

Dr. Leroy E. Mayo Elementary School

Student Handbook

2023-2024



At Mayo Elementary, we are proud of a culture that develops strong learners and future citizens by helping students:

Prepare for Learning
Act with Kindness
Work Hard
Show Leadership



Carolyn Kasper, Principal
Anthony DiBenedetto, Assistant Principal
351 Bullard Rd
Holden, MA 01520
Phone: (508) 829-3203 ~ Fax: (508) 829-5216
<https://mayo.wrsd.net/>

Wachusett Regional School District

Table of Contents

Section

A. Introduction

1. Wachusett Regional School District Committee

2. Mission Statement/ Core Values

3. Annual School Events

4. Organizations

4.1.1 School Improvement and Modernization Council (SIMCO)

4.1.2 Parent Teacher Association (P.T.A.)

5. Health Services

5.1 Confidentiality (WRSDC P6650)

5.2 School Immunization Law

5.3 Immunizations

5.4 Physical Examinations

5.5 Mandated Screening Programs

5.6 Contagious Conditions

5.7 Temporary or Permanent Exclusion from School/Physical Education

5.8 Administration of Medication

5.9 Accident Insurance

6. No-School Announcements

7. Attendance

7.1 Late Arrival

7.2 Early Dismissal

7.3 Dismissal Time Parent Pick-up

7.4 Before School Drop-Off

7.5 Vacations during School Time

7.6 Makeup Work

8. General Information

8.1 Pre-School Screening

8.2 Kindergarten Entrance

8.2.1. Registration

8.2.2. School Entrance

8.3 Media Center - Library

8.4 Art

8.5 Music

8.6 Physical Education

8.7 Chapter 766

8.8 Child Study Team (CST)

8.9 Special Education Staff

8.10 Speech and Language Therapy

8.11 Home Tutoring

8.12 Report Cards/Progress Reports

- 8.13 Parent/Teacher Communication
- 8.14 Audio. Video and/or Stenographic Recording of Meetings (WRSDC P3813)
- 8.15 Radios, Cell Phones, Messaging Devices, other electronic Devices, etc.
- 8.16 Homework
- 8.17 Disciplinary Action
- 8.18 Student Transfers
- 8.19 Assignment of Students to Classes

9. Miscellaneous Information

- 9.1 Financial Assistance
- 9.2 Hot Lunch Program
- 9.3 Free/Reduced Hot Lunch
- 9.4 Birthday/ Holiday Snacks
- 9.5 Birthday Invitations
- 9.6 School Evacuation/Critical Incident Drills
- 9.7 School Bus Evacuation Drills
- 9.8 Personal Attire
- 9.9 Bicycle/Scooter Policy
- 9.10 Gift Giving
- 9.11 Lost Articles
- 9.12 Care of School Books
- 9.13 School Telephone
- 9.14 Student Photographs
- 9.15 School to Home Communication
- 9.16 Field Trips
- 9.17 Non-Smoking Policy

10. Code of Conduct

- 10.1 Introduction of Mayo Code of Conduct/ Philosophy of Discipline
- 10.2 General Rules and Consequences
 - 10.2.1 Discipline at School Related Functions
 - 10.2.2 School Bus Safety and Security Procedures
 - 10.2.3 Wachusett Regional School District Bus Discipline Policy and Procedure
 - 10.2.4 Special Education Discipline
 - 10.2.5 In-School Suspension
 - 10.2.6 Out of School Suspension/Expulsion

11. Mayo School Safety and Security Plan

- 11.1 Access to School Building
- 11.2 Safety in Classrooms
- 11.3 Safety in Hallways
- 11.4 Safety on School Grounds
- 11.5 Responsibilities of the Staff and the Plan Implementation

Principal's Message:

Dear Parents and Students,

A warm welcome to Mayo Elementary School! We're thrilled to have you as a part of our Mountain Lion family and look forward to a year filled with growth and learning. At Mayo, our goal is to make learning exciting and to create a strong partnership between students, parents, and our dedicated staff. Together, we can achieve remarkable things.

This Student Handbook serves as an introduction to the remarkable education that awaits your child at Mayo School. I urge all parents and students to not only review its contents for general information, but to also take an active role in the Mayo experience. By engaging in school activities, joining parent-teacher associations, and participating in various events, you will enrich your understanding of our school's vibrant community and contribute to its growth.

May this year be filled with laughter, exploration, and countless moments of enlightenment. Together, there is no limit to what we can achieve, and I am confident that, as Mountain Lions, we will overcome challenges and celebrate triumphs in unity.

I extend my best wishes to you and your family for an exhilarating and rewarding school year. Feel free to reach out to us at any time; your thoughts, feedback, and involvement are greatly valued and appreciated.

Welcome to Mayo School! Here's to an exciting and rewarding school year ahead!

Sincerely,

Carolan Kasper, Principal



Wachusett Regional School District Committee policies supersede the material contained in this handbook. A copy of the district policies are available in the Mayo Main Office, the WRSD central office and online at <http://www.wrsd.net/schoolcom.htm>. WRSD policies are formatted the same as this paragraph when referenced in part or in whole.

The student code of conduct, grievance procedures, sexual harassment policies, special education discipline policies, restraint policies and any other section of the student handbook will be translated into the primary language of a parent/guardian upon request.

The Wachusett Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, English Language Learner (ELL) status, housing status, or other protected status in the operation of the educational programs, activities, or employment policies, and no person will be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to its public schools, or in obtaining advantage and privileges in regards to courses of study and extracurricular programs of such public schools on account of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, English Language Learner (ELL) status, housing status or other protected category.

The School District, in complying with the laws of the Federal Government and Massachusetts, notifies you of this action and informs you that the coordinator for compliance at the building level is the school principal.

At the District level, the ADA (disability pertaining to non-students), Title VI and Title IX (race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, and sexual orientation Coordinator is Jeff Carlson, Director of Human Resources, WRSD, 1745 Main St., Jefferson, MA 01522, 508-829-1670 ext. 224

At the District level, the ADA and Section 504 (disability pertaining to students) Coordinator is Catherine Knowles, Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services, WRSD, 1745 Main St., Jefferson, MA 01522, 608-829-1670 ext. 237

Notice of Procedural Safeguards (formerly titled “Parent’s Rights Brochure”) can be accessed at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/prb/>.

If you need this booklet translated, please contact the main office of your child's school.

Portuguese/Português

Se você necessitar este livreto traduzido, contate por favor o escritório principal da escola da sua criança.

Spanish/ Español

Si usted necesita este librete traducido, entre en contacto con por favor la oficina principal de la escuela de su niño.

French/ Français

Si vous avez besoin de ce livret traduit, entrez en contact avec svp le bureau principal de l'école de votre enfant.

German/ Deutsch

Wenn Sie diese übersetzte Broschüre benötigen, treten Sie bitte mit dem Hauptbüro der Schule Ihres Kindes in Verbindung.

Russian/Русско

Если вы этот переведенный буклет, то пожалуйста контактируйте главный офис школы вашего ребенка.

Korean/한국어

당신가 번역이 책자가 필요하면, 자녀의 학교의 주요 사무실에 문의하시기 바랍니다.

Chinese/汉语

如果您需要这本小册子被翻译，请与您的儿童的学校大会办公处联系。

Japanese/日本語

翻訳されるこの小冊子を必要とすれば あなたの子供の学校の主要なオフィスに連絡しなさい。

Hindi/हिन्दी

Agar Aapka yah puistka ki Anavaaidt AavaSyakta ho tba kRpyaa Apnao baccao ko ivaValaya ka mau#ya kayaa-laya sampk- kiryao .

