privacy rights and the rights of employees to have their personnel and medical information kept confidential. Information that is protected by law from disclosure to third parties will not be communicated online in a way that unreasonably exposes such information
8. Records retention requirements for student data and transcripts

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips can bring the school and the community closer together, which can result in real life experiences that enrich the curriculum for students and also bring about better public relations. The School Committee will also encourage field trips as an integral part of the instructional programs in the schools.

The Superintendent will establish regulations to assure that:

1. All students have parental permission for trips.
2. All trips are properly supervised.
3. All safety precautions are observed.
4. All trips contribute substantially to the educational program.
5. All trips allow student access without regard of family ability to pay.

All out-of-state or extended (overnight) trips and excursions, except those required for student participation in tournament competition or contests, must have advance approval of the Superintendent. Fundraising activities for such trips will be subject to approval by the appropriate Administrator.

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

CROSS REF.: [JJH](#), Policy Relating to Field Trips Involving Late Night or Overnight Travel

COMMUNITY RESOURCE PERSONS/ SPEAKERS

Community resources are those individuals or groups who are invited into the schools to present supplementary information and ideas to the classroom course of study. These experiences afford students the opportunity to benefit from community viewpoints. Care should be taken in selecting these speakers so that they are individuals who respect diversity in thinking and varying views and who are not attempting to inappropriately influence points of view.

CROSS REF.: [ADDA](#), C.O.R.I. Requirements

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

It is the policy of the School Committee to encourage volunteer efforts in the schools. Parents/guardians, business representatives, senior citizens, and other community volunteers are recognized as important sources of support and expertise to enhance the instructional program and vital communication links with the community. The volunteer program will be coordinated in cooperation with building administrators, and following District volunteer guidelines such as C.O.R.I. checks.

CROSS REF.: [ADDA](#), C.O.R.I. Requirements

STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

The School Committee recognizes the school's obligation to give periodic reports of a student's progress and grades. The School Committee further recognizes that these reports are a vital form of communication between the schools and parent/guardian. The School Committee also believes that all progress reports must be based upon full information, accurately and honestly reported with the proper maintenance of confidentiality.

Reports depicting a student's progress will be issued periodically following an evaluation by the appropriate teacher, teachers, or other professional personnel.

In addition to the periodic reports, parents will be notified when a student's performance warrants attention.

Grading and promotion will be based on improvement, achievement, capability of the student, and the professional judgment of the teacher and Principal.

Major changes in the reporting system shall be preceded by a cooperative study and evaluation by teachers, principals, parents, and the Assistant Superintendent, who will submit the proposal to the School Committee for consideration and approval.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

The School Committee is dedicated to the best total and continuous development of each student enrolled. The professional staff is expected to place students at the grade level best suited to them academically, socially, and emotionally.

In evaluating student achievement, each teacher will make use of all available information, including results of teacher-made tests and other measures of skill and content mastery, standardized test results, and teacher observation of student performance. The Principal will direct and aid teachers in their evaluations and review grade assignments in order to ensure uniformity of evaluation standards.

Students will normally progress annually from grade to grade. Exceptions may be made when, in the judgment of the professional staff, such exceptions are in the best educational interest of the students involved. Exceptions will only be made after prior notification and explanation to each student's parents/guardians, but the final decision will rest with the building Principal.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to graduate from the Worcester Public Schools, a student must have earned at least 24 credits and complied with all state accountability requirements. Course requirements are the following:

Grade 9 beginning 2013-14

4 credits English

4 credits Mathematics (Effective with the graduating class of 2019, three of the four courses must include Algebra I and II, Geometry or Trigonometry)

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

Other requirements may be established by the school administration in relation to the particular program, otherwise the additional credits needed for a graduation may be selected from among elective courses. For the total number of credits required please see the high school program of studies or student handbook.

Credit for Foreign Study: Students who are away for a term or year to participate in a student exchange program or otherwise study abroad may receive credits toward high school graduation when (1) study plans are approved by the school administration in advance; and (2) the institution where the study occurred submits a record of the student's work. In these instances, the Principal and student's guidance counselor will evaluate the work and assign credit for it according to standards prevailing in the District.

EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

The School Committee considers comprehensive and objective evaluation of the effectiveness of the curriculum to be of primary importance. The Superintendent will provide for the translation of the stated instructional goals into objectives and for appraisal of their implementation in order to:

1. Determine educational needs and provide information for planning.
2. Indicate instructional strengths and weaknesses.
3. Check on the suitability of programs in terms of community requirements.
4. Show the relationship between achievement and the system's stated goals.
5. Provide data for public information.

Elements of this evaluation process may include:

1. Testing programs such as nationally standardized general achievement tests, nationally standardized tests in specific subject areas, and tests administered by other agencies.
2. Study of school achievement records.
3. Study of students' high school and drop-out records.
4. Use of outside services, participation in regional research studies, contracted evaluation services; evaluation services at cost to the school system must be approved in advance by the School Committee.
5. Teacher and parent/guardian evaluation of student behavior.
6. State Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education specialists and services.
7. Evaluation by the regional accrediting association.
8. Evaluation by other agencies.

An evaluation of the curriculum and its effectiveness will be made periodically and reported to the Committee by the Superintendent.

TEACHING ACTIVITIES/PRESENTATIONS

It is the desire of the School Committee that the best available strategies for bringing about learning be utilized in the District's schools. The instructional staff shall be expected to keep abreast of new and promising instructional ideas and practices developed in schools throughout the nation and to apply those which have potential for improving the learning program in the District's schools.

An educational climate shall be established which shall be conducive to rational thought, inquiry, and respect for the dignity of the individual. This educational climate will assist students in learning how to think rather than what to think and shall provide students the opportunity to identify, express, and defend their opinions without penalty or fear of reprisal or ridicule.

Nothing in this policy shall limit a parent/guardian's right to file a complaint to challenge the use of teaching activity or presentation.

TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES/CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKERS

An important goal of the schools is to help prepare students for intelligent and conscientious participation as citizens in our democratic society. One step toward meeting this goal is to introduce students to reasoned and dispassionate approaches to the analysis of contemporary social and political issues. To insure that these issues can be examined in an atmosphere as free from emotion and prejudice as the times permit, the School Committee establishes the following guidelines for discussion of controversial issues in the schools.

Teacher-Planned Classroom Discussions

1. Controversial issues selected by teachers for classroom discussion must relate directly to the objectives and content of courses approved by the School Committee for inclusion in the curriculum.
2. The teachers' right to introduce controversial issues in classroom presentations does not include the right of advocacy. Teachers must refrain from using their positions to express partisan points of view.
3. The approach to discussion of these issues in the classroom must be objective and scholarly with minimum emphasis on opinion and maximum emphasis on intelligent analysis.
4. Teachers must ensure that the reasoned arguments of all sides of an issue are given equal presentation and emphasis in classroom discussions.
5. Teachers may invite visitors from outside the schools to give presentations on controversial issues when the visitors offer qualifications and resources not available in the schools. All visitors are to be guided by the standards of language usage that prevail in the classrooms and by the standards of scholarly inquiry set forth above. Whenever possible, teachers who invite visitors to present one side of an issue will also invite visitors to present the other side(s).
6. In all cases teachers must obtain from the appropriate Principal permission to invite visitors for classroom presentations. Permission must be requested at least 48 hours before the scheduled time of presentation.

Student-Initiated Forums on Controversial Issues

Student groups may request permission to conduct forums on controversial issues in the schools. The Principal may grant such requests under the following conditions:

1. Preparation for presentation of a forum will not cause any student or teacher to miss class and will not cause the cancellation of any class.
2. Adequate advance planning must be conducted for each forum. A request to hold a forum must be received by the Principal at least three weeks before the scheduled date of presentation. For each request the Principal will appoint, after consultation with the requesting student group, an adult advisory group consisting of at least two parents and two faculty members.
3. The standards for approach to discussion, style of presentation, and use of visitors as defined above will apply to student-initiated forums.

Requests from Groups or Individuals Outside the Schools

No permission will be granted to non-school groups or individuals to make presentations on controversial issues in the schools during school hours. Requests for after-school or evening use will

be processed in accordance with the policy on community use of school facilities.

No permission will be granted outsiders for distribution of literature on controversial issues to students in general or to class groups.

A Principal may grant an outside group or individual permission to post one notice of a public meeting for discussion of issues if the language of that notice conforms to the standards that prevail in the community. The Principal will determine the appropriate bulletin board for such notices.

SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES

The United States Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Massachusetts and related court rulings clearly establish the concept of "church and state separation" and the "preclusion of sectarian instruction in public schools."

In order to help staff members abide by the spirit and letter of the law, and to avoid compromising any student's religious or conscientious beliefs or freedoms, the following guidelines have been established:

The observance of religious holidays is not the responsibility of the public schools.

While it is recognized that many activities are initiated with the approach of major holidays in order to capitalize on the readiness and interest that is generated at these times, it should be understood that such occasions frequently have religious underpinnings. Care should be taken to relate only to secular aspects of these holidays.

Music programs given at times close to religious holidays should not use religious aspects of these holidays as the underlying motive or theme. Although religious music is appropriate in the schools to the extent that it is sung or presented for musical rather than religious content, its use should not violate the secular nature of the school. Pageants, plays, recitals, and other literary or dramatic activities should not be used to convey religious messages. While the holidays represent a valid source of ideas for meaningful school art experiences, teachers should avoid assigning or encouraging art work that promotes religious aspects of such holidays. If, however, individual students choose to use a religious personage, event, or symbol as the vehicle for an artistic expression, they should be allowed to take this action.

The above statements should not be interpreted to preclude the factual and objective teaching about religions, religious holidays, and religious differences. Such instruction will be permitted in the schools since insights in this area can enhance the mutual understanding needed by all the people in a pluralistic society.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR [26:05](#)

ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

No animal shall be brought to school without prior permission of the building Principal.

The School District is committed to providing a high quality educational program to all students in a safe and healthy environment.

School Principals, in consultation with the Health Services Providers in each building, shall utilize the Department of Public Health publication "Guidelines for Animals in Schools or on School Grounds" and review student health records to determine which animals may be allowed in the school building. The decision of the Principal shall be final.

Educational Program

Use of animals to achieve specific curriculum objectives may be allowed by the building Principal provided student health and safety is not jeopardized and the individual requesting that the animal be brought to school is responsible for adhering to the "Guidelines for Animals in Schools or on School Grounds" and any other conditions established by the Principal to protect the health and well-being of students.

Student Health

The health and well-being of students is the District's highest priority. Animals may cause an allergic reaction or otherwise impair the health of students. No animals may be brought to school or kept in the school, classroom, office or common area that may negatively impact the health of any student who must utilize that area. Animals that cause an allergic reaction or impair the health of students shall be removed from the school immediately so that no student shall have his/her health impaired and each student shall have full access to available educational opportunities.

Animals Prohibited from School

Rabies is a growing problem and any fur-bearing animal is susceptible to this very serious fatal disease. Infected animals can transmit this disease to students and staff. Based on the Massachusetts Departments of Health and Education recommendations the following animals are prohibited from schools within the School District:

Wild Animals and Domestic Stray Animals - Because of the high incidence of rabies in bats, raccoons, skunks, foxes and other wild carnivores, these animals should not be permitted in school buildings under any circumstances (including dead animals).

Fur-Bearing Animals (pet dogs, * cats, wolf-hybrids, ferrets, etc.,) - These animals may pose a risk for transmitting rabies, as well as parasites, fleas, other diseases and injuries.

Bats - Bats pose a high risk for transmitting rabies. Bat houses should not be installed on school grounds and bats should not be brought into the school building.

Poisonous Animals - Spiders, venomous insects and poisonous snakes, reptiles and lizards are prohibited for safety reasons.

***Exception: Guide, Hearing and Other Service Dogs or Law Enforcement Dogs** - These animals may be allowed in school or on school grounds with proof of current rabies vaccination.

Exceptions may be made with the prior approval of the Superintendent of Schools.

Service Animals (Guide or Assistance Dogs)

The School Committee does not permit discrimination against individuals with disabilities, including those who require the assistance of a service animal. The District will comply with Massachusetts law concerning the rights of persons with guide or assistance dogs and with federal law and will permit such animals on school premises and on school transportation.

For purposes of this policy, a "service animal includes any dog that has been individually trained to do the work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability." The regulations further state that "a public entity shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a miniature horse by an individual with a disability if the horse has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with the disability."

Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that individuals with disabilities cannot perform themselves. Service animals are not pets. There are several kinds of service animals that assist individuals with disabilities. Examples include, but are not limited to, animals that:

- assist individuals who are blind or have severe sight impairments as "seeing eye dogs" or "guide dogs;"
- alert individuals with hearing impairments to sounds;
- pull wheelchairs or carry and pick-up items for individuals with mobility impairments; and assist mobility-impaired individuals with balance.