Polish/Polski

Jeśli potrzebujesz tej broszury przetłumaczone, skontaktuj się z głównego urzędu Twoje dziecko w szkole.

Greek

Αν χρειάζεστε το φυλλάδιο αυτό μεταφράστηκε, παρακαλούμε επικοινωνήστε με την κύρια έδρα του σχολείου του παιδιού.

Italian/Italia

Se hai bisogno di questo opuscolo tradotto, si prega di contattare l'ufficio principale del vostro bambino scuola.

Arabic

ب رئيسية من طفلك مدرسة. اتصل ب إن أنت تحتاج هذا كراس يترجم، رجاء

Albanian

Ne qofte se ju do te deshironit dokumentat te perkthyer ne gjuhen shqip. Ju mund ti kerkoni ne zyren qendrore te shkolle eshte femija juaj.

DR. LEROY E. MAYO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



OFFICE HOURS:

School office hours are 8:10 AM to 4:10 PM.

SCHOOL DAY HOURS:

Grades K-5:

AM: 8:50- 9:00 arrival. Students who are late should report to the office for a late pass and will be escorted to their classrooms. Parents should accompany any tardy students into the office area until they have received their late pass.

NOTE: Supervision of students by staff does not begin until 8:50. Therefore students must not be left off at school unattended by parent/guardian prior to that time.

1. Wachusett Regional School District Committee

The Wachusett Regional School District Committee, elected by the citizens of Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland and Sterling, is directly responsible to the Massachusetts Department of Education for the operation of the District's Schools in accordance with State Laws and Department Regulations, and to the citizens of the District for the quality of the educational program and responsible stewardship of the District's financial resources.

The Wachusett Regional School District Committee is the policy-making body and has the final authority in all matters relating to the schools. The School Committee determines policy and enacts business only when meeting as a committee in a legally called meeting.

The Wachusett Regional School District Committee recognizes that every child is entitled by law to a free public education designed to meet his or her needs and potential. The Committee recognizes its responsibility to provide an educational environment that will:

- Encourage equal opportunity for intellectual and creative growth for all children.
- Encourage opportunities for physical and emotional growth for all children.
- Encourage opportunities for independent and responsible thought and action on the part of all students.

2. Mission Statement/ Core Values

The Mission of Mayo School is to inspire, encourage and celebrate learning and personal growth, with every student, every day.

Core Values: PAWS

Prepare for Learning, **A**ct with Kindness, **W**ork Hard, **S**how Leadership

3. Annual School Events

Mayo School has several traditional activities that happen each year and are posted on the website. The Mayo PTA sponsors some of these activities. Please monitor the website and communication from the office for updates.

4. Organizations

4.1 School Improvement and Modernization Council (SIMCO)

The SIMCO is an organization providing an opportunity for teachers, parents, students, and members of the community to become informed and actively participate in the educational process at Mayo School. Included in this group are parent, teacher and community representatives. The council meets monthly to advise and assist the principal in:

- setting goals for the school;
- identifying students' educational needs;
- reviewing the school building's budget;
- assisting in the creation of the school improvement plan.

All meetings are open to the public and parental attendance is encouraged. Notices regarding times and locations of meetings are typically sent home via Principal 'Smore Updates' through e-mail and posted on the Mayo website and Social Media platforms.

4.2 Parent-Teacher Association (P.T.A.)

The P.T.A. is a service organization whose main function is providing educational materials and social and cultural events, which will be of mutual benefit for parents, teachers and children. It promotes a closer working relationship between home and school by encouraging volunteers to participate at school and P.T.A. events.

One of its functions has been to raise funds for enrichment programs, field trips, equipment and family programs and events. Officers are elected annually and consist of president (or co-presidents), vice president (or co-vice presidents), secretary and treasurer. Members volunteer to coordinate or assist at events during meetings or through sign-up sheets.

Anyone who is interested in the Mayo School is cordially invited to join the P.T.A. meetings, which are held monthly. Notices regarding times and locations of meetings are typically sent home via Principal 'Smore Updates' through e-mail and posted on the Mayo PTA website <http://www.mayopta.com/>.

5. Health Services

Students who become ill or injured will be directed to the school nurse for assessment, evaluation, treatment and/or referral. If the nurse is not available, students are to report to the office. Parents will be notified when a child must be sent home. If the parent cannot be contacted, the person indicated on the Emergency Card will be called. **It is imperative that the Emergency Card be completed annually and updated as necessary.**

5.1 Confidentiality (WRSDC P6650)

The Wachusett Regional School District shall encourage communication between and among school personnel, students, and parents. The Committee recognizes that circumstances may arise when a student with a personal or medical problem may seek help from a member of the faculty or administration. In such instances, the Committee will respect the confidentiality of communications between student and a teacher, counselor, nurse, or administrator. However, it is not the intention of this statement of policy to encourage interference with parental or legal authority.

5.2 School Immunization Law

In accordance with Chapter 76, Section 15 of the General Laws of Massachusetts, parents/guardians of students must provide documentation of immunizations or have on file a religious or medical exemption. All students must be compliant with immunizations required by Massachusetts regulations (102 CMR 7.09 and 105 CMR 220.00) and established by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. The only exemptions are for documented religious or medical reasons.

5.3 Physical Examinations

Massachusetts requires that a physical examination by a healthcare provider be on file with the nurse for Kindergarten entry and every four years thereafter (grades 4 and 8). Students entering the

District without records or recent physicals must have a physical examination within the first year. A physical exam is also required prior to tryouts for competitive athletics or cheerleading.

5.4 Mandated Screening Programs

Students in grades K through 5 are tested for various parameters annually according to the chart below. The school nurse does postural screening for scoliosis. Parents will be notified if screening procedures identify possible problems.

Grade	Weight	Height	Vision	Hearing	Scoliosis
Kindergarten	X	X	X	X	
1	X	X	X	X	
2			X	X	
3			X	X	
4	X	X	X	X	
5			X	X	X

5.5 Contagious Conditions

Parents are requested to report any incidence of contagious disease or condition to the school nurse. This includes incidence of head lice and scabies. When these conditions are identified, the student will be sent home.

Children having a fever should remain at home until their temperature is within normal range for 24 hours. It is suggested that if your child is placed on antibiotics, they remain at home for the first 24 hours and/or follow physician's orders.

District policies regarding other health conditions can be found on the District website (www.wrsd.net).

5.6 Temporary or Permanent Exclusion from School Activities/Physical Education

Students are expected to participate in all activities of the school program including recess and physical education. If, for health reasons, a child must be excluded for a temporary time from any activity, we request written verification from a doctor. It is expected that children will go out for recess; subsequently, please ensure that your children are dressed appropriately for the conditions.

5.7 Administration of Medication

The policy for the administration of medication in school is designed to protect the health of the child and the rights of the staff. The following policy and procedure will be followed for administering any medication during school hours. This includes both prescription and over-the-counter drugs. If the medication to be administered falls under the classification of "psychotropic drugs", Guidelines of Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 71 Section 54B, will be followed.