The District shall not assume or take custody or control of, or responsibility for, any service animal or the care or feeding thereof. The owner or person having custody and control of the animal shall be liable for any damage to persons, premises, property, or facilities caused by the service animal, including, but not limited to, clean up, stain removal, etc.

If, in the opinion of the School Principal or authorized designee, any service animal is not in the control of its handler, or if it is not housebroken, the service animal may be excluded from the school or program. The service animal can also be excluded if it presents a direct and immediate threat to others in the school. The parent or guardian of the student having custody and control of the animal will be required to remove the service animal from District premises immediately.

If any student or staff member assigned to the classroom in which a service animal is permitted suffers an allergic reaction to the animal, the person having custody and control of the animal will be required to remove the animal to a different location designated by the Building Principal or designee and an alternative plan will be developed with appropriate District staff. Such plan could include the reassignment of the person having custody and control of the animal to a different classroom. This will also apply if an individual on school transportation suffers an allergic reaction. In this case, an alternate plan will be developed in coordination with appropriate school, District, and transportation staff including the involvement of the parents/guardian of the student.

When a student will be accompanied by a service animal at school or in other District facilities on a regular basis, such staff member or such student's parent or guardian, as well as the animal's owner and any other person who will have custody and control of the animal will be required to sign a document stating that they have read and understood the foregoing.

The Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee shall be responsible for developing procedures to accommodate a student's use of an assistance animal in District facilities and on school transportation vehicles.

LEGAL REF.: 28 CFR, Part 35

SECTION J - STUDENTS

Proposed

<u>JB</u>	EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
<u>JC</u>	ATTENDANCE AREAS
<u>JCA</u>	ASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS TO SCHOOLS
<u>JEB</u>	ENTRANCE AGE
<u>JF</u>	SCHOOL ADMISSIONS
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<u>JFABD</u>	HOMELESS STUDENTS: ENROLLMENT RIGHTS AND SERVICES
<u>JFBB</u>	SCHOOL CHOICE
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<u>JI</u>	STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
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<u>JIC</u>	STUDENT DISCIPLINE
<u>JICA</u>	STUDENT DRESS CODE
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<u>JICF</u>	GANG ACTIVITY/SECRET SOCIETIES
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<u>JICFA-E</u>	HAZING
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<u>JICH</u>	ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUG USE BY STUDENTS PROHIBITED
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<u>JII</u>	STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES
<u>JJ</u>	CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
<u>JJA</u>	STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS
<u>JJE</u>	STUDENT FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES
<u>JJF</u>	STUDENT ACTIVITY ACCOUNTS
<u>JJH</u>	STUDENT LATE NIGHT OR OVERNIGHT TRAVEL
<u>JJH-R</u>	STUDENT TRAVEL REGULATIONS
<u>JJIB</u>	INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS
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<u>JKA</u>	CORPORAL PUNISHMENT
<u>JKAA</u>	PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS
<u>JL</u>	STUDENT WELFARE
<u>JLA</u>	STUDENT INSURANCE PROGRAM
<u>JLC</u>	STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS
<u>JLCA</u>	PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS OF STUDENTS
<u>JLCB</u>	INOCULATIONS OF STUDENTS
<u>JLCC</u>	COMMUNICABLE DISEASES
<u>JLCD</u>	ADMINISTERING MEDICINES TO STUDENTS
<u>JLD</u>	GUIDANCE PROGRAM
<u>JP</u>	STUDENT GIFTS AND SOLICITATIONS

[JQ](#)

[JRA](#)

[JRD](#)

STUDENT FEES, FINES, AND CHARGES

STUDENT RECORDS

STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHS

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

In recognition of the diversified characteristics and needs of our students and with the keen desire to be responsive to them, the School Committee will make every effort to protect the dignity of the students as individuals. It also will offer careful consideration and sympathetic understanding of their personal feelings, particularly with reference to their race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, homelessness, or physical and intellectual differences.

To accomplish this, the Committee and its staff will make every effort to comply with the letter and the spirit of the Massachusetts equal educational opportunities law which prohibits discrimination in public school admissions and programs. The law reads as follows:

No child shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and course of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or homelessness.

This will mean that every student will be given equal opportunity in school admission, admissions to courses, course content, guidance, and extracurricular and athletic activities.

All implementing provisions issued by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in compliance with this law will be followed.

UPDATED: June 2012

LEGAL REFS.: Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972

Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375

Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972

M.G.L. [76:5](#); [76:16](#) (Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971)

BESE regulations 603 CMR [26:00](#)

BESE regulations 603 CMR [28.00](#)

CROSS REF.: [AC](#), Nondiscrimination

ATTENDANCE AREAS

Attendance areas for the various schools of the city will be drawn up by the Superintendent and approved by the School Committee. The primary considerations that govern the establishment of a school attendance area are school capacity and transportation considerations. Generally, students will attend the school in the attendance area in which they live.

In establishing an attendance area, the following general guidelines will also be applied:

1. Use of safe walking conditions consistent with the Committee's transportation policies; where possible, major traffic thoroughfares and natural barriers will be used for boundaries.
2. Honoring community of interest; where possible, school attendance zones will incorporate community patterns.

From time to time an overcrowded condition in an existing school, the development of new residential areas, or the opening of a new school may require the establishment or change of previously established school attendance areas.

The Committee will confer with community representatives prior to setting new attendance lines. However, the Committee's primary basis for judgment must be equality of educational opportunity for all students rather than the personal desires of any one group.

The Superintendent is authorized to make exceptions to attendance lines for individual children in the best interests of the student and/or the school.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:37C](#); [71:37D](#); [71:37I](#); [71:37J](#)
603 CMR [17.00](#)
603 CMR [26.00](#)

CROSS REF.: [JCA](#), Assignment of Students to Schools

ASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS TO SCHOOLS

Generally, students will be required to attend school in the attendance area in which they reside, unless the Superintendent has granted special permission.

Special permission may be granted for the following reasons:

1. If the change involves a hardship case, or if there are medical considerations.
2. If the change appears to be in the interests of the child, of the schools, and for disciplinary and administrative reasons.
3. If the legal residence of a child changes from one attendance area to another during the school year and the parents wish the child to remain in his former school; permission will not extend beyond the current school year.
4. To permit secondary school students to take courses not offered in their assigned schools.

School bus transportation will not be provided for students attending schools outside their attendance area unless they can be accommodated on existing bus routes and schedules, or a hardship is involved; or unless specific permission is granted by the School Committee.

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 five citywide magnet schools are: (1) Chandler Magnet School, (2) City View Discovery School, (3) Jacob Hiatt Magnet School (4) Norrback Avenue School and (5) Worcester Arts Magnet School. Elementary students residing in the North quadrant are eligible to attend the North quadrant magnet school, Roosevelt School, based on space availability. 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 Office for Instruction and School Leadership:
 - 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. Parent Information Center or the Office for Instruction and School Leadership.
- 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 Office for Instruction and School Leadership.

III. Hardship Appeals Process

If the parent/guardian disagrees with the decision of the Office for Instruction and School Leadership, 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, Parent Information Center, 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 Office for Instruction and School Leadership. Proceedings of the Hardship Appeals Board will be recorded and maintained by personnel in the Office for Instruction and School Leadership.

ENTRANCE AGE

In an attempt to permit children to enter school at the time most appropriate for them individually, the School Committee establishes the following policy on entrance age:

1. Children who will be five years of age by the last day of December of the school year during which they wish to enroll will be eligible to enter kindergarten for that school year.
2. Initial admission of children to the first grade (or other grades) will involve a consideration of both chronological age and the readiness of the children to do the work of those grades.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [15:1G](#)
603 CMR [8.00](#)

SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

All children of school age who reside in the city will be entitled to attend the public schools, as will certain children who do not reside in the city but who are admitted under School Committee policies relating to nonresident students or by specific action of the School Committee.

Advance registration for prospective kindergarten students will take place in the spring. Every student seeking admission to school for the first time must present a birth certificate or equivalent proof of age acceptable to the District and proof of vaccination and immunizations as required by the state and the School Committee. Proof of residency and of legal guardianship may also be required by the District.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [15:1G](#); [76:1](#); [76:5](#); [76:15](#); [76:15A](#)
603 CMR [26.00](#)

CROSS REFS.: [JLCA](#), Physical Examination of Students
[JLCB](#), Inoculations of Students
[JFBB](#), School Choice
[JFABD](#), Homeless Students: Enrollment Rights and Services

ADMISSION OF TRANSFER STUDENTS

The school district will enroll and place students who have left Commonwealth charter schools by adhering to the same policies and procedures in place for any other student enrolling in the school district including, but not limited to, examination of the course of study and level of academic attainment of the student when determining the student's appropriate grade placement or eligibility for high school graduation.

To the same extent provided for other students enrolling in the school district, students who enroll in the school district from a Commonwealth charter school shall be subject to the graduation requirements of the school district, may have certain graduation requirements waived, and may make-up certain graduation requirements.

LEGAL REFS.: Chapter [12, Section 11](#) of the Acts of 2010

HOMELESS STUDENTS: ENROLLMENT RIGHTS AND SERVICES

To the extent practical and as required by law, the district will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable pre-school programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs and school nutrition programs.

Homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including:

1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship;
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
3. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
4. Being abandoned in hospitals;
5. Awaiting foster care placement;
6. Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
7. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings;
8. Migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples.

The Superintendent shall designate an appropriate staff person to be the district's liaison for homeless students and their families.

To the extent feasible, homeless students will continue to be enrolled in their school of origin while they remain homeless or until the end of the academic year in which they obtain permanent housing. Instead of remaining in the school of origin, parents or guardians of homeless students may request enrollment in the school in the attendance area in which the student is actually living, or other schools. Attendance rights by living in attendance areas, other student assignment policies, or intra and inter-district choice options are available to homeless families on the same terms as families resident in the district.

If there is an enrollment dispute, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The parent or guardian shall be informed of the district's decision and their appeal rights in writing. The district's liaison will carry out dispute resolution as provided by state rule. Unaccompanied youth will also be enrolled pending resolution of the dispute.

Once the enrollment decision is made, the school shall immediately enroll the student, pursuant to district policies. If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student shall be admitted under a personal exception. Students and families should be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the district liaison is directed to assist. Records from the student's previous school shall be requested from the previous school pursuant to district policies. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies, including compliance with the state's address confidentiality program when necessary.

Homeless students are entitled to transportation to their school of origin or the school where they are to be enrolled. If the school of origin is in a different district, or a homeless student is living in another district but will attend his or her school of origin in this district, the districts will coordinate the transportation services necessary for the student, or will divide the costs equally.

The district's liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youths and their families; other school districts on issues of transportation and records transfers; and state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. This coordination includes providing public notice of the educational rights of homeless students in schools, family shelters and soup kitchens. The district's liaison will also review and recommend amendments to district policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students.

LEGAL REFS.: The McKinney-Vento Act and Title I, Part A, as Amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015

SCHOOL CHOICE

It is the policy of this School District to admit non-resident students under the terms and conditions of the Interdistrict School Choice Law and under the following local conditions:

1. Every school year, the administration will determine the number of spaces in each school available to choice students.
2. That by June 1 of every school year, if consideration is being given to withdraw from the provisions of the choice law, a public meeting will be held to review this decision.
3. That resident students be given priority placement in any classes or programs within the District.
4. That the selection of non-resident students for admission be in the form of a random drawing when the number of requests exceeds the number of available spaces.
5. Any student who is accepted for admission under the provisions of this policy is entitled to remain in the District until graduation from high school except if there is a lack of funding of the program.
6. The School Committee affirms its position that it shall not discriminate in the admission of any child on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, age, homelessness, sexual orientation, ancestry, athletic performance, physical disability, special need, academic performance or proficiency in the English language.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L.[71:6](#); [71:6A](#); [76:6](#); [76:12](#); [76:12B](#)
BESE Regulations 603 CMR [26:00](#)

SCHOOL CHOICE

If it is the policy of this school district **not** to admit nonresident students under the terms and conditions of the Interdistrict School Choice Law (M.G.L. [76:12B](#).) This decision must be reaffirmed annually prior to June 1st by a vote of the School Committee following a public hearing. In the event the School Committee votes to participate, the following local conditions would apply:

1. That by May 1 of every school year, the administration will determine the number of spaces in each school available to choice students.
2. That by June 1 of every school year, a public hearing will be held to review participation in the school choice program.
3. That resident students be given priority placement in any classes or programs within the district.
4. That the selection of nonresident students for admission when the number of requests exceeds the number of available spaces be in the form of a random drawing. There will be two drawings for this purpose. The first will take place during the last week of the current school year but no later than July 1st. The second will be conducted during the week immediately preceding the opening of the next school year and will be based on the possibility of unexpected additional openings.
5. Any student who is accepted for admission under the provisions of this policy is entitled to remain in the district until graduation from high school except if there is a lack of funding of the program.
6. The School Committee affirms its position that it shall not discriminate in the admission of any child on the basis of race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, gender identity, age, sexual orientation, homelessness, ancestry, athletic performance, physical disability, special need, academic performance or proficiency in the English language.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:6](#); [71:6A](#); [76:6](#); [76:12](#); [76:12B](#)
BESE Regulations 603 CMR [26:00](#)

STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. The Committee recognizes that parents of children attending our schools have special rights as well as responsibilities, one of which is to ensure that their children attend school regularly, in accordance with state law.