For ALL medications (prescription and non-prescription), medication shall be administered by the school nurse provided below:

- The school nurse must have on file the "**Physician Medication Order/Parent Consent Form**" properly completed by the physician. This form states the type of medication and the frequency with which to give it. This form must also be signed by the parent/guardian. Parental permission alone is not acceptable.
- The "Physician Medication Order/Parent Consent Form" must be updated by the physician and parent whenever the medication is changed.
- All medication should be properly safeguarded in the nurse's office.
- The nurse shall have the right, with just and reasonable cause, to refuse the administration of medication.
- No child is to transport medication to or from school. All medication must be brought to and from school via the parent or other responsible adult. However, in the case of self-medicating students, students may transport and self-administer upon completion of a written agreement between the parent and the nurse.
- All medication must be submitted in the original pharmacy container with the label intact.
- Cough drops and lozenges are prohibited in Elementary and Middle Schools by WRSD Policy.

Medical Emergencies

- In the event of a life-threatening or serious injury or illness, an attempt will be made to contact the parent or guardian. Emergency Medical Services will be contacted for their assistance, and the student will be transported to the appropriate medical facility for treatment.

5.8 Accident Insurance

The Wachusett Regional School District sponsors a student-participation insurance plan. Brochures describing the plans available are available to all students during the first week of school.

(WRSDC P6616) The Wachusett Regional School District shall require each student participating in intramural programs to provide evidence of an active accident or health insurance policy covering the student.

6. No-School Announcements

A School Messenger call will be made to all parents to notify them of a school cancellation. In addition to the School Messenger call, no-school announcements will be aired on the following local television stations:

WBZ Channel 4

WCVB Channel 5

WHDH Channel 7

NBS Boston Channel 10

During the winter months, bad weather occasionally makes it necessary to delay the opening of school. Delayed openings will be announced on the radio, television stations, and through School Messenger.

If the announcement is for a **delayed opening**:

- students or their parents should continue listening to these radio stations for further announcements, in case we change to **no school** all day.
- Delays could be up to two hours.
- Delayed openings do not affect dismissal times.

In an emergency such as a loss of water, boiler breakdown, or extreme weather conditions school may be dismissed earlier than the regular closing time. Additionally, the Holden Recreation After-School Program is sometimes canceled due to weather conditions. **Parents should be certain that all Unanticipated Early Dismissal/Cancellation of After School Program Forms are kept up to date, and should inform their children as to what they should do in case of early dismissal.** These forms are distributed for completion at the beginning of the school year; if changes need to be made during the school year, parents should contact the school secretary.

7. Attendance

Education requires strong attendance in order to reap its fullest reward. **It is imperative that your child is in attendance when school is in session.** Any time/ day missed interrupts the educational sequence, which affects school attitudes and overall progress. It is understood that children who are ill or are recovering from an illness should be kept at home.

If your child is going to be out of school for the day, it is important that you call school first thing in the morning. This is informational as well as a safety check. A message can be left at (508) 829-3203.

7.1 Late Arrival Policy

If a pupil arrives at school after 9:00 A.M., they must be accompanied by a parent/guardian to the Main Office where a tardy slip (which is to be presented to the teacher by the pupil) is issued. It is important to have your child arrive for school on time. When a child is late it causes a disruption in their classroom routine and he/she may miss specific instructional opportunities.

7.2 Early Dismissal Policy

Early dismissal (before 3:30 P.M.) of pupils can be arranged through the office. Please see that your child brings a note stating the reason for dismissal and the time he/she is to be dismissed. The child should then be picked up at the office at the early dismissal time.

7.3 Dismissal Time Parent Pick-Up

If a parent wishes to pick up a child at the regular dismissal time, please send a note with the child in the morning. In order to facilitate end of the day dismissal for the entire school, students who are parent pick-ups will be dismissed from the cafeteria door. Parents are to use the main driveway

around to the back of the building for pick-up. If you arrive early and are waiting for your child to be dismissed please do not leave your car idling as the exhaust from the cars is drawn into the building.

7.4 Before School Drop off

Walkers cross Bullard Street with the crossing guard and use the path beside the school, then enter the building through the front doors. At the end of the day, walkers meet our two crossing guards in the front foyer and are dismissed with them through the front door. They accompany students to Bullard St and cross them safely there.

Bus riders are delivered to the front of the school. Arrival is monitored by a staff member, who checks with the driver about student behavior and bus safety. Dismissal is monitored by teachers until students board their bus.

Carpool students are dropped off and dismissed from the back of the school. Both arrival and dismissal are monitored by staff members. Drivers go around the circle behind the school, always staying to the right. Move forward as directed by the staff in charge. Students will be dismissed to you and may not rush. They must never get out of the car in the middle of the lane and may not cross traffic. Adults should remain in the car and follow all directions in order to provide for safety.

7.5 Vacations during School Time

Parents and students are reminded that Massachusetts Law requires compulsory attendance for students. We strongly discourage family vacations when school is in session. In addition to compromising the attendance law, family vacations interrupt the educational process of each course in ways that makeup work cannot reverse. Teachers are not required to give out homework/ classwork assignments prior to a family vacation.

7.6 Make Up Work

Students who have been absent must assume the responsibility for making up work. If a student is absent for a prolonged period of time, he/ she will be given an adequate amount of time to make up the missed work. A parent may request class assignments for a child who is ill if absence exceeds more than two days. A note/ call to the teacher must be received in the morning in order for a teacher to get work ready to be sent home or picked up at the school office at the end of the day.

8. General Information

8.1 Preschool Screening

Parents may request pre-school screening for their child (age 3 and above) if they believe there may be a possible learning concern. This evaluation could detect problems that may hinder the child's ability to learn. Parents should call the Special Education Office at the Superintendent's Office. All children who will be entering the Kindergarten Program are screened in the spring for vision, hearing, gross and fine motor skills, language delays and speech.

8.2 Kindergarten Entrance

Registration

- Registration begins in early February. Kindergarten Orientation occurs prior to the end of the school year.

School Entrance

- Any child entering Kindergarten shall have attained the age of five (5) years on or before August 31st.
- Any child entering first grade shall have attained the age of six (6) years on or before August 31st.
- The parent seeking entrance of a child to first grade who does not meet the age requirements but who has completed an accredited Kindergarten program in a public or private school, and whose records indicate that the child is ready for first grade, may be allowed to enter first grade at the discretion of the principal.
- To be eligible for entrance, the following must be brought or sent to the school with the completed registration papers.
 - Birth Certificate (if an original it is copied and later returned to the parents),
 - Record of all immunizations.
 - Parents should inform the school of any disabilities, health concerns, and any information that they feel might affect their child's ability to function in school.

8.3 Media Center- Library (Parent and Volunteer Run)

The library has reading and reference materials and is used for story hours and library instruction. Children are allowed to take out books for a period of up to two weeks. Students are responsible for any materials that are checked out of the library. There is a charge for lost or damaged books.

8.4 Art

There is a dual philosophy to the art program: (1) that art stands alone as an important basic educational area in its own right, and (2) it is an important integrating force with respect to other subject areas such as, reading, math, science and social studies. Emphasis is placed on one or both objectives at a time. Experience in materials, techniques and concepts are presented.

8.5 Music

As with art, music has a dual philosophy to its approach: (1) that a comprehensive and sequential music education stands alone in its own right and (2) that music is one of the ways children are known to learn; it helps to develop multicultural understanding and to develop the skills needed for reading, writing and listening. Experience in listening to a wide variety of music is provided along with musical programs as scheduling allows and recorder lessons are taught in grade three.

8.6 Physical Education

Classes are scheduled outdoors in good weather and in the gym during the colder months and inclement weather. The program provides a range of activities allowing for all the children to participate, both as individuals and as part of a team. Fitness, fun, and sportsmanship are the key concepts that are emphasized during physical education classes.