Therefore, students may be excused temporarily from school attendance for the following reasons: illness or quarantine; bereavement or serious illness in family; weather so inclement as to endanger the health of the child; and observance of major religious holidays.

A child may also be excused for other exceptional reasons with approval of the Principal or designee.

A student's understanding of the importance of day-to-day schoolwork is an important factor in the shaping of his/her character. Parents can help their children by not allowing them to miss school needlessly.

Accordingly, parents will provide a written explanation for the absence or tardiness of a child. This will be required in advance for types of absences where advance notice is possible.

In instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the school administration may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justified.

Student Absence Notification Program

The District will notify a student's parent/guardian daily of a student's absence based on morning attendance via a ConnectEd automated phone call.

Beginning with 5 absences, parents/guardians will receive an attendance letter via U.S. Mail with each absence. Each Principal, by whatever title they may be known, or designee shall make a reasonable effort to meet with any student, and that student's parent/guardian, who has missed five (5) or more unexcused school days (a school day shall be equal to two (2) or more class periods in the same day) in a school year. The meeting shall be to develop action steps to improve student attendance and shall be developed jointly by the Principal or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The parties may seek input from other relevant school staff and/or officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing, and nonprofit agencies.

Dropout Prevention

No student who has not graduated from high school shall be considered permanently removed from school unless the Principal has sent notice to a student, and that student's parent/guardian, who has been absent from school for ten (10) consecutive days of unexcused absence. The notice shall be sent within five (5) days of the tenth consecutive day of absence and shall offer at least 2 dates and times within the next ten (10) days for an exit interview with the Superintendent or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The notice shall be in both English and the primary language of the home, if applicable. The notice shall include contact information for scheduling the exit interview and shall indicate the parties shall reach an agreement on the date/time of the interview within the ten (10) day timeframe. The timeframe may be extended at the request of the parent/guardian and no extension shall exceed 14 days.

The Superintendent or designee may proceed with any interview without a parent/guardian present, provided the Superintendent has documented a good faith effort to include the parent/guardian.

The Superintendent or designee shall convene a team of school staff to participate in the exit interview and shall provide information to the student and, if applicable, the student's parent/guardian on the detrimental effects of early withdrawal from school and the alternative education programs and services available to the student.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [76:1](#); [76:1B](#); [76:16](#); [76:18](#); [76:20](#)

EXCLUSIONS AND EXEMPTIONS FROM SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Denial of Admission

Denial of admission means the withholding of the privilege of enrolling in a school of the District.

The following shall be the grounds for denial of admission to school or diversion to an appropriate alternative program:

Graduation from the twelfth grade of any school or receipt of any document evidencing completion of the equivalent of a secondary curriculum;

Failure to meet the requirements of age by a student who has reached the age of six years at a time after the beginning of the school year, as fixed by the School Committee as provided in Massachusetts General Laws;

Not being a resident of the District and the District has opted not to participate in the School Choice Law;

Failure to comply with the provisions of the Massachusetts School Entry Immunization Law.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:37H](#); [76:12](#); [76:12A](#); [76:12B](#)
603 CMR [26:00](#)

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The School Committee has the responsibility to afford students the rights that are theirs by virtue of guarantees offered under the federal and state constitutions and statutes. In connection with rights, there are responsibilities that must be assumed by students.

Among these rights and responsibilities are the following:

1. Civil rights--including the rights to equal educational opportunity and freedom from discrimination; the responsibility not to discriminate against others.
2. The right to attend free public schools; the responsibility to attend school regularly and to observe school rules essential for permitting others to learn at school.
3. The right to due process of law with respect to suspension, expulsion, and decisions the student believes injure their rights.
4. The right to free inquiry and expression; responsibility to observe reasonable rules regarding these rights.
5. The right to privacy, which includes privacy with respect to the student's school records.

It is the School Committee's belief that as part of the educational process students should be made aware of their legal rights, and of the legal authority of the School Committee to make and delegate authority to its staff to make rules regarding the orderly operation of the schools.

Students have the right to know the standards of behavior that are expected of them and the consequences of misbehavior.

The rights and responsibilities of students, including standards of conduct, will be made available to students and their parents through handbooks distributed annually.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:37H](#); [71:82](#) through [71:86](#)

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING

As appropriate to the age of students, class or school organizations and school government organizations, such as student councils, may be formed to offer practice in self-government and to serve as channels for the expression of students' ideas and opinions.

The Committee will take into consideration student opinions in establishing policies that directly affect student programs, activities, privileges and other areas of student sensitivity.

Students will be welcomed at Committee meetings and granted privileges of speaking in line with the privileges extended to the general public.

Student Advisory Committee

As required by state law, the Superintendent will meet at least once every other month while school is in session with its student advisory committee, which is composed of at least five students elected by the high school student body.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:38M](#)

CROSS REF.: [BDF](#), Advisory Committees to the School Committee

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

The School Committee believes that all students deserve every opportunity to achieve academic success in a safe, secure learning environment. Good citizenship in schools is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a way that the rights and privileges of others are not violated. They will be required to respect constituted authority, to conform to school rules and to those provisions of law that apply to their conduct.

The District shall include prohibited actions in the student handbook or other publication to be made available to students and parents.

Principals and staff shall not use academic punishment of any form as a consequence to inappropriate behaviors/actions by students.

The Principal may, as a disciplinary measure, 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 remainder of this policy, law, or regulation.

The Superintendent shall provide each Principal with a copy of the regulations promulgated by DESE.

Suspension

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed (except for offenses referenced in the note at the end of this policy), a Principal shall 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.

Notice of Suspension:

Except for emergency removal or an in-school suspension of less than 10 days, a Principal must provide the student and the parent oral and written notice, and provide the student an opportunity for a hearing and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing before imposing suspension as a consequence for misconduct. The Principal shall provide both oral and written notice to student and parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English. The notice shall include the rights enumerated in law and regulation. To conduct a hearing without a parent present, the Principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent.

Emergency Removal

A Principal 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 judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption.

The Principal shall immediately notify the Superintendent in writing of the removal including a description of 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: 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 required in the notice as referenced in the applicable regulation; Provide written notice to the student and parent as required above; Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the Principal that complies with applicable regulations, 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; 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 applicable law and regulation.

A Principal shall also ensure adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation prior to removal.

In School Suspension - not more than 10 days consecutively or cumulatively

The Principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.

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 regulation and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress as required by law and regulation.

Principal's Hearing - Short Term Suspension of up to 10 days

The hearing with the Principal shall be 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 law and regulation.

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.

The Principal shall, based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.

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 required by law and regulation. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

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.

Principal's Hearing - Long Term Suspension of more than 10 days but less than 90 days (consecutive or cumulative)

The hearing with the Principal shall be 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, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights: 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; 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 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.

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.

The Principal shall, based on the evidence, determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension as required by law and regulation, 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: Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the Principal; Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as required by law and regulation; Inform the student of the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent, 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: 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 designee's determination on appeal.

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 Hearing

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.

The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the Superintendent within the time period noted above (see Principal's hearing - Suspension of more than 10 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.

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.

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.

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. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the Principal's hearing for long-term suspension.

The Superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of law and regulation. 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. The decision of the Superintendent shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension.

Expulsion

Expulsion is defined as the removal of a student from school for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently as allowed by law for possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or 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.

Any student expelled from school for such an offense shall be afforded an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress.

Academic Progress

Any student who is suspended or expelled shall have the opportunity to earn credits, 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, in English and in the primary language of the home, 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.

The District 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 the law.

The District 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.

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 of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Reporting

The school district shall collect and annually report data to the DESE regarding in-school suspensions, short- and long-term suspensions, expulsions, emergency removals, access to education services, and such other information as may be required by the DESE.

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 accordance with law and regulation.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. [71:37H](#); [71:37H ½](#); [71:37H ¾](#); [76:17](#); 603 CMR [53.00](#)

STUDENT DRESS CODE

The responsibility for the dress and appearance of the students will rest with individual students and parents.

They have the right to determine how the student will dress providing that attire is not destructive to school property, complies with requirements for health and safety, and does not cause disorder or disruption. The administration is authorized to take action in instances where individual dress does not meet the stated requirements.

This does not mean that student, faculty, or parent/guardian groups may not recommend appropriate dress for school or special occasions. It means that students will not be prevented from attending school or a school function, or otherwise be discriminated against, so long as their dress and appearance meet the requirements set forth above.

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.

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

The School Committee and its staff share with students and parents the responsibility for student safety during transportation to and from school. The authority for enforcing School Committee requirements of student conduct on buses will rest with the Principal.

To ensure the safety of all students who ride in buses, it may occasionally be necessary to revoke the privilege of transportation from a student who abuses this privilege. Parents of children whose behavior and misconduct on school buses endangers the health, safety, and welfare of other riders will be notified that their children face the loss of transportation privileges in accordance with regulations approved by the School Committee.

STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Within the school setting, students enjoy the constitutional right of freedom of expression, including the right to express their views in student publications, provided such expression does not cause, or threaten to cause by reasonable forecast by school officials, any disruption or disorder in the school. Additionally, such constitutional right of freedom of expression does not include expression which is obscene, defamatory, or advocates violence or illegality where such advocacy is imminently likely to incite the commission of such acts to the detriment of school security, or which can reasonably be forecast to cause substantial disruption or material interference with school activities.

The School Committee will at least annually review their support of student publications, and encourage student publications not only because they offer an educational activity through which students gain experience in reporting, writing, editing, and understanding responsible journalism, but also because they provide an opportunity for students to express their views subject to the limitations as contained in this policy.

Student publications will be encouraged to comply with the rules for responsible journalism. Students shall affix their names to all articles or editorials written by or contributed to by them. The Superintendent will establish guidelines that are in keeping with this policy and provide for review of student publications prior to their distribution, to address matters that are not protected forms of expression.

Each student publication shall contain the following: "Pursuant to state law, no expression made by students in the exercise of such rights shall be deemed to be an expression of school policy and no school officials shall be held responsible in any civil or criminal action for any expression made or published by the students."

Distribution of Literature

The time, place and manner of distribution of literature will be reasonably regulated by the Principal.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:82](#)

GANG ACTIVITY/SECRET SOCIETIES

The goal of the School Committee is to keep District schools and students free from the threats or harmful influence of any gang. For purposes of this policy, gang is defined as any group, secret society, organization or association that advocates drug use, violence, ethnic intimidation, or disruptive or illegal behavior. The Principal or his/her designee shall maintain supervision of school premises to deter intimidation of students and confrontations between members of different gangs.

The Superintendent shall establish open lines of communication with local law enforcement agencies so as to share information and provide mutual support in this effort within appropriate legal guidelines.

The Superintendent shall provide in-service training to help staff members identify gangs and gang symbols, recognize early manifestations of disruptive activities, and respond appropriately. Staff members shall be informed about conflict management techniques and alerted to intervention measures and community resources that may help students.

Symbols

The School Committee finds that gang symbols are inherently disruptive to the educational process, and therefore prohibits the presence of any insignia, apparel, jewelry, accessory, notebook or other school supply, or manner of grooming which by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, or any other attribute denotes membership in gangs. The School Committee further prohibits any demonstration of gang membership through the use of hand gestures, graffiti, or printed materials. This policy shall be applied by the Principal or his/her designee as the need for it arises individual school sites. A student may be suspended or expelled for failure to comply with the provisions of this policy.

Prevention Education

The School Committee realizes that students may become involved in gangs without understanding the consequences of such membership. Early intervention is a key component of efforts to break the cycle of such memberships. Therefore, gang violence prevention information shall be made available in the elementary, middle, and high schools as appropriate.

SECRET SOCIETIES

Fraternities, sororities and/or secret societies shall not receive District or building recognition in any manner.

A student may be suspended or expelled for failure to comply with the provisions of this policy.

PROHIBITION OF HAZING

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, the School Committee hereby deems that no student, employee or school organization under the control of the School Committee shall engage in the activity of hazing a student while on or off school property, or at a school sponsored event regardless of the location. No organization that uses the facilities or grounds under the control of the School Committee shall engage in the activity of hazing any person while on school property.

Any student who observes what appears to them to be the activity of hazing another student or person should report such information to the Principal including the time, date, location, names of identifiable participants and the types of behavior exhibited. Students and employees of the District are obligated by law to report incidents of hazing to the police department.

Any student who is present at a hazing has the obligation to report such an incident. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action by the school against that student and could involve suspension from school for up to three days.

Any student who participates in the hazing of another student or other person may, upon the approval of the Superintendent of Schools, be suspended from school for up to ten (10) school days.

Any student determined by the Principal to be the organizer of a hazing activity may be recommended for expulsion from school but will receive no less disciplinary action than that of a participant.

In all cases relating to hazing, students will receive procedural due process.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [269:17](#), [18](#), [19](#)

HAZING

CH. 269, S.17. CRIME OF HAZING; DEFINITION; PENALTY

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 three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, 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 be contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

CH. 269, S.18. DUTY TO REPORT HAZING

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen 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 one thousand dollars.

CH. 269, S.19. HAZING STATUTES TO BE PROVIDED; STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICY REQUIRED

Each secondary school and each public and private school or college shall issue to every group or organization under its authority or operating on or in conjunction with its campus or school, and to every member, plebe, pledge or applicant for membership in such group or organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen. An officer of each such group or organization, and each individual receiving a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen shall sign an acknowledgment stating that such group, organization or individual has received a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each secondary school and each public or private school or college shall file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary schools, the Board of Education, certifying that such institution has complied with the provisions of this section and also certifying that said school has adopted a disciplinary policy with regards to the

organizers and participants of hazing. The Board of Regents and, in the case of secondary schools, 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 a report.

BULLYING PREVENTION

The School Committee is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. No student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying.

"Bullying" 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 target that:

- causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- places the target in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself, or of damage to his/her property;
- creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

"Cyber-bullying" means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a:

- wire
- radio
- electromagnetic
- photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Bullying and cyber-bullying may occur in and out of school, during and after school hours, at home and in locations outside of the home. When bullying and cyber-bullying are alleged, the full cooperation and assistance of parents and families are expected.

For the purpose of this policy, whenever the term bullying is used it is to denote either bullying, or cyber-bullying.

Bullying is prohibited:

- On school grounds;
- On property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- At school-sponsored or school-related activities;
- At functions or programs whether on or off school grounds
- At school bus stops;
- On school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the school district; or,
- Through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the school district;

Bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the school district if the act or acts in question:

- create a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringe on the rights of the target at school; and/or
- materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Prevention and Intervention Plan

The Superintendent and/or his/her designee shall oversee the development of a prevention and intervention plan, in consultation with all district stakeholders, which may include teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents and guardians, consistent with the requirements of this policy, as well as state and federal laws. The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be reviewed and updated at least biennially.

The Principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the bullying prevention and implementation plan within his or her school.

Reporting

Students, who believe that they are a target of bullying, observe an act of bullying, or who have reasonable grounds to believe that these behaviors are taking place, are obligated to report incidents to a member of the school staff. The target shall, however, not be subject to discipline for failing to report bullying.

The District has a means for anonymous reporting by students of incidents of bullying. No formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Parents or guardians, or members of the community, are encouraged to report an incident of bullying as soon as possible.

A member of a school staff shall immediately report any instance of bullying the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the school principal or their designee.

Investigation Procedures

The Principal or their designee, upon receipt of a viable report, shall promptly contact the parents or guardians of a student who has been the alleged target or alleged perpetrator of bullying. The actions being taken to prevent further acts of bullying shall be discussed.

The school Principal or a designee shall promptly investigate the report of bullying, using a Bullying/Cyber-bullying Report Form which may include interviewing the alleged target, alleged perpetrator, staff members, students and/or witnesses.

Support staff shall assess an alleged target's needs for protection and create and implement a safety plan that shall restore a sense of safety for that student.

Confidentiality shall be used to protect a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or is witness to or has reliable information about an act of bullying.

If the school Principal or a designee determines that bullying has occurred he/she shall take appropriate disciplinary action and if it is believed that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator, the principal shall consult with the school's resource officer and the Superintendent to determine if criminal charges are warranted. If it is determined that criminal charges are warranted, the local law enforcement agency shall be notified.

The investigation shall be completed within fourteen school days from the date of the report. The parents or guardians shall be contacted upon completion of the investigation and informed of the results, including whether the allegations were found to be factual, whether a violation of this policy was found, and whether disciplinary action has or shall be taken. At a minimum the Principal or his/her designee shall contact the parents or guardians as to the status of the investigation on a weekly basis.

Disciplinary actions for students who have committed an act of bullying or retaliation shall be in accordance with district disciplinary policies.

Each school shall document any incident of bullying that is reported per this policy and a file shall be maintained by the Principal or designee.

Confidentiality shall be maintained to the extent consistent with the school's obligations under law.

Retaliation

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying, shall be prohibited.

Target Assistance

The school district shall provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and protection to students, both targets and perpetrators, affected by bullying, as necessary.

Training and Assessment

Annual training shall be provided for school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students in preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying.

Age-appropriate, evidence-based instruction on bullying prevention shall be incorporated into the curriculum for all K to 12 students.

Publication and Notice

Annual written notice of the relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to students and their parents or guardians, in age-appropriate terms.

Annual written notice of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to all school staff. The faculty and staff at each school shall be trained annually on the bullying prevention and intervention plan applicable to the school.

Relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff shall be included in the school employee handbook.

The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be posted on the school district website.

LEGAL REFS.: Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended
Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
603 CMR [26:00](#)
M.G.L. [71:370](#); [265:43](#), [43A](#); [268:13B](#); [269:14A](#)

REFERENCES: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

CROSS REFS.: [AC](#), Nondiscrimination
[ACAB](#), Sexual Harassment
[JIC](#), Student Discipline
[JICFA](#), Prohibition of Hazing

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUG USE BY STUDENTS PROHIBITED

A student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use or consume, possess, buy or sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product, including vapor/E-cigarettes; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. The School Committee prohibits the use or consumption by students of alcohol, tobacco products, or drugs on school property, at any school function, or at any school sponsored event.

Additionally, any student who is under the influence of drugs or alcoholic beverages prior to, or during, attendance at or participation in a school-sponsored activity, will be barred from that activity and may be subject to disciplinary action.

The school district shall utilize, in accordance with law, a verbal screening tool approved by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to screen students for substance abuse disorders. The tool shall be administered by trained staff on an annual basis at grades 7 and 9.

Parents/guardians shall be notified prior to the opening of school each year. Parents/guardians shall have the right to opt out of the screening by written notice prior to or during the screening.

All statements made by a student during a screening are confidential and shall not be disclosed except in the event of immediate medical emergency or in accordance with law. De-identified results shall be reported to the Department of Public Health within 90 days of the completion of the screening process.

This policy shall be posted on the district's website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents of this policy in accordance with state law. Additionally, the district shall file a copy of this policy with DESE in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L.71:2A; 71:96; 71:97; 272:40A

CROSS REFS.: IHAMB, Teaching About Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco
GBEC, Drug Free Workplace Policy

PREGNANT STUDENTS

The School Committee wishes to preserve educational opportunities for those students who may become pregnant and/or take on parenting responsibilities.

Pregnant students are permitted to remain in regular classes and participate in extracurricular activities with non-pregnant students throughout their pregnancy, and after giving birth are permitted to return to the same academic and extracurricular program as before the leave.

The school district does not require a pregnant student to obtain the certification of a physician that the student is physically and emotionally able to continue in school.

Every effort will be made to see that the educational program of the student is disrupted as little as possible; that health counseling services, as well as instruction, are offered; that return to school after leave is encouraged; and that every opportunity to complete high school is provided.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:84](#)
Title IX: 20 U.S.C. § 1681
34 CFR § 106.40(b)

SEARCHES AND INTERROGATIONS

Searches by Staff

The right of inspection of students' school lockers is inherent in the authority granted school committees and administrators. This authority may be exercised as needed in the interest of safeguarding children, their own and school property.

Nevertheless, exercise of that authority by school officials places unusual demands upon their judgment so as to protect each child's constitutional rights to personal privacy and protection from coercion and to act in the best interest of all students and the schools.

Searches by school officials of students' automobiles or the student will be conducted in a way that protects the students' rights consistent with the responsibility of the school system to provide an atmosphere conducive to the educational process.

Interrogations by Police

The schools have legal custody of students during the school day and during hours of approved extracurricular activities. It is the responsibility of the school administration to make an effort to protect each student's rights with respect to interrogations by law enforcement officials. Therefore:

1. When law enforcement officials find it necessary to question students during the school day or periods of extracurricular activities, the school Principal or his/her designee will be present when possible. An effort will be made to contact the student's parent/guardian or guardian so that the responsible individual may be notified of the situation.
2. If custody and/or arrest are involved, the Principal will request that all procedural safeguards, as prescribed by law, be observed by the law enforcement officials.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

The School Committee recognizes that there may be conditions in the school system that are in need of improvement and that students should have some means by which their concerns may be effectively expressed, considered, and dealt with fairly. Such means, if well conceived and understood in advance, can do much to maintain harmonious relationships among the schools and the students and community. Every attempt will be made to seek a satisfactory solution to any concerns in a friendly and informal manner.

Students and their parents and/or guardians, who believe that a student has received unfair treatment may bring forward their grievance through the appropriate channels. Appeals of disciplinary cases will be required to follow the district's policy on student discipline. Any applicable provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws or federal law will be followed by school officials in conducting hearings.

CROSS REF: [J1C](#) Student Discipline

CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The School Committee believes that student activities are a vital part of the total educational program and should be used as a means for developing wholesome attitudes and good human relations and knowledge and skills. Therefore, the schools will provide a broad and balanced program of activities geared to the various ages, interests, and needs of students.

The following will serve as guides in the organization of student activities:

1. The schools will observe a complementary relationship to the home and community, planning activities with due regard for the widespread and rich facilities already available to students.
2. The assistance of parents in planning activity programs will be encouraged.
3. The goal for each student will be a balanced program of appropriate academic studies and activities to be determined by the school, the parents, and the student. This should be a shared responsibility.
4. Guidance will be offered to encourage participation of all students in appropriate activities and to prevent over-emphasis on extracurricular activities at the cost of academic performance.
5. All activities will be supervised; all clubs and groups will have a faculty advisor.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:47](#); [76:5](#)
603 CMR [26.00](#)

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Student Organizations

Student organizations in the District shall be encouraged when they meet the criteria of contributing to student self-esteem and performance and should operate within the framework of state statutes, School Committee policies, and administrative procedures.

The District has developed general guidelines for the establishment and operation of student organizations within the school. Among other provisions, such guidelines shall require the approval of the Principal prior to the formation of any club or organization in the school and the assignment of at least one faculty or designated adult advisor to each approved student organization. Within such guidelines will be provisions for a periodic review of all student organizations.

The formation of any student organization that may engage in activities of a controversial nature shall require approval by the Superintendent.

All student organizations shall be required to open membership to all interested and/or eligible students. Disruptive groups, secret societies, and/or gangs shall not receive recognition in any manner under this policy.

All forms of hazing in initiations shall be prohibited in a student organization. No initiation shall be held for a student organization which will bring criticism to the school system or be degrading to the student.

The faculty or designated adult advisor must attend every meeting of the student organization whether conducted on school premises or at another location.

Student Organizations - High Schools

In addition to the above requirements, all clubs or organizations at the high school level will relate to the subject matter covered by the curriculum. The Principal is responsible for determining that the purpose of a student organization is related to the curriculum. The Principal is authorized to deny requests by unauthorized student organizations desiring to meet or form in a particular school, the Principal shall inform the group of the reasons for the denial. The students and/or group may submit a written request to the appropriate District administrator for review of the Principal's decision.

CROSS REF: [JICF](#), Gang Activities/Secret Societies

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR [26.00](#)

STUDENT FUND-RAISING ACTIVITIES

While the School Committee recognizes that fundraising activities have become a part of the school environment at all levels, the Committee wishes to ensure that students are not exploited by the process.

The Committee supports student involvement in the sale of tickets to scheduled athletic events, school dramatic and musical performances, and other school events where sales are required. Also, student publications which require the sale of advertising to sustain themselves and serve the student body and/or the community may involve students in such sales.

Charitable fundraising activities, especially those that are part of a community service event or program are encouraged provided such proposals are submitted to and approved by the building Principal.

Other fundraising activities that wish to involve students in the fundraising process shall be submitted to the Principal for approval.

For safety reasons and because the School Committee recognizes that community members receive requests for support from many worthy causes, activities such as canvassing and door-to-door sales are strongly discouraged.

CROSS REFS.: [JP](#), Student Gifts and Solicitations
[KHA](#), Public Solicitations in the Schools

STUDENT ACTIVITY ACCOUNTS

Student Activities are sponsored by the school, under the guidance and supervision of the staff of the Worcester Public Schools. The goal of these activities is to provide students with experiences that offer motivation, enjoyment, and improvement of skills.