Sneakers are required for physical education class. As for other dress, the children wear their regular school clothes. A sweatshirt or jacket is recommended for outdoor physical education. Students are allowed to bring a water bottle to class. Sneakers are a must for all gym classes. Hats may be worn when physical education classes are held outside

8.7 Chapter 766

This is a Massachusetts Law that became effective in September 1974. It is designed to assist individuals with identified disabilities between the ages of three and twenty-one who require specialized instruction.

For further information, please contact the Mayo Team Chairperson/ Assistant Principal.

8.8 Child Study Team (CST)

The purpose of the Child Study Team (CST) is to assist students when challenges arise with either academic learning or social/ emotional needs. The Team makes recommendations for classroom accommodations or additional assessment. The Child Study Team is comprised of an administrator, the school psychologist and the referring teacher. Other staff may sometimes be asked to participate as well. If accommodations are recommended, it reconvenes at a later date to assess the effectiveness of those recommendations. Referral to CST does not mean an automatic referral for special education evaluation. Parents will be notified about the recommendation to CST, but at this level of intervention their involvement is not required.

8.9 Special Education Staff

This staff provides support services for children with identified disabilities who require support services in order to make effective educational progress. Special Education Staff members coordinate the evaluation of students who are experiencing learning problems. Mayo special education teachers also conduct small group classes. They often prescribe specific learning approaches to be used by classroom teachers and co-plan and co-teach classes with the regular classroom teachers.

8.10 Speech and Language Therapy

Students with speech, voice and language difficulties may receive services as indicated by an Individual Educational Plan (IEP). A speech and language therapist is available to work primarily with children who have been evaluated under Chapter 766 (see Chapter 766 above).

8.11 Home Tutoring

Home Tutoring is available for extended student absence due to illness and/or serious injury, or for children with a Chronic Illness Plan. Parents needing this service should contact the School Administration.

8.12 Report Cards/Progress Reports

Report cards are issued for grades 3- 5 four times a year - November, January, April and June. Report cards are issued for grades K - 2 three times a year-January, April and June. In lieu of a report card for the first term, parent/teacher conferences for students in K-2 will be held in November. Final report cards (Grades K - 5) will not be issued until the last day of school. Parents may view Report Cards through the PowerSchool Parent Portal. Progress reports are provided to parents of students receiving special education services four times a year, November, January, April, and June.

8.13 Parent/Teacher Communication

Parents and teachers may communicate effectively in a number of ways (e.g., phone, letter, e-mail, etc.). However, as a result of a need/concern/issue, a parent or teacher may request a conference to discuss the issue. Parents and teachers should arrange for such a meeting at a mutually convenient time contingent to the school day.

8.14 Audio, Video and/or Stenographic Recording of Meetings (WRSDC P3813)

The Wachusett Regional School Committee prohibits the audio, video and/or stenographic recording of parent/teacher conferences and/or Team meetings conducted in Wachusett Regional School District facilities. Exceptions to this policy will be made only where a parent/guardian or student is able to demonstrate that either the audio, video and/or stenographic recording of the meeting or conference is necessary to ensure the parent's/guardian's or student's full understanding of the proceedings or to otherwise accommodate a parent's/guardian's or student's documented disability. Requests by a parent/guardian or student for authorization to audio, video and/or stenographic record a meeting or conference shall be submitted in writing to the Superintendent of the Wachusett Regional School District no less than three (3) business days prior to said meeting/conference. The Superintendent's decision on any such request shall be final.

8.15 Radios, Cell Phones, Messaging Devices, other Electronic Devices, etc.

Mayo acknowledges that cell phones are often used as a safety measure for families. Students may not use their cell phones during school hours, and are discouraged from bringing them on a routine basis. The use of cell phones is permitted outside of school hours. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones. If a student uses a cell phone during the school day, or the cell phone disrupts classes the student will be referred to the Main Office.

Portable games or other electronic devices such as those listed above are NOT permitted on field trips. Laser pointers are not allowed at school and will be confiscated. Inappropriate use of laser pointers will be considered a violation of the weapons policy **P6433**.

8.16 Homework

Children are encouraged to continue their school learning at home and in the community. Teachers may decide to assign homework for this extended learning, for needed practice or for enrichment. If you wish to provide valuable assistance to the education of your child, you can do so by encouraging your child to take pride in passing in neat and carefully completed assignments.

The following is an approximate amount of time your child should be spending on homework daily. It is expected that your child's teacher will inform you of their homework policy at the beginning of the school year. Some children will need more time to complete certain assignments; and from

time-to-time assignments will be more extensive. If you have any questions, contact your child's teacher.

Kindergarten	5-10 minutes
Grade 1	5-10 minutes
Grade 2	20-30 minutes
Grades 3 and 4	30-45 minutes
Grade 5	45-60 minutes

If the homework is incomplete after a serious attempt has been made over this period of time, the parent should **write a note** to the teacher stating the amount of time spent and that the homework was seriously attempted although incomplete. If any emergency arises, and your child is unable to complete his/her homework, please write a note to the teacher. However, this does not excuse the student from completing the assignment the following evening. Other out of school activities do not constitute a reason for a student being excused from completion of homework.

8.17 Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action for homework not completed may include:

- Verbal warning
- Loss of classroom privileges
- Notification to parents/ Conference scheduled

8.18 Student Transfers

Please inform us if you are moving and let us know the last day (date) that your child will attend Mayo School. We will also need your new address and the name of the next school your child will attend. The parents must sign certain release forms so that school records may be forwarded to your new school. Records will not be given to parents for transit, but will be sent to the school upon request.

8.19 Assignment of Students to Classes

Classroom placement is an important, complex and time-consuming process that our staff takes very seriously. Per School Committee Policy, our ultimate goal is to "establish classes that will enhance the dynamics of the classroom by bringing students together who will work as a learning team, and challenge and complement one another".

Per School Committee Policy, requests for specific teachers will not be considered in the placement process. The principal approves all final placement decisions provided the recommendation of the sending grade level teaching team, special education staff and any available parent input.

9. Miscellaneous Information

9.1 Financial Assistance

Occasionally, money is collected from students to cover expenses related to field trips, special programs, etc. Financial constraints should never prevent participation of students in educational

programs of the school. Any family needing assistance in this regard should contact the principal. All such contact will remain confidential.

9.2 Hot Lunch Program

For the 2023-2024 school year, all students will be eligible for one free breakfast and one free lunch per day. However, all additional breakfasts and lunches and snacks must be purchased. All students Hot lunches, including milk, are available during the lunch period throughout the year. For those wishing to bring a cold lunch, milk is available. Alternate sandwiches and salads are also available. Annual lunch and milk fees shall be provided at the start of the school year. Hot lunches begin the first day of school.

We have a computerized lunch system. Every student is given a unique pass code that they enter to access their account to pay for their lunch. Parents are encouraged to pre-pay for their child's lunch. This money is placed in an account that a child may use to purchase lunch or milk, but not snacks. Parents can pay by the week, month or year. This system is an effective means of purchasing lunch and students no longer have to worry about losing their lunch money. Information is available at <https://sites.google.com/a/wrsd.net/food-services/>

9.3 Free/Reduced Hot Lunch

Free hot lunch or partial payment is considered by request. Forms for this will be sent home to parents the first week of school. The forms must be filled out completely in order to be processed. As financial situations do change, these forms are always available online at <http://www.wrsd.net/parentinformation/FreeReducedLunch.pdf>

9.4 Birthday/ Holiday Snacks

Due to the many food allergies, medical conditions, and other food related issues, birthday/ Holiday snacks for sharing are not permitted. If you feel that you still want to send something in, birthday pencils, colored pencils, erasers, or other school supplies are alternatives to snacks. Although we do not celebrate with a snack, your child's birthday will be recognized by their teacher and school administration.

9.5 Birthday Invitations

We do not distribute birthday invitations for parents.

9.6 School Evacuation/Critical Incident Drills

Drills are held regularly to ensure the safety of all persons in the event of fire, disaster or critical incident. Students are instructed in understanding signals, exits used, procedures for leaving the building, areas in which to assemble, and procedures for returning to the building.

9.7 School Bus Evacuation Drills

School Bus Evacuation Drills are held twice annually in conjunction with the school bus contractor.

9.8 WRSD Dress/Personal Attire:

Neatness, cleanliness, and appropriateness are the keystones of school dress and appearance in the Wachusett Regional School District. Personal dress and appearance may not violate

reasonable standards of health, safety, cleanliness, and may not result in disruption or disorder within the school.

The WRSD Dress Code for school and school functions hopes to achieve three goals:

1. Promote a respectful learning environment.
2. Promote a safe learning environment where dress does not interfere with the successful and safe completion of learning activities.
3. Promote an equitable and inclusive learning environment in which the dress code does not negatively impact any group based on race, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, ethnicity, religion, disability, socio-economic status, and/or body type/size.

The responsibility of proper dress and grooming rests primarily with the student and his/her/their parents or guardians. We ask that students and parents/guardians work to ensure that the goals outlined above are being met with the student's school dress attire.

Hoods, except those worn in relation to required religious practice or with prior administrative approval due to a disabling condition, **may not be worn within the school building** as such headwear interferes with the identification of students and presents safety concerns. Sunglasses are not to be worn inside the building except with medical authorization and prior approval of the school administration.

Offensive clothing can sometimes be subjective to the individual; however, students should be aware that if symbols, words, or pictures on clothing cause, or are reasonably forecast to cause, a substantial disruption of the school environment, they will be asked to remove and replace the offensive clothing. Offenders may be subject to other disciplinary action as well. To this end, we ask that students and parents be considerate of how dress choices affect the safety and comfort of others. Clothing may not depict, advertise, or advocate the use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana or other controlled substances, and weapons.

In addition, a student's personal dress and appearance must comply with any and all applicable state and federal health and safety regulations.

9.9 Bicycles/Scooters

Children in Grades 4 and 5 are allowed to ride their bicycles or scooters to and from school, but are not allowed to ride or play with them on school grounds during school hours. **A note from home giving permission to ride to and from school is required.** However, considering the amount of traffic on Bullard Street and in our school lot during arrival and dismissal, it is strongly recommended that parents consider the safety of allowing your child/ren to ride their bikes to school.

Massachusetts law requires children 12 years and under to wear a properly fitted and fastened helmet at all times. (School Committee Policy P6411) Students are required to follow the rights and duties of a bicyclist as set forth in Mass. G.L. Ch. 85 sect. 11B. Bike riders must walk their bikes across Bullard St. with the crossing guards and then walk down the walkers' path. **Students may not ride their bikes down the path** because it creates a hazard for the walkers on the path. A

bike lock is recommended since the school is not responsible for stolen bikes.

The privilege of riding a bicycle to school will be taken away at any time if the child does not follow safety procedures or is being harmful to other students.

9.10 Gift Giving

Students/ families may donate gifts that enhance the classroom or school such as markers, glue sticks, books, etc. in lieu of personal gifts to mark any occasion. Books may also be donated to the school library.

9.11 Lost Articles

The school will not assume responsibility for any items (brought to school by students), which are lost or stolen. A Lost and Found Table is maintained in the cafeteria. On a **monthly** basis, unclaimed clothing will be donated to GoodWill.

Pupils are encouraged to turn in any article found to the Lost and Found Table. Items coming to school, including lunch boxes, book bags, coats, hats, boots, and mittens should be clearly labeled with the student's first and last name.

9.12 Care of School Books

Schoolbooks, textbooks, library books, etc. are loaned to students. The student is responsible for the care of these books and must pay for any which are lost or damaged.

Books that are lost or damaged must be paid for in total, including shipping costs.

9.13 School Phone

Students will be permitted to use the telephone with permission of the teacher, the school secretary, and/or the administration. Students will not be called to the telephone except in a case of an emergency. Similarly, messages to students will be delivered in an emergency.

9.14 Student Photographs

As a service to parents, school photographs are taken in the fall and spring at all grade levels. Information regarding fees and packages available is typically sent home prior to photographs being taken.

9.15 School to Home Communication

School-related, PTA and group-sponsored notices are periodically sent home with the students. School-related information is generally provided via School Messenger emails. The Mayo website <https://mayo.wrsd.net/> is also maintained and provides current information. If you do not have access to a computer, and require a paper copy of notices, please contact the Main Office.

9.16 Field Trips

There are two types of field trips:

- Classroom - These are planned in conjunction with an area of study and may be walking or bus trips.

- General - These field trips are planned to include more than one class and are generally bus trips.

All field trips are chaperoned by classroom teachers, parents and sometimes other staff. In order to participate in a field trip all adults **MUST** have a valid **CORI** badge. **The CORI check must be through the Wachusett Regional School District. Forms are available on the Mayo website.** Field trips involving an admission charge will be the responsibility of the parent unless paid for by the parents' group. No student will be excluded from a field trip due to financial hardship. Please contact the teacher or administration if paying the fees is at all difficult, and we will make arrangements for coverage.

9.17 Non-Smoking Policy

As required by Massachusetts Education Reform legislation, smoking is not permitted by any person at any time, anywhere on school property (building or grounds).

10. Code of Conduct

The Wachusett Regional School District shall help students learn behavior patterns which will enable them to be responsible, contributing members of society. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in keeping with their level of maturity and act with due regard for their fellow students and supervisory authority. Students shall have a right to reasonable treatment from the school and its employees and, in turn, the school and its employees shall have a right to expect reasonable behavior from students. The principal will be responsible for administering behavior and discipline procedures at the school in accordance with District policy and school procedures. In order to assure that all students and staff are made aware of their specific rights and responsibilities, this Mayo Elementary Student Handbook defines the rights and responsibilities of students and others whose actions affect student behavior. References to all School Committee policies relating to student discipline will be included in the student handbook.

Corrective actions for misbehaviors outlined in the handbook shall be commensurate with the severity of the misbehavior. Consideration shall be given to the following:

1. age of the student;
2. mitigating circumstances;
3. previous behavior of the student; and
4. attitude of the student.

10.1 Philosophy Of Discipline

At Mayo School, we attempt to utilize Positive Behavioral Interventions when disciplining students for their choices and actions. Effective behavioral interventions help to ensure the safety and dignity of students and staff, and address the causes of a student's misbehavior in order to improve positive behavioral skills and long-term outcomes. Our goal is to provide students with discipline that is both fair and corrective. In addition, it is understood that interventions may require individualization, and should ideally result in a student taking responsibility for their actions, helping to 'correct' or apologize for their choice/ behavior, and learn from their experience.

10.2 General Rules and Consequences

Students attending Mayo School are expected to adhere to our CORE VALUES and conduct themselves in a manner that is safe, kind and respectful at all times.