The Superintendent shall approve student organizations. An annual list of student activities shall be maintained in the district's Business Office. The composition of these organization include a student body, student president, student treasurer, and faculty advisor. New student activity groups may be added with the approval of the Superintendent of Schools.

Student activity funds are moneys raised by an approved student organization by student efforts through approved fundraising activities. Student activity funds are raised by students, spent by those students, for their benefit. No staff member shall benefit from student activity funds.

The purpose of student activity funds are to provide financial support for approved extra-curricular activities.

The Superintendent of Schools, or his designee shall have the responsibility and authority to implement all policies and rules pertaining to the supervision and administration of student activity funds in accordance with the statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and policies of the Worcester School Committee and procedures developed by the Massachusetts Association of School Business Officials and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The school principal is designated as the trustee of the student activity fund, and shall give bond to the City in the maximum amount authorized to be maintained in the school's checking account and the principal shall be responsible for the operation of the student financial activities in his/her building. The maximum balance of the Student Activity Checking Account shall be \$25,000.00 but the Superintendent may approve temporary requests from schools to exceed this maximum amount during the year when necessary based on the level of student activity payments needed during that time of year.

The City Auditor will establish a Student Activity Agency Account for each school's student activity funds in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 66 of the Acts of 1996 (M.G. L. Chapter 71, Section 47).

The City Treasurer shall deposit Student Activity Funds revenue into an interest-bearing account as required by Ch. 66.

The School Principal will appoint a member of the school staff, designated to maintain the required financial records for the school's student activity funds.

Student activity records and financial procedures shall be subject to audit by staff of the Worcester Public Schools as well as outside independent auditors

as the School Committee may prescribe following the recommendations of the City Auditors, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and/or the Department of Revenue. Audit reports shall be referred to the Principal and the Central Administration for informative purposes and possible improvement of procedures. Annual reports shall be prepared by the Principal and forwarded to the Chief Financial and Operations Officer. These reports shall reflect the status of the student activity checking account and proof of reconciliation of the account. Each account must be accounted for so that the identity of its resources, obligations, revenues, and expenditures are continuously maintained.

The Principal of each school shall designate one person, in addition to himself or herself, who shall be authorized to receive and deposit funds into the Student Activity Agency Account following procedures established by the City Treasurer and providing detailed documentation to the Treasurer for each deposit. Two signatures, the Principal and the Student Activity Treasurer, shall be required for all checks drawn on the Student Activity Checking Account. Supporting evidence shall be required prior to signing the check. Blank checks shall never be signed.

Interest earned of the Student Activity Agency Accounts and the Student Activity Checking Accounts shall be accounted for separately from the individual student activity fund accounts and may be used to pay for bonding costs, bank account fees, bookkeeping costs, the costs of checks, or any audit costs that may be required. Interest earned not for these purposes may be distributed to the individual subsidiary accounts if documented methodology is maintained by the Student Activity Treasurer.

Fundraising activities such as commissions on sale of yearbooks, rings, pictures must be conducted in connection with approved student activities and the proceeds shall be handled as other student activity revenue and deposited and expended by the students involved in those activities. Other earnings, if based on student use, must be distributed to student activity accounts in a manner that may be determined and documented by the principal.

Collection and Deposit of Cash

All moneys collected from any source must be substantiated by duplicate-copy receipt. A receipt will be issued immediately upon receipt of funds of student activity account bookkeeper or advisor. A copy of the receipt is to be given to the person from whom the money is received. The second copy is to be retained by the Principal or designee as permanent record of money received. A third copy shall be provided to the City Treasurer as part of the documentation of deposits made into the Student Activity Checking Account. (No deposits shall be made directly into the Student Activity Checking Account). All moneys collected shall be placed in the school safe, or other secure location, for security. Said moneys shall remain in the school safe, or other secure location, only until such time as deposit can be reasonably completed. All checks to be deposited in the student activity agency account shall be endorsed immediately upon receipt, showing a restrictive endorsement, making it payable for deposit only to the City of Worcester, and showing the School's student activity agency account number.

Disbursements

Disbursements from the Student Activity Checking Account shall be made on pre-numbered checks which serve as the basis for making an entry recording the disbursement. Disbursements shall be supported by an invoice or documentation bearing signatures certifying to receipt of merchandise or delivery of services. When a check is written, the invoice, and supporting documents, shall be marked "Paid by check Number XXXX" and "Date of Payment" XX/XX/XX" and shall be filed for auditing purposes.

A check register, copy of invoices, and copy of checks shall be considered documentation supporting a warrant to receive funds from the Student Activity Agency Account for deposit into the Student Activity Checking Account returning the checking account to the maximum balance.

Record of Transactions

The Principal or designee shall maintain a complete set of books recording all moneys deposited and disbursed. A Cash Receipts Journal (*Record of Receipts*) and a Cash Disbursement Journal (*Record of Expenditures*) shall serve as a control whereby the total amount of money deposited and expended for all funds is maintained continuously. All transactions shall be entered and categorized to permit appropriate analysis.

Reconciliation of Bank Statements

The balance shown by the bank statements will rarely agree with the balance reflected by the books of the fund because of outstanding checks, deposits in transit, bank charges and possible errors. The bank statement will be reconciled with the activity fund books as soon as possible after it has been received. A copy of the reconciliation shall be retained for the annual audit. Should a balanced reconciliation not be made, the school administration and City Auditor shall be informed immediately.

Monthly Financial Reports

At the end of each month, a financial statement shall be prepared by the Principal or designee. The information contained in the statement shall include the financial status of each activity comprising the activity fund. Copies of the statement shall be forwarded monthly to the school administration and City Auditor for the purpose of reporting the overall financial status of the fund as well as to provide an internal audit.

Other

Fund raisers must keep accurate records of inventory received and inventory distributed.

When receiving money for trips, an accurate record of student deposits and destination costs must be kept.

Under no circumstances are advisors to open student accounts using their own signatures or names of parents.

When obtaining service such as transportation, for example, it is important that providers have satisfactory liability insurance to protect students and the public schools in the event of accidental losses due to property damage or injury. Guidance should be sought from the central administration if there are questions regarding this matter prior to committing to a provider.

Source: M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 47
Worcester School Committee gb #6-197.1 (1996)

STUDENT LATE NIGHT OR OVERNIGHT TRAVEL

All student trips which include late night or overnight travel must have prior approval of the Superintendent. Initial approval by the Superintendent is required before engaging students in fundraising activities. The Superintendent will also consider the educational value of the trip in relation to the cost prior to granting initial approval. Overnight trips should offer significant educational benefits to students that clearly justify the time and expense of the trip. Such trips should be appropriate for the grade level.

Final approval will not be granted until all preparations for the trip have been completed including, but not limited to, all logistical details involving transportation, accommodation arrangements and fundraising efforts. The Superintendent requires that final approval be sought no less than 30 days prior to the scheduled trip dates.

Teachers and other school staff are prohibited from soliciting for privately run trips through the school system and in the schools. The Superintendent will only review for approval school-sanctioned trips. The Superintendent will not review or approve trips that are privately organized and run without school sanctioning.

CROSS REFS.: IJOA, Field Trips

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [69:1B](#); [71:37N](#)

STUDENT TRAVEL REGULATIONS

1. Transportation

The use of vans or private automobiles for trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel is discouraged. Late night or overnight trips will use commercial motor coaches.

Trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel will include a pre-trip check of companies, drivers, and vehicles. CORI and/or background checks will be conducted in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws and School Committee Policy.

The Superintendent or designee will ensure that the selected carrier is licensed for passenger transportation by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). The district will not contract with any carrier that has a safety rating of "conditional" or "unsatisfactory". FMCSA ratings are available at <http://www.saferys.org/>.

The contract with the carrier will prohibit the use of subcontractors unless sufficient notice is given to the district that allows verification of the subcontractor's qualifications.

2. Trip Scheduling

Overnight accommodations should be made in advance with student safety and security in mind. Whenever possible, trip schedulers should avoid planning student travel between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m., due to the increased risk of vehicular accidents during this time period.

Whenever possible, overnight trips should be scheduled on weekends or during school vacations to minimize lost classroom time. Non-academic field trips are considered "optional school programs" and do not count toward meeting structured learning time requirements. (Refer to the Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education publication Student Learning Time Regulations Guide)

Trip itineraries must leave enough time for drivers to rest in conformity with federal hour-of-service requirements and common sense.

Trip scheduling should take into account the likelihood of delays due to weather, traffic, stragglers, and other unanticipated factors.

If substantially all members of a class are participating in a trip, the school should provide appropriate substitute activities for any students not participating.

3. Fundraising

The amount of time to be devoted to fundraising should be reasonable and commensurate with students' obligations for homework, after-school activities, and jobs.

Group fundraising activities are preferred. Students should not be assigned individual fundraising targets.

If students are charged individual fees for participation, every effort should be made to provide scholarships where needed.

Additional Resources

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) <http://www.fmcsa.gov>

United Motorcoach Association - Student Motorcoach Travel Safety Guide
(includes "Motorcoach Safety Checklist")
<http://www.uma.org/consumerhelp/studentguide.asp>

Department of Defense's approved list of motor carriers
<http://www.mtmc.army.mil/content/504/approvedlist.pdf>

CROSS REFS.: [IJOA](#), Field Trips
[ADDA](#), Background Checks

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [69:1B](#); [71:37N](#); [71:38R](#)
603 CMR [27.00](#)

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

The School Committee believes that students will benefit from the experiences in self-discipline and team effort made possible through participation in interschool sports.

Participation in interscholastic athletics will be subject to approval by the School Committee and will be in accordance with regulations and recommendations of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association.

At the high school level, interscholastic athletic competition will include a variety of sports. Students will be allowed to participate in individual sports on the basis of their abilities and desire. Additionally, intramural athletic activities will be offered as an outgrowth of class instruction in physical education.

The School Committee is aware that team participation in athletic contests by members of the student body requires that "away games" be scheduled. It also recognizes that there is a need to regulate certain aspects of student participation in such contests. Therefore, the Superintendent will establish regulations to ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff members who participate in these activities.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:47](#); [71:54A](#); [76:5](#)
603 CMR [26.00](#)

CROSS REFS.: [AC](#), Nondiscrimination (and subcodes)

ATHLETIC CONCUSSION POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide information and standardized procedures for persons involved in the prevention, training management and return to activity decisions regarding students who incur head injuries while involved in extracurricular athletic activities [1](#) including, but not limited to, interscholastic sports, in order to protect their health and safety as required by Massachusetts law and regulations. The requirements of the law apply to all public middle and high schools, however configured, serving grades six through high school graduation. In addition to any training required by law, the following persons shall complete one of the head injury safety training programs approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) as found on its website: coaches; certified athletic trainers; trainers; volunteers; school and team physicians; school nurses; athletic directors; directors responsible for a school marching band; employees or volunteers; and students who participate in an extracurricular activity and their parents.

Upon the adoption of this policy by the School Committee, the Superintendent shall ensure that DPH receives an affirmation on school district letterhead that the district has developed policies and the School Committee has adopted a final policy in accordance with law. This affirmation shall be updated by September 30, 2013 and every two years thereafter upon review or revision of its policies.

The Superintendent shall maintain or cause to be maintained complete and accurate records of the district's compliance with the requirements of the Concussion Law, and shall maintain the following records for three years or, at a minimum, until the student graduates, unless state or federal law requires a longer retention period:

1. Verifications of completion of annual training and receipt of materials;
2. DPH Pre-participation forms and receipt of materials;
3. DPH Report of Head Injury Forms, or school based equivalents;
4. DPH Medical Clearance and Authorization Forms, or school based equivalents; and
5. Graduated reentry plans for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities.

This policy also applies to volunteers who assist with extracurricular athletic activities. Such volunteers shall not be liable for civil damages arising out of any act or omission relating to the requirements of law, unless such volunteer is willfully or intentionally negligent in his act or omission.

Most student athletes who sustain a concussion can fully recover as long as their brain has time to heal before sustaining another hit; however, relying only on an athlete's self-report of symptoms to determine injury recovery is inadequate as many high school athletes are not aware of the signs and symptoms or the severity concussive injuries pose, or they may feel pressure from coaches, parents, and/or teammates to return to play as quickly as possible. One or more of these factors will likely result in under-diagnosing the injury and a premature return to play. Massachusetts General Laws and Department of Public Health regulations make it imperative to accurately assess and treat student athletes when concussions are suspected.

Student athletes who receive concussions may appear to be "fine" on the outside, when in actuality they have a brain injury and are not able to return to play. Incurring a second concussion can prove to be devastating to a student athlete. Research has shown that young concussed athletes who return to play before their brain has healed are highly vulnerable to more prolonged post-concussion syndrome or, in rare cases, a catastrophic neurological injury known as Second Impact Syndrome.