Students attending Mayo School are forbidden to engage in the following activities during school time or during school sponsored activities:

- Display aggressive behavior or exhibit any verbal or nonverbal behaviors that interfere with or threaten the safety or well-being of another person;
- Possess drugs, alcohol, or tobacco;
- Carry or wear dangerous weapons (i.e., sharp objects, firearms, knives, laser pointers, or any devices or objects that could be used to inflict or threaten bodily harm);
- Possess matches or fireworks;
- Deface, damage, destroy, or steal school or personal property;
- Disrupt or instigate behavior that interferes with the operation of the school, classroom, auditorium, cafeteria or school buses;
- Possess indecent literature;
- Distribute any literature in class without permission from the teacher;
- Intentionally cause or attempt to cause physical injury to another person, except in self-defense;
- Leave school grounds without permission;
- Use profane, offensive or vulgar language;

Failure to comply with established discipline practices and procedures may result in:

- Verbal reprimand
- Parent notification
- Loss of recess
- In-school suspension
- Out of school suspension or expulsion
- Any combination of the above

10.2.1 Discipline at School Related Functions

The school has the authority to discipline students for inappropriate behavior at Mayo School or Mayo School Activities.

10.2.2 School Bus Safety

While waiting for the bus, students should:

- Stay out of the road except when they must cross the street.
- Wait in an orderly manner. Rough behavior or running is inappropriate.
- Not throw stones, snowballs or other objects.
- Avoid trespassing on private property.
- Obey all school rules.
- Line up off the road and approach the bus only when the driver has opened the door.

While riding the bus, students should:

- Listen carefully to the driver's instructions.
- Get on the bus quickly and be seated. Pupils may be expected to sit three in a seat.
- Help keep the bus clean. Eating on the bus is not allowed.
- Be aware of the danger of protruding arms, etc. All parts of the child's body should be kept inside the bus.
- Remain in his/her seat when the bus is moving.
- Restrict his/her talking to those children who are sitting next to him/her. Shouting will distract the bus driver.
- Not use inappropriate language.
- Not fight-bully-tease on the bus.

10.2.3 WRSD Bus Discipline Policy and Procedure

BUS DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES AND CONSEQUENCES

The code below classifies unacceptable behavior into three levels. The examples are not exhaustive but illustrative. Additionally, all consequences are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the misbehavior. The administration reserves the right to consider extenuating circumstances in determining disciplinary action.

LEVEL 1

<u>Misbehaviors</u>	<u>Consequences</u>
Misbehaviors that interfere with the orderly transportation of students. Some examples are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Talking too loudly• Failure to stay seated• Littering on the bus• Tampering with the possessions of other passengers	The bus driver may address the misbehavior: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Verbal warning issued to student• Assign seats

LEVEL 2

<u>Misbehaviors</u>	<u>Consequences</u>
More severe misbehaviors that interfere with the orderly transportation of students. Some examples are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repeated occurrences of Level 1 behaviors• Annoying and/or bullying other passengers• Use of profanity• Damage to the bus	The bus driver reports misbehaviors on the bus. The principal or designee administers consequences. This action may include any or all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conference with principal or designee• Contact with parents• Assigned seats• Loss of bus privileges for up to five days• Suspension from school for up to five days

LEVEL 3

<u>Misbehaviors</u>	<u>Consequences</u>
Behavior that endangers the safety of the driver or students and which impairs the driver's ability to drive safely. Some examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repeated occurrences of Level 1 or 2 behaviors• Refusal to remain in seats• Throwing objects, spitting, or spit balls• Distracting the driver	The bus driver reports misbehaviors on the bus. The principal or designee administers consequences. At more severe levels, the superintendent or designee may be involved. This action may include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Loss of bus privileges for six to ten days• Suspension for 6 or more days or exclusion from school

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refusal to obey driver • Fighting, including pushing and/or wrestling • Lighting matches/lighters • Possession of knives or other dangerous objects • Possession or use of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated incidents of Level 2 behavior or egregious acts may result in a child being permanently suspended from bus privileges • Illegal activity will be referred to the Police Department
--	--

Procedures for reporting passenger misconduct

1. The bus driver will report misconduct occurring on the school bus to the school administration. If a student shares information pertaining to student misconduct on the bus with a teacher or other staff member, the administration will be notified and speak with the bus driver.
2. A School Bus Conduct Report will be completed and submitted to the school administration and the bus company.
3. The principal or designee and the bus company will retain copies of the signed report.

10.2.4 Special Education Discipline

All students are expected to meet the standards for behavior as set by the Wachusett community. Chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws and I.D.E.A. 1997 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 Individual Education Plan (IEP). The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of special needs students:

1. The IEP for every special needs student will indicate if they can meet student management policies or if modifications are needed.
2. The principal (or designees) will notify the Special Education Office of any special needs student who has been suspended. The Director of Special Education will keep these suspensions on record.
3. When it becomes known that a special needs student will be suspended for more than ten days in a school year:
 - 3.1. services will be provided in order to ensure that the student receives FAPE (Free and Appropriate Education), and
 - 3.2. a functional behavioral assessment will be conducted and a behavioral intervention plan will be implemented, and
 - 3.3. the team will conduct a manifestation determination in order to decide whether the infraction is related to the student's disability, and if the team finds that the behavior is a manifestation of the disability, the District may not suspend the student.

10.2.5 In-School Suspension

The student will be isolated from the student body under the supervision of the administration. Students will be expected to complete assignments given by the classroom teachers. The amount of suspension time may range from one class to five days and may include recess and lunch.

In-School Suspension: Prior to the imposition of an In-School Suspension, the student will be informed of the disciplinary offense and provided with an opportunity to respond. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal will provide oral notice to the student and parent of the length of the In-School Suspension and will make reasonable efforts to meet with the parent. On or before the day of the In-School Suspension, the principal will deliver written notice to the parent of the basis for and length of the in-school suspension and invite the parent to meet to discuss the student's behavior if such a meeting has not already occurred.

10.2.6 Out-of-School Suspension/Exclusion/Expulsion - Due Process

Out-of-School Suspension/Exclusion/Expulsion - In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to suspend students from attending school. These instances involve serious disruptions of the school community, or when other forms of discipline do not appear to be effective.

Emergency Removal under Section M.G.L. c. 71 §37H3/4: The 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. M.G.L. c. 71 §37H3/4

Out-of School Suspension: In the case of disciplinary offenses not involving: 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, the student and parents will be given oral and written notice of the disciplinary offense with which the student is charged and the opportunity to participate in a hearing prior to the imposition of an out-of-school suspension. Written notice of the date and time for the hearing will be provided in English and in the primary language of the student's home and will identify the disciplinary offense with which the student has been charged, the basis for the charge, the potential length of the student's suspension, and shall inform the parent and student of the right to interpreter services if necessary to participate in the hearing. Where a student may be subject to a Long-Term Suspension, the Principal will also notify the student and parent of the student's right to legal representation (at private expense), the right to present and examine witnesses, the right to review the student's record and documents that may be relied upon by the Principal, and the right to request that the hearing be audiotaped.

For disciplinary offenses involving: 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, the student will be given oral notice of the violation with which the student is charged and an opportunity to respond thereto prior to the Principal's imposition of a short-term/interim suspension ten (10) consecutive school days or less pending formal disciplinary proceedings. Upon imposition of a short-term or interim suspension or an interim suspension of ten (10) consecutive days or less pending further disciplinary proceedings, the student and parents will be provided with written notice of the suspension and the date and time of any formal disciplinary proceedings to consider the student's long-term suspension or expulsion.

In accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H3/4 and 603 CMR 53.08(3)(d)(5) disciplinary decisions made by the principal's designee for any discipline other than long-term suspensions are not subject to appeal.

Principal's Hearing:

Short-Term Suspension:

At the Principal's hearing, the student and parents (if participating) may dispute the charge(s) against the student and present information, including mitigating facts, for the principal's consideration in determining consequences for the student. Short term suspensions cannot be appealed.

Long-Term Suspension:

In addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student will have the following rights:

- the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;
- 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 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 produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident;
- 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.

Principal's Decision:

Based on the evidence presented at the hearing, the Principal will determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense and the remedy or consequences to be imposed. The Principal shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense and, in cases not involving possession of a controlled substance, a weapon, an assault on staff or felony charges, shall avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. If the Principal decides to suspend or expel the student, written notice of the Principal's decision will be sent to the student and parents in English and the primary language of the home identifying the disciplinary offense, the factual basis for the Principal's decision, the beginning and end dates of the suspension or expulsion, and the process for appeal regarding long-term suspensions and expulsions. The Principal will also notify the student and parent of the student's opportunity to make academic progress during the period of removal from school in accordance with M.G.L. c. 76, §21.

Appeals:

Where the student is excluded in accordance with M.G.L. c.71 §37H, the student shall have ten (10) calendar days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the Superintendent of Schools. For exclusions imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H1/2, the student shall have five (5) school days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the Superintendent. And for exclusions imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71, §37H3/4, the student shall have five (5) calendar days from the effective date of the suspension imposed by the Principal but shall be granted an extension of seven (7) calendar days upon request.

Students with Disabilities:

Students who have been identified as students with disabilities in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or who the school has reason to believe might be eligible for special education services are entitled to additional procedural protections when a disciplinary exclusion is considered. In many cases, a student with a disability will be entitled to services identified by the student's Team as necessary to provide the student with a free appropriate public education during periods of disciplinary exclusion exceeding ten (10) school days in a given year. For additional information regarding the rights of students with disabilities in the context of school discipline, please contact the Principal or the Director of Special Education.

11. Mayo School Safety and Security Plan

11.1 Access to School Building

- All doors will be locked during the school day. All visitors will be allowed entry by office personnel.
- All visitors must report to the office upon entry. Signs will be located at all entrances to alert visitors to this request.
- School volunteers will report to the office, sign in and wear an identification badge.
- Unscheduled visits to classrooms will be discouraged without authorization from school administration.

11.2 Safety in Classrooms

- Fire doors will be kept closed at all times.
- Evacuation plans will be clearly marked and routes to egress will be clear and accessible.
- Each classroom will have an individual monitoring system for students entering and leaving the room.
- Student daily attendance will be monitored at the start of each school day and parents of absent children will be notified.

11.3 Safety in Hallways

- Students are expected to **walk** at all times in the hallways. Running and "speed walking" are not allowed in order to maintain maximum safety.
- Teachers will be located in classroom doorways at arrival and dismissal to supervise hallway and classroom conduct.
- Groups of students (physical education, art, and music classes) will be supervised by an adult when moving between classes.
- An adult will supervise all bus lines through the building, outside and on to the bus to ensure safe loading.

11.4 Safety on School Grounds

- Rules will be defined and published for safe use of the playground.
- The school will provide adequate adult supervision at each recess break.
- An adult will accompany walkers until they leave school property.

- In accordance with state law, any child sixteen years of age or younger must wear a helmet while on a bicycle path or public way.

11.5 Responsibilities of the Staff and the Plan Implementation

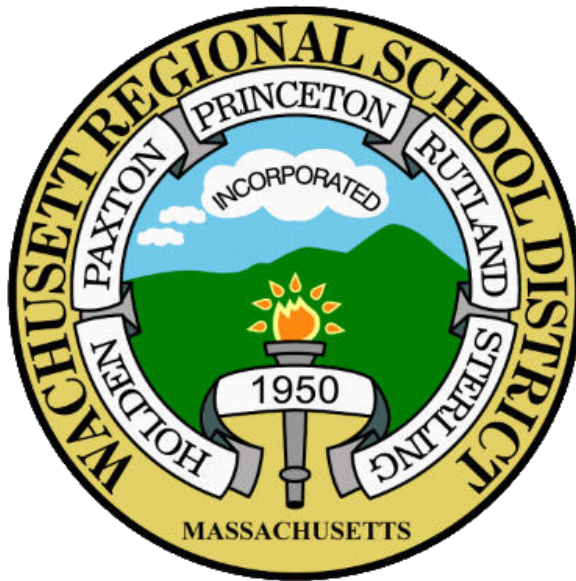
Staff will:

- Be alert to student welfare at all times.
- Exercise good judgment in planning and implementing any instructional or other activity.
- Notify the office should any strangers be observed in or around the building.
- Review the rules for school evacuation procedures with aides and volunteers.
- Annually review with the school nurse the rules for proper precaution when dealing with bodily fluids.
- Inspect interior and exterior grounds regularly to ensure safe conditions.

Thank You!

WRSD Student Handbook Addendum

Policies and Procedures



2023-2024

The Wachusett Regional School District does not tolerate discrimination or harassment of students, parents, employees, or the general public on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy status, disability, homelessness, religion, age, or immigration status. Consistent with the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act, the District also does not discriminate against students on the basis of homelessness.

Table of Contents

Nondiscrimination Statement	2
Use of Cameras / Surveillance	2
Physical Restraint Information	2
Disciplinary Due Process	3
STUDENT SUSPENSIONS AND/OR EXPULSIONS:	3
NOTICE OF SUSPENSION HEARING:	3
LONG-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND DETERMINATION	4
APPEAL OF LONG-TERM SUSPENSION	5
EMERGENCY REMOVAL	5
IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION UNDER 603 CMR 53:02(6) & 603 CMR 53.10:	5
SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION FOR DISCIPLINARY OFFENSES UNDER M.G.L. 71 §37H and/or 37H1/2:	6
SCHOOL-WIDE EDUCATION SERVICES PLAN FOR STUDENTS SUSPENDED OR EXPELLED FROM SCHOOL (M.G.L. c. 76, § 21, 603 CMR 53.13:	7
DISCIPLINE AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES	8
Selected Massachusetts Laws - Student Conduct	10
School Committee Policies	13
POLICY 1000 NON-DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT	13
POLICY 1020 NON-DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF DISABILITY	13
POLICY 1523 DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE PUBLICATIONS	14
POLICY 3611.4 ENRICHMENT	15
POLICY 3625 TEACHING ABOUT ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUGS	15
POLICY 6400 BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE	16
POLICY 6431.1 TOBACCO PRODUCTS ON SCHOOL PREMISES PROHIBITED	17
POLICY 6433.1 ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUG USE BY STUDENTS PROHIBITED	17
POLICY 6515 STUDENT PUBLICATIONS	18
POLICY 6613.2 ATHLETIC HEAD INJURY AND CONCUSSION POLICY	18
POLICY 6621 TRANSPORTATION SAFETY AND SECURITY PROCEDURES	19

Nondiscrimination Statement

The Wachusett Regional School District does not tolerate discrimination or harassment of students, parents, employees, or the general public on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy status, disability, homelessness, religion, age, or immigration status. Consistent with the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act, the District also does not discriminate against students on the basis of homelessness.