The following protocol will discuss and outline what a concussion is, the mechanism of injury, signs and symptoms, management and return to play requirements, as well as information on Second Impact Syndrome and past concussion syndrome. Lastly, this policy will discuss the importance of education for our athletes, coaches and parents and other persons required by law.

This protocol should be reviewed on a yearly basis with all staff to discuss the procedures to be followed to manage sports-related concussions. This protocol will also be reviewed on a yearly basis by the athletic department as well as by nursing staff. Any changes in this document will be approved by the school committee and given to athletic staff, including coaches and other school personnel in writing. An accurate synopsis of this policy shall be placed in the student and faculty handbooks.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. [111:222](#); 105 CMR 201.000

STUDENT CONDUCT

The Massachusetts General Laws require the School Committee to adopt written policies, rules and regulations not inconsistent with law, which may relate to study, discipline, conduct, safety and welfare of all students, or any classification thereof, enrolled in the public schools of the District.

The implementation of the general rules of conduct is the responsibility of the Principal and the professional staff of the building. In order to do this, each school staff in the District shall develop specific rules not inconsistent with the law nor in conflict with School Committee policy. These building rules shall be an extension of the District policies by being more specific as they relate to the individual schools.

The purpose of disciplinary action is to restore acceptable behavior. When disciplinary action is necessary, it shall be administered with fairness and shall relate to the individual needs and the individual circumstances.

Students violating any of the policies on student conduct and control will be subject to disciplinary action. The degree, frequency, and circumstances surrounding each incident shall determine the method used in enforcing these policies. Most of the situations which require disciplinary action can be resolved within the confines of the classroom or as they occur by reasonable but firm reprimand, and/or by teacher conferences with the student and/or parents or guardians.

If a situation should arise in which there is no applicable written policy, the staff member shall be expected to exercise reasonable and professional judgment.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:37H](#); [71:37H ½](#); [71:37H ¾](#); [71:37L](#); [76:16](#); [76:17](#)
603 CMR [53.00](#)

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

State law provides that:

The power of the School Committee or of any teacher or other employee or agent of the Committee to maintain discipline on school property shall not include the right to inflict corporal punishment upon any student.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:37G](#)

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS

Maintaining an orderly, safe environment conducive to learning is an expectation of all staff members of the school district. Further, students of the district are protected by law from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. Such restraint shall be used only in emergency situations of last resort after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution.

When an emergency situation arises, and physical restraint is the only option deemed appropriate to prevent a student from injuring himself or herself, another student or school community member, a teacher or employee or agent of the school district may use such reasonable force needed to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

The definitions of forms of restraint shall be as defined in 603CMR [46.02](#).

The use of mechanical restraint, medical restraint, and seclusion is prohibited.

Physical restraint, including prone restraint where permitted under 603 CMR [46.03](#), shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to themselves and/or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions are deemed inappropriate.

The Superintendent will develop procedures identifying:

- Appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention;
- Methods of preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide including crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behaviors among groups of students or individuals;
- Descriptions and explanations of alternatives to physical restraint as well as the school's method of physical restraint for use in emergency situations;
- Descriptions of the school's training and procedures to comply with reporting requirements; including, but not limited to making reasonable efforts to orally notify a parent/guardian of the use of restraint within 24 hours of its imposition;
- Procedures for receiving and investigating complaints;
- Methods for engaging parents in discussions about restraint prevention and use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure;
- A statement prohibiting: medication restraint, mechanical restraint, prone restraint unless permitted by 603 CMR [46.03](#)(1)(b), seclusion, and the use of physical restraint in a manner inconsistent with 603 CMR [46.00](#),
- A process for obtaining principal approval for a time out exceeding 30 minutes.

Each building Principal will identify staff members to serve as a school-wide resource to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. These staff members will participate in an in-depth training program in the use of physical restraint.

In addition, each staff member will be trained regarding the school's physical restraint policy and accompanying procedures. The Principal will arrange training to occur in the first month of each school year, or for staff hired after the beginning of the school year, within a month of their employment.

Physical restraint is prohibited as a means of punishment, or as a response to destruction of property, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats that do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious physical harm to the student or others.

Physical restraint is prohibited when it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting;

The use of "time out" procedures during which a staff member remains accessible to the student shall not be considered "seclusion restraint".

This policy and its accompanying procedures shall be reviewed and disseminated to staff annually and made available to parents of enrolled students. The Superintendent shall provide a copy of the Physical Restraint regulations to each Principal, who shall sign a form acknowledging receipt thereof.

ADOPTED: August 2015

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:37G](#)
603 CMR [46.00](#)

STUDENT WELFARE

Supervision of Students

School personnel assigned supervision are expected to act as reasonably prudent adults in providing for the safety of the students in their charge.

In keeping with this expected prudence, no teacher or other staff member will leave his/her assigned group unsupervised except when an arrangement has been made to take care of an emergency.

During school hours or while engaging in school-sponsored activities, students will be released only into the custody of parents or other persons authorized in writing by a parent or guardian.

Reporting to Authorities - Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

Any school official or employee shall report any suspected child abuse or neglect as required by M.G.L. Ch. 119, S 51A.

In accordance with the law, the District shall establish the necessary regulations and procedures to comply with the intent of the Act consistent with the District's responsibility to the students, parents, District personnel, and the community.

Student Safety

Instruction in courses in industrial arts, science, homemaking, art, physical education, health, and safety will include and emphasize accident prevention.

Safety instruction will precede the use of materials and equipment by students in applicable units of work, and instructors will teach and enforce all safety rules set up for the particular courses. These include the wearing of protective eye devices in appropriate activities.

Safety on the Playground and Playing Field

The District shall provide safe play areas. Precautionary measures, which the District requires, shall include:

- A periodic inspection of the school's playground and playing fields by the Principal of the school and others as may be deemed appropriate;
- Instruction of students in the proper use of equipment;
- Supervision of both organized and unorganized activity.

Fire Drills and Reporting

The District shall cooperate with appropriate fire departments in the conduct of fire drills. The Principal of any public or private school, containing any of grades 1 to 12, shall immediately report any incident of unauthorized ignition of any fire within the school building or on school grounds, to the local fire department. Within 24 hours, the Principal shall submit a written report of the incident to the head of the fire department on a form furnished by the Department of Fire Services. The Principal must file this report whether or not the fire department responded.

LEGAL REFS: MGL [71:37L](#); [148:2A](#)

STUDENT INSURANCE PROGRAM

A noncompulsory accident insurance plan totally administered by an insurance company may be made available to students. The District does not assume any responsibility regarding service, claims, or other matters relating to the insurance program.

All students participating in competitive athletics shall be required to be covered by a medical insurance plan.

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS

Activities may include identification of student health needs, health screening tests (including eye and hearing screening tests), communicable disease prevention and control, promotion of the correction of remediable health defects, emergency care of the ill and injured, health counseling, health and safety education, and the maintenance of a healthful school environment.

The District recognizes that parent/guardian(s) have the primary responsibility for the health of their students. The school will cooperate with appropriate professional organizations associated with maintaining individual and community health and safety.

The District shall provide the services of a medical consultant who shall render medical and administrative consultative services for personnel responsible for school health and athletics.

Procedures for Emergency at School

School personnel shall give only emergency care to students who become ill or injured on school property, buses, or while under school supervision.

Each year parent/guardian(s) shall supply information indicating where the student is to be taken in case of an emergency; the name, address, and phone number of a neighbor to be contacted in case the parent/guardian is not available; and any allergies or diseases the student might have.

The District shall maintain a Medical Emergency Response Plan, as required by law, and an Emergency Procedures Handbook, which shall be utilized by District personnel for handling emergencies. Emergency procedures shall include the following:

- Provision for care beyond First Aid, which would enable care by the family or its physician or the local Emergency Medical Services agencies. In instances when the EMS is required, every effort shall be made to provide the unit with the student's Emergency Card which lists any allergies or diseases the student might have;
- Information relative to not permitting the administration of any form of medicine or drugs to students without written approval of parent/guardian(s). Requests made by parent/guardian(s) for such administration of medication shall be reviewed and approved by the Principal or designee;
- Provisions for reporting all accidents, cases of injury, or illness to the Principal. Provisions shall be made (in all cases of injury or illness involving possible legal or public relations implications) for reporting such to the appropriate executive director of education immediately;
- Prompt reporting by teachers to the Principal or designee any accident or serious illness and such reports will be filed with the Business Office.

Student Illness or Injury

In case of illness or injury, the parent or guardian will be contacted and asked to call for the student or provide the transportation.

Transportation of an ill or injured student is not normally to be provided by the school. If the parent cannot provide transportation and the student is ill or injured, an ambulance may be called. Expense incurred as a result of emergency ambulance use will not be borne by the District.

Transportation of a student by school personnel will be done only in an emergency and by the individual so designated by the school administrator.

LEGAL REF.: [71:53](#); [54](#); [54A](#); [54B](#); [55](#); [55A](#); [55B](#); [56](#); [57](#); [69:8A](#)

CROSS REF.: [EBB](#), First Aid

[EBC](#), Emergency Plans

[JLCD](#), Administration of Medications to Students

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS OF STUDENTS

Every student will be examined for screening in sight, hearing, BMI*, and for other physical problems as provided in the law and regulation. A record of the results will be kept by the school nurse.

Every student will be given a general physical examination four times: upon entering school and upon admittance to the fourth, seventh, and tenth grades. The results of examinations will be a basis for determining what corrective measures or modifications of school activities, if any, should be recommended. A record of all examinations and recommendations will be kept.

Every candidate for a school athletic team will present the signed consent of parent or guardian in order to participate on a squad and will, with the signed consent of parent or guardian, be thoroughly examined to determine physical fitness. The school physician will examine athletes, except when a family wishes to have the examination done by their own doctor at their own expense. A written report stating the fitness of the student to participate signed by the physician will be sent to the school Principal.

The school physician will make a prompt examination of all children referred to him/her by the school nurse. He/she will examine school employees when, in his/her opinion, the protection of the student's health may require it. Except in an emergency, the school physician will not prescribe for or treat any student.

Whenever the school nurse finds a child suffering from any disease or medical problem, the situation will be reported to the parent or guardian in writing, or by personal visit if remedial treatment is recommended. A copy of the report will be filed at the school.

The school nurse will make a monthly report to the Superintendent of the number of students examined; the number excluded; and the number recommended for treatment or special adjustment of work. In all cases of exclusion or recommendation, the causes will be included in the report.

** NOTE: Department of Health Regulations call for vision screenings in Grades 1-5, once between 6-8, and once between 9-12; hearing screenings in grades 1-3, once between 6-8, and once between 9-12; BMI in grades 1, 4, 7, 10.*

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:53](#); [71:54](#); [71:56](#); [71:57](#)
105 CMR 200

CROSS REF.: [JF](#), School Admissions

INOCULATIONS OF STUDENTS

Students entering school for the first time, whether at kindergarten or through transfer from another school system, will be required to present a physician's certificate attesting to immunization against communicable diseases as may be specified from time to time by the Department of Public Health. The only exception to these requirements will be made on receipt of a written statement from a doctor that immunization would not be in the best interests of the child, or by the student's parent or guardian stating that vaccination or immunization is contrary to the religious beliefs of the student or parent.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [76:15](#)

CROSS REF.: [JF](#), School Admissions

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

The District is required to provide educational services to all school age children who reside within its boundaries. By law, however, admission to school may be denied to any child diagnosed as having a disease whereby attendance could be harmful to the welfare of other students and staff, subject to the District's responsibilities to handicapped children under the law.

The School Committee recognizes that communicable diseases which may afflict students range from common childhood diseases, acute and short-term in nature, to chronic, life-threatening diseases.

Management of common communicable diseases shall be in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Health guidelines. A student who exhibits symptoms of a communicable disease may be temporarily excluded from school attendance. The District reserves the right to require a physician's statement authorizing the student's return to school.

The educational placement of a student who is medically diagnosed as having a life-threatening communicable disease shall be determined on an individual basis in accordance with this policy and accompanying administrative procedures. Decisions about the proper educational placement shall be based on the student's behavior, neurological development, and physical condition; the expected type of interaction with others in school setting; and the susceptibility to other diseases and the likelihood of presenting risks to others. A regular review of the placement decision shall be conducted to assess changes in the student's physical condition, or based on new information or research that may warrant a change in a student's placement.

In the event a student with a life-threatening communicable disease qualifies for services as a handicapped child under state and federal law, the procedures for determining the appropriate educational placement in the least restrictive environment shall be used in lieu of the procedures designated above.

Neither this policy nor the placement of a student in any particular program shall preclude the administration from taking any temporary actions including removal of a student from the classroom as deemed necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the student, staff, and others.

In all proceedings related to this policy, the District shall respect the student's right to privacy. Only those persons with a direct need to know shall be informed of the specific nature of the student's condition. The determination of those who need to know shall be made by the Superintendent.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:55](#)

ADMINISTERING MEDICINES TO STUDENTS

Medication may not be administered to students while at school unless such medicine is given to them by the school nurse acting under specific written request of the parent or guardian and under the written directive of the student's personal physician (see below for exceptions). If a student has been approved for self-administration, a student who needs medication during the school day may be reminded to take the medicine by the school nurse or other individual designated by the school nurse in the student's medical administration plan. This provision only applies when the school nurse has a medical administration plan in place for the student. No one but the school nurse, and those others listed in the medical administration plan acting within the above restriction, may give any medication to any student.

Exceptions:

The school district shall, through the district nurse leader, register with the Dept. of Public Health and train personnel in the use of epinephrine auto-injectors.

The school district may, in conjunction with the School Physician and the School Nurse Leader, stock nasal naloxone (Narcan) and trained medical personnel and first responders may administer nasal naloxone to individuals experiencing a life threatening opiate overdose in a school setting.

If the school district wishes medical personnel to train non-medical staff in the administration of nasal naloxone, the School Committee shall vote to approve such training and the Superintendent shall ensure that medical personnel have a written protocol which complies with medical directives and regulations from the Dept. of Public Health.

Following consultation with the school nurse, students who fall into the following exceptions may self-administer medications:

1. Students with asthma or other respiratory diseases may possess and administer prescription inhalers.
2. Students with cystic fibrosis may possess and administer prescription enzyme supplements.
3. Students with diabetes may possess and administer glucose monitoring tests and insulin delivery systems.
4. Students with life threatening allergies may possess and administer epinephrine.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:54B](#) Dept. of Public Health Regulations:
105 CMR 210.00; 244 CMR 3.00

GUIDANCE PROGRAM

Guidance is defined as helping individuals understand themselves in the light of their abilities, aptitudes, interests, attitudes, strengths and limitations. This process should assist students in the development of their potential; their decisions relating to personal, educational, and vocational matters, and also in becoming capable of mature self-guidance.

The school system's guidance program will be based on this definition and developed from these broad fundamental principles:

1. Individuals are different from one another in their capabilities, aptitudes, interests, needs, goals, desires and values.
2. Conditions may be improved. Equality of educational opportunity will benefit the individual and society.
3. Guidance is a continuous and developmental process. Every experience of the individual influences his/her performance in some way.
4. Guidance does not propose to program an individual's course of action but rather tries to assist him/her in arriving at his/her own satisfactory solutions.

Guidance services will include: educational guidance; testing programs; occupational, career, and higher education assistance and information; study aids; consultation services; and personal developmental guidance as needed. These services will be available to all students.

While some of the problems of the individual may relate to behavior and consequently entail guidance on behavior, student discipline will not be a regular function of guidance personnel.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:38A](#) through [71:38F](#); [71:46G](#); [76:5](#)
603 CMR [26.00](#)

STUDENT GIFTS AND SOLICITATIONS

Because of the embarrassment that might result among children, students will be discouraged from giving gifts to classroom teachers and other school personnel, but gifts can be given at appropriate times. For the same reason, there will be no formal exchange of gifts between students in the classroom.

Solicitation of funds for charitable purposes from students of the school system will be made only as approved by the Superintendent.

Any organization desiring to distribute flyers or other materials to students in connection with fund drives may do so only with the approval of the Superintendent or the designee.

CROSS REFS.: [GBEBC](#), Staff Gifts and Solicitations
[JJE](#), Student Fund-Raising Activities
[KHA](#), Public Solicitations in the Schools
[KHB](#), Advertising in the Schools

STUDENT FEES, FINES, AND CHARGES

The School Committee recognizes the need for student fees to fund certain school activities. It also recognizes that some students may not be able to pay these fees. While no student will be denied access due to an inability to pay fees, all students will be required to remit charges and fines.

A school may exact a fee or charge only upon the Superintendent approval. The schools, however, may:

Charge students enrolled in certain courses for the cost of materials used in projects that will become the property of the student.

Charge for lost and damaged books, materials, supplies, and equipment.

Students who are indigent are exempt from paying fees. However, indigent students are not exempt from charges for lost and damaged books, locks, materials, supplies, and equipment.

All student fees and charges, both optional and required, will be listed and described annually in each school's student handbook or in some other written form and distributed to each student. The notice will advise students that fees are to be paid and of the penalties for their failure to pay them. Permissible penalties include the denial of participation in extra class activities and graduation exercises and activities while the student is enrolled in this District.

Any fee or charge due to any school in the District and not paid at the end of the school year will be carried forward to the next succeeding school year, as such debts are considered to be debts of the student to the District and not to a particular school.

STUDENT RECORDS

In order to provide students with appropriate instruction and educational services, it is necessary for the school system to maintain extensive and sometimes personal information about them and their families. It is essential that pertinent information in these records be readily available to appropriate school personnel, be accessible to the student's parents or legal guardian and/or the student in accordance with law, and yet be guarded as confidential information.

The Superintendent will provide for the proper administration of student records in keeping with state and federal requirements, and shall obtain a copy of the state student records regulations. The temporary record of each student enrolled on or after June 2002 will be destroyed no later than seven years after the student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the School District. Written notice to the eligible student and his/her parent 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. The student's transcript may only be destroyed 60 years following his/her graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from the school system.

The Committee wishes to make clear that all individual student records of the school system are confidential. This extends to giving out individual addresses and telephone numbers.

LEGAL REFS: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974,
P.L. 93-380, Amended
P.L. 103-382, 1994
M.G.L. [66:10](#) [71:34A](#), [B](#), [D](#), [E](#), [H](#)
603 CMR: [23.00](#)

CROSS REF: [KDB](#), Public's Right to Know

STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHS

Individual schools may arrange, in cooperation with the school's parent/guardian organization, student council, designated student committee, or a staff committee, to take individual student and/or class group pictures.

Individual and/or class group pictures may be taken at the school facility and during the regular school day hours. The pictures shall be made available for purchase by students and/or parents on a voluntary basis. The building Principal or his/her designee shall have final authority in authorizing the picture-taking program and will be responsible for overseeing the process.

Students may be required to have an individual picture taken for the cumulative file or identification purposes; however, no student shall be pressured or required to purchase photographs.

The purpose of the policy is to:

Enhance the safety of students through visual identification in an emergency situation.

Facilitate the social, educational, and administrative activities conducted in the school.

Provide a service to parents and students.

Allow the profits gained from the picture-taking program to be used by the sponsoring group and authorized by the building Principal.

SECTION K - COMMUNITY RELATIONS

KA SCHOOL/COMMUNITY RELATIONS GOALS

KBA SCHOOL/PARENT RELATIONS GOALS

KBBA NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS' RIGHTS

KBE RELATIONS WITH PARENT/BOOSTER ORGANIZATIONS

KCB COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING

KCD PUBLIC GIFTS TO THE SCHOOLS

KDB PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW

KDD NEWS MEDIA RELATIONS/NEWS RELEASES

KE PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

KF COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

KHA PUBLIC SOLICITATIONS IN THE SCHOOLS

KHB ADVERTISING IN THE SCHOOLS

KI VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS

KLG RELATIONS WITH POLICE AUTHORITIES

KLJ RELATIONS WITH PLANNING AUTHORITIES

KLK RELATIONS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES

SCHOOL/COMMUNITY RELATIONS GOALS

The School Committee believes that the District is an integral part of the community and that community support is necessary for the District's operation and achievement of excellence. The School Committee and District staff members recognize that community support is based on a mutual exchange, a dynamic process in which the District contributes to the community's success and, in turn, benefits from the community's resources.

In order to maintain productive relationships with the community, the District is committed to sustaining:

Effective, accurate, and meaningful communications that facilitate dialogue, encourage involvement in District programs, and create community advocacy for its public schools.

Volunteer programs that provide mutually enriching experiences for our students, staff, and community volunteers.

Recognition programs that publicly honor the contributions of our students, employees, and community partners and express pride in our individual and collective accomplishments.

Community service efforts which enable the District's staff and students to express their commitment to the community.

SCHOOL/PARENT RELATIONS GOALS

It is the general goal of the District to foster relationships with parents, which encourage cooperation between the home and school in establishing and achieving common educational goals for students.

While parents are individually responsible for their children, the District provides direct services of education and indirect services of childcare for students during the time when they are within the supervision of school personnel. Consistent with these shared responsibilities and as appropriate to the maturity of the student, members of the school staff will consult with parents regarding student progress and achievement, methods to enhance student development, and matters of correction.

Additionally, parental involvement in the schools is encouraged through regular communication with the school Principal and staff, the parent/teacher organizations, the school volunteer program, and other opportunities for participation in school activities and District programs.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS' RIGHTS

As required by Massachusetts General Law, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with law and Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education Regulations. The school district will follow the law and the regulations developed by the Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education to standardize the process by which public schools provide student records to parents who do not have physical custody of their children ("non-custodial parents").

As required by law, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with the following provisions.

- (a) A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless the school or district has been given documentation that:
 - 1. The parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or
 - 2. The parent has been denied visitation, or
 - 3. The parent's access to the student 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 information contained in the student record, or
 - 4. There is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.
- (b) The school shall place in the student's record documents indicating that a non-custodial parent's access to the student's record is limited or restricted pursuant to regulation.
- (c) In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school principal.
- (d) Upon receipt of the request the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth in regulation.

- (e) The school must delete all electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In addition, such records must be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.
- (f) Upon receipt of a court order which prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to law, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:34D](#); [71:34H](#)

603 CMR [23.07](#) (5) Access Procedures for Non-Custodial Parents

20 U.S.C. §1232g Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

RELATIONS WITH PARENT/BOOSTER ORGANIZATIONS

To foster relationships with parents that encourage the home and school to work together to establish and achieve common educational goals for students, the Superintendent and the professional staff will:

1. Consult with and encourage parents to share in school planning.
2. Help parents understand the educational process and their role in promoting it.
3. Provide for parent understanding of school operations.
4. Provide opportunities for parents to be informed of their child's development and the criteria for its measurement.

To accomplish the above and to enhance communications between parents and school officials, the Committee encourages the maintenance of formal parent organizations, including Parent Teacher and/or booster organizations, at each school building. For this purpose the Committee will officially recognize parent organizations. These procedures will be observed:

1. Organizations will be officially recognized upon request by the building Principal who will file a copy of the organizational papers with the Superintendent.
2. A vote, open to all parents of children enrolled, will designate the organization to be recognized if more than one organization with the same purpose makes the request.
3. All parent organizations need to recognize that spending on student activities must comply with federal law relating to equity among student genders.

LEGAL REFS: Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972

CROSS REFS: [ACA](#) - Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING

The School Committee endorses the concept that community participation in the affairs of the schools is essential if the school system and the community are to maintain mutual confidence and respect and work together to improve the quality of education for students. It therefore intends to exert every effort to identify the desires of the community and to be responsive, through its actions, to those desires.

All citizens will be encouraged to express ideas, concerns, and/or questions about the schools to the school administration, to any appointed advisory bodies, and to the Committee.

Residents who are specially qualified because of interest, training, experience, or personal characteristics, will be encouraged to assume an active role in school affairs. From time to time, these people may be invited by the Committee to act as advisors, either individually or in groups.

The Committee and the staff will give substantial weight to the advice they receive from individuals and community groups interested in the schools, particularly from those individuals and groups they have invited to advise them regarding specific problems, but will use their best judgment in arriving at decisions.

CROSS REF.: [BDF](#), Advisory Committees to the School Committee

PUBLIC GIFTS TO THE SCHOOLS

The Superintendent will have authority to accept gifts and offers of equipment for the schools in the name of the Committee when the gift is of educational value. In the case of gifts from industry, business, or special interest groups, no extensive advertising or promotion may be involved in any donation to the schools.

Gifts that would involve changes in school plants or sites will be subject to School Committee approval.

Gifts will automatically become the property of the school system. Any gift of cash, whether or not intended by the donor for a specific purpose, will be accepted by vote of the School Committee, handled as a separate account and expended at the discretion of the Committee, as provided by law.

The Committee directs the Superintendent to assure that an appropriate expression of thanks is given all donors.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:37A](#)

PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW

The School Committee is a public servant, and its meetings and records will be a matter of public information except as such meetings and records pertain to individual personnel and other classified matters.

The School Committee supports the right of the people to know about the programs and services of their schools and will make every effort to disseminate information. All requests for information will be acted on fairly, completely and expeditiously.

All commonly available public record documents of the School District shall be posted on the district's website. The length of time such records shall remain posted on the district website shall be in accordance with the Municipal Record Retention Manual. In addition, the official minutes of the Committee, its written policies and regulations, and its financial records will be open for inspection at the office of the Superintendent by any citizen desiring to examine them during hours when the office is open. No records pertaining to individual students or staff members will be released for inspection by the public or any unauthorized persons by the Superintendent or other persons responsible for the custody of confidential files. The exception to this will be information about an individual employee (or student) that has been authorized in writing for release by the employee (or student, or student's parent).

Each building administrator is authorized to use all means available to keep parents and others in the particular school's community informed about the school's program and activities.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [4:7](#); [66:10](#); [30A:18](#)-25

CROSS REFS.: [BEDG](#), Minutes

[GBJ](#), Personnel Records

[JRA](#), Student Records

NOTE: The cross references are to related categories in this manual.

NEWS MEDIA RELATIONS/NEWS RELEASES

Every effort will be made to assist the press and other communications media to obtain complete and adequate coverage of the challenges, programs, planning, and activities of the school system.

All representatives of the media will be given equal access to information about the schools. General releases of interest to the entire community will be made available to all the media simultaneously. There will be no exclusive releases except as media representatives request information on particular programs, plans or problems.

In order that school system publicity is given wide coverage and is coordinated into a common effort and purpose, the following procedures will be followed in giving official information to the news media:

1. The School Committee Chair will be the official spokesman for the Committee, except as this duty is delegated to the Superintendent.
2. News releases that are of a system-wide or a sensitive nature or pertain to established Committee policy are the responsibility of the Superintendent. The Superintendent should preview releases and be informed of statements made to the press.
3. News releases that are of concern to only one school, or to an organization of one school, are the responsibility of the Principal of that particular school. All statements made to the press by other staff members of the particular school must be cleared with the Superintendent's Chief of Staff.

While it is impossible to know how news releases will be treated by the press, every possible effort should be made to obtain coverage of school activities that will create and maintain a dignified and professionally responsible image for the school system.

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Although no member of the community will be denied the right to bring their complaints to the Committee, they will be referred through the proper administrative channels for solution before investigation or action by the Committee. Exceptions will be made when the complaints concern Committee actions or Committee operations only.

The Committee believes that complaints are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible, and that the professional staff should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and attempt to resolve the problem prior to involvement by the Committee. Therefore, the proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline or learning materials will be as follows:

1. Teacher
2. School building administrator
3. Manager
4. Deputy Superintendent
5. Superintendent
6. School Committee

If a complaint, which was presented to the Committee and referred back through the proper channels, is adjusted before it comes back to the School Committee, a report of the disposition of the matter will be made to the Committee and then placed in the official files.

Complaints about school personnel will be investigated fully and fairly. However, before any such complaint is investigated, the complainant must submit his complaint in writing. Anonymous complaints will be disregarded.

Matters referred to the Superintendent and/or School Committee must be in writing and should be specific in terms of the action desired.

The Committee expects the professional staff to receive complaints courteously and to make a proper reply to the complainant.

LEGAL REFS.: MG.L. [76:5](#)
603 CMR [26.00](#)

COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

It is the School Committee's desire that maximum use of school property be enjoyed by the city residents. It is the Committee's intent that such use will maintain safe conditions and preserve the property for school program use.

Use of school buildings and other facilities by organizations will be permitted only when a worthy educational, civic, or charitable purpose will be served; or a substantial group of citizens from the community will be benefited.

School facilities will be used according to the regulations and rental fee schedules recommended by the Superintendent and approved by the School Committee.

Permission for the use of facilities must be obtained through the Facilities Office, where applications are available for this purpose.

Eligibility

School facilities will be available for the following:

1. Public school activities
2. Parent-teacher activities
3. Official town public hearings and political activities
4. Meetings and activities sponsored by the School Committee and school personnel
5. Parks and playgrounds activities
6. Local nonprofit and noncommercial organization activities
7. Metropolitan civic, educational, social, and religious organization activities if a substantial portion of the members are residents of the community
8. The activities of other organizations when approved through the permission process

School Preference

The priority given requests for use of school facilities will be as follows:

1. School activities
2. City meetings have preference over other community activities
3. Parks and playgrounds

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:71](#); [71:71B](#); [272:40A](#)

PUBLIC SOLICITATIONS IN THE SCHOOLS

The School Committee will place limits on commercial activities and fund-raising activities in the schools for the following reasons:

1. The school system should provide students, parents, and employees some measure of protection from exploitation by commercial and charitable fund-raising organizations.
2. The school system should not give the public the impression of generally endorsing or sanctioning commercial and fund-raising activities.
3. Commercial and fund-raising activities may disrupt school routine and cause loss of instructional time.

Following these guiding statements, the Superintendent and Principals may permit occasional commercial or fund-raising activities related to the objectives of the schools.

For the purposes of this policy, local PTA PTG and PTO groups and groups representing school system employees will be considered "school groups" and will be governed by the Committee's policy on staff solicitations.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [44:53A](#)

CROSS REFS.: [GBEBC](#), Staff Gifts and Solicitations
[JJE](#), Student Fund-Raising Activities
[JP](#), Student Gifts and Solicitations
[KHB](#), Advertising in the Schools

NOTE: The cross references are to related categories in the NEPN classification system.

ADVERTISING IN THE SCHOOLS

The School Committee may grant permission for advertising of commercial products or services in school buildings or on school property under guidelines or regulations it may approve. Otherwise, no advertising of commercial products or services will be permitted in school buildings or on school property. Publications of the school system will not contain any advertising. However, this will not prevent advertising in student publications that are published by student organizations, subject to administration controls, or the use of commercially-sponsored, free teaching aids if the content is approved by the administration.

The Worcester School Committee desires to promote positive relationships between schools and the community in order to enhance community support and involvement in the districts' schools. Prior to the execution of advertisement agreements, the Superintendent or designee shall review and approve all advertising for the electronic sign or other areas at Commerce Bank Field at Foley Stadium in accordance with School Committee policy.

The Superintendent or designee may selectively approve or disapprove of any advertising based on the criteria below, but may not disapprove advertising material in an arbitrary or capricious manner or in a way that discriminates against a particular viewpoint on a subject that would otherwise be allowed. The advertisement on the electronic sign or other areas within the Commerce Bank Field at Foley Stadium does not imply district endorsement of any identified product or services.

The Superintendent or designee shall not approve advertising at Commerce Bank Field at Foley Stadium that:

1. Are obscene (as defined by prevailing community standards throughout the district), libelous or slanderous.
2. Incite students to commit unlawful acts, violate school rules, disrupt the orderly operation of schools, or any act prohibited by the student Policy Handbook.
3. Promote any particular political or religious interest.
4. Promote, favor or oppose the candidacy or candidate for election, party or ballot measure.
5. Promote the use or sale of materials or services that are illegal or inconsistent with school objectives, including but not limited to advertisements for tobacco, intoxicants, and movies or products unsuitable for children.
6. Promote products that are contrary to the district's wellness practices for staff and students.
7. Solicit funds or services for an organization, with the exception of solicitations authorized by School Committee policy.

8. Would override the school district or school district's identity.

The Superintendent or designee also may consider the educational value of the advertisement, the age or maturity of students in the intended audience, and whether the advertisements support the basic educational mission of the district, directly benefit the students or are of intrinsic value to the students or their parents/guardians. All advertisements must comply with all local ordinances.

Solicitation of sales or use of the name of the school system to promote any product will not be permitted by the Committee.

SOURCE: Worcester School Committee gb #0-181 (2000)

CROSS REF.: [JP](#), Student Gifts and Solicitations
[KHA](#), Public Solicitations in the Schools

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS

The School Committee welcomes parents and guests to visit classrooms to support, observe and learn about the instructional programs taking place in our schools. Such visits can prove most beneficial in promotion of greater school-home cooperation and community understanding of how we carry out the school system's mission and goals. These will most often be scheduled by the school or teacher for the purpose of volunteer support or for student demonstrations or exhibits.

Visits by parents to several classrooms in a given grade for the purposes of comparing teaching styles to provide a basis for a request for student assignment to a particular teacher are strongly discouraged because the School District's policy of assigning a student to a particular class is the sole responsibility of the building Principal in consultation with the staff of that school.

The following guidelines to classroom and school visits should be followed:

1. The building Principal has the authority to determine the number, times, and dates of observations by visitors. This will be done in consultation with staff members so as to give adequate notice to the staff members of the impending visits.
2. For security purposes it is requested that all visitors report to the Principal's office upon entering and leaving the building and sign a guest log showing arrival and departure times. Teachers are encouraged to ask visitors if they have registered in the Principal's office.
3. Under ordinary circumstances classroom observations will be strongly discouraged during the first three weeks of school in September and during the month of June.
4. Any student who wishes to have a guest in school MUST ask permission of one of the administrative staff 24 HOURS in advance of the proposed visit. If permission is granted, the guest is expected to follow the standards of behavior expected of all students. Upon arrival the guest must register in the office. Any guest who fails to comply with student regulations will be asked to leave the school building and grounds immediately.

CROSS REF.: [IHBAA](#), Observations of Special Education Programs

RELATIONS WITH POLICE AUTHORITIES

Cooperation with law enforcement agencies is essential for the protection of students, for maintaining a safe environment in the District schools, and for safeguarding all school property.

Relationships between the schools and officials of law enforcement agencies in investigative matters concerning pupils will take into consideration the respective roles of the schools and law enforcement agencies in assisting and protecting the interests of the community, and ensuring the rights of all concerned.

The School Committee also recognizes the potential enrichment that law enforcement agencies can make in the educational program.

Efforts should be made to develop and maintain a healthy attitude toward law enforcement agencies and personnel to promote better understanding and communication.

RELATIONS WITH PLANNING AUTHORITIES

The School Committee will participate in local and state planning functions that could directly affect District schools and their immediate environment.

The Superintendent or designee will keep the School Committee informed of planning matters bearing directly on the operation of District schools or school-sponsored programs, and will undertake action on behalf of the School Committee to influence matters in the best interests of the students, the schools and the District.

RELATIONS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES

The School Committee and its administrative officers welcome all who seek to serve the residents of the community and will participate with them in the planning and execution of such projects as will be mutually beneficial for students.

It is School Committee policy that administration inform elected and appointed officials of the local and county government of the desire to work cooperatively for improved services.

SECTION L - EDUCATION AGENCY RELATIONS

LA EDUCATION AGENCY RELATIONS GOALS

LB RELATIONS WITH OTHER SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS

LBC RELATIONS WITH NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS

LDA STUDENT TEACHING AND INTERNSHIPS

EDUCATION AGENCY RELATIONS GOALS

The School Committee appreciates the place and importance of an educational system in its greater environment, which includes other organizations and institutions dedicated to education. It believes that much is gained through cooperative endeavors with other agencies.

In order to make a maximum contribution to education, within the school system and to other educational agencies, the Committee establishes these broad goals:

1. To encourage liaison with other educational agencies.
2. To supply educational services to and/or share with other educational agencies.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The School Committee will cooperate with other schools and with local, state, and regional agencies and organizations to:

1. Seek solutions of educational problems of common concern.
2. Offer support services of high quality to our children.
3. Equalize educational opportunities for all children.
4. Acquire federal and state grants.
5. Promote local school system involvement in state and federal decision-making.

This cooperation may extend to research, providing transportation for children to special schools and hospitals, coordination of curriculum, exchange of information and data, construction of facilities that may be efficiently used on a cooperative basis, and the coordination of school calendars and activities.

Before joining any cooperative programs, education collaborative, or participating in any joint educational services with other school systems, the School Committee wants to be sure that in all instances the best interests of our school children will be served. In carrying out this policy the Superintendent will include in reports to the Committee an evaluation of the desirability and feasibility of cooperation with other schools and agencies on matters of mutual interest.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [40:4E](#); [71:48](#); [71:71D](#); [71B:4](#); [74:4](#) through [74:7A](#); [76:1](#)

NOTE: Policies under this category and its subcategories are usually specific in naming the cooperatives, collaborative, and special agencies with which the school system is associated to provide special services and programs.

RELATIONS WITH NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS

Private Schools

In accordance with state law, the School Committee will approve a private school when it is satisfied that the instructional program of the school equals that of the town's public schools in thoroughness, efficiency, and progress made.

The Committee recognizes that many worthwhile contributions are made to this community by parochial and other private schools. Therefore, it will cooperate with these schools in matters of mutual benefit when law does not expressly prohibit this cooperation.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [40:4E](#); [71:48](#); [71:71D](#); [71B:4](#); [74:4](#) through [74:7A](#); [76:1](#)

STUDENT TEACHING AND INTERNSHIPS

The Committee encourages the administration to cooperate with teacher-training institutions in the placement of student teachers in the school system.

The Committee authorizes the administration to honor the reasonable rules and training guidelines of the sending institution.

In all arrangements made with colleges and universities, the school system will be given the privilege of interviewing and accepting or rejecting individual candidates for student teaching and internships.

The school administration will ensure there are procedures for evaluating the performance of student teachers that meet requirements of the sending institution and fit with the Committee's policies.