Use of Cameras / Surveillance

Parents, guardians, and students should be aware that security cameras and video recording systems are in use at all WRSD schools, for the purposes of monitoring the interior and exterior of school buildings, to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of students, staff, and visitors, and to protect school facilities.

While riding on buses or vans, students are under the jurisdiction of the school administration. For purposes of monitoring and student safety, school transportation vehicles may be equipped with video and audio recording systems. All students may be subject to video and audio surveillance for this purpose while riding a school bus or van.

Physical Restraint Information

The Wachusett Regional School District complies with the requirements of Massachusetts statutes and regulations governing the use and reporting of physical restraint in schools. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37G; 603 CMR 46.00. Physical restraint is defined as direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint does not include: brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort.

Physical restraint is considered an emergency procedure of last resort and may be used only when: (a) the student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to self and/or others; and (b) less intrusive interventions are ineffective or deemed to be inappropriate under the circumstances. Physical restraint in a public education program shall be limited to the use of such reasonable force as is necessary to protect a student or another member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. Physical restraint is prohibited in the following circumstances: (a) as a means of punishment; or (b) as a response to property destruction, 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.

In the event that a physical restraint is administered, the parents/guardians will be notified orally within twenty-four (24) hours of the restraint and shall be provided with a written Restraint Report within three (3) school days of the restraint. 603 CMR 46.06.

Disciplinary Due Process

STUDENT SUSPENSIONS AND/OR EXPULSIONS:

NOTICE OF SUSPENSION HEARING:

Except in the case of an emergency removal or disciplinary offense defined under M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H1/2 or an in-school suspension as defined by 603 CMR 53.02(6), the school shall provide the student and parent/guardian with written and oral notice of the proposed out-of-school suspension, an opportunity to be heard at hearing, and the opportunity to participate at the hearing.

The Notice shall set forth in plain language:

- A. the disciplinary offense;
- B. the basis for the charge;
- C. the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
- D. the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal or principal's designee concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent/guardian to attend the hearing;
- E. the date, time, and location of the hearing;
- F. the right of the student and student's parent/guardian to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;

The principal, or principal's designee, shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. In order to conduct a hearing without the parent/guardian present, the principal, or principal's designee, must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent/guardian. Reasonable effort is presumed if the principal or principal's designee sent written notice and documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent/guardian in the manner specified by the parent/guardian for emergency situations.

All written communications regarding notice of proposed suspension shall be either by hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal/principal's designee and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.

SHORT-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND DETERMINATION

A short-term suspension is the removal of the student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. Out-of-school short-term suspensions which do not cumulatively over the course of the school year exceed ten (10) school days of suspension shall be conducted in accordance with this section.

Principal's Hearing. The purpose of the hearing with the principal or the principal's designee for such purposes, is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student has committed the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts. A parent/guardian present at the hearing shall have the opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances. Under applicable regulations, students do not have a right to be represented by an attorney at a short-term suspension hearing.

Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal or principal's designee will make a determination whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequence. The principal or principal's designee will provide notification in writing of his/her determination and provide reasons for the determination. If the student is suspended, the principal/principal's designee

shall inform the parent/guardian of the type and duration of the suspension, and shall provide an opportunity for the student to make up assignments and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal. If the student is in grades pre-k through 3, the principal/principal's designee shall send his/her determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons prior to imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect. All written communications regarding the hearing and principal determination shall be either hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.

Students do not have the right to appeal a short-term suspension imposed in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H3/4 and 603 CMR 53.00.

LONG-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND DETERMINATION

A long-term suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. The purpose of the hearing with the principal or principal's designee is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, to provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, to determine if the student has committed the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal or principal's designee will consider in determining whether alternatives to suspension such as loss of privileges, detention, an apology, a student contract, restitution, and/or probation are appropriate.

Additionally, the student shall have the following additional rights:

- i. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal or principal's designee may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
- ii. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's and/or parent's/guardian's expense;
- iii. 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; and the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school;
- iv. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal or principal's designee. All participants shall be informed that the hearing is being recorded by audio. A copy of the audio recording will be provided to the student or parent/guardian upon request.

Based on the evidence submitted at the hearing the principal/principal's designee shall make a determination as to whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension (the use of evidence-based strategies and programs, such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive interventions and supports) what remedy or consequence will be imposed. If the principal/principal's designee decides to impose a long-term suspension, the written determination shall:

- i. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
- ii. Set out key facts and conclusions reached by the principal/principal's designee;
- iii. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
- iv. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive a specific list of education services to make academic progress while suspended, and the contact information of a school member who can provide more detailed information.
- v. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's/designee's decision to impose a long-term suspension to the superintendent or his/her designee for said purpose within five (5) calendar days, which may be extended by parent/guardian request in writing an additional seven (7) calendar days.

The long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent/superintendent's designee decides to reverse the principal's/principal's designee's determination on appeal. If the student is in grades pre-k through grade 3, the principal/principal's designee shall send his/her determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons prior to imposing an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long-term, before the suspension takes effect. All written communications regarding the hearing and principal's/designee's determination shall be either hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal/principal's designee and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or by other means of communication where appropriate.

APPEAL OF LONG-TERM SUSPENSION

A student who is placed on a long-term suspension shall have the right to appeal the principal's/ principal's designee's decision to the superintendent if properly and timely filed. A good faith effort shall be made to include the parent/guardian at the hearing. The appeal shall be held within three (3) school days of the appeal, unless the student or parent/guardian requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, which the superintendent shall grant.

The student and parent/guardian shall have the same rights afforded at the long-term suspension principal hearing. Within five (5) calendar days of the hearing the superintendent or superintendent's designee shall issue his/her written decision which meets the criteria required of the principal's determination. If the superintendent or superintendent's designee determines the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent/designee may impose the same or a lesser consequence than that of the principal. The decision of the superintendent/superintendent's designee on the student's appeal shall constitute the final decision of the school district with regard to the student's long-term suspension.

EMERGENCY REMOVAL

A student may be temporarily removed prior to notice and hearing when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense within the scope of M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H3/4 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/principal's designee's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days, following the day of the emergency removal. During the emergency removal the principal/designee shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal and the reason for the emergency removal. The principal/designee may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation. The principal/designee shall also provide the due process requirements of written notice for suspensions and provide for a hearing which meets the due process requirements of 603 CMR 53.08 within the two (2) school day time period, unless an extension of time for the hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal/principal's designee, student, and parent/guardian.

A decision shall be rendered orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION UNDER 603 CMR 53:02(6) & 603 CMR 53.10:

In-school suspension is defined as the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not the school premises, for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions over the course of the school year. An in-school suspension may be used as an alternative to short-term suspension.

A principal or principal's designee may impose an in-school suspension as defined above according to the following procedures:

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

consecutively, in a school year. On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal/principal's designee shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal/principal's designee shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal/principal's designee is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least two (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

The principal/principal's designee shall send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the principal/principal's designee for the purpose set forth above, if such meeting has not already occurred. The principal/principal's designee shall deliver such notice on the day of the in-school suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the principal/principal's designee and the parent.

SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION FOR DISCIPLINARY OFFENSES UNDER M.G.L. 71 §37H and/or 37H1/2: The due process notification and hearing requirements in the preceding sections do not apply to the following disciplinary offenses:

- I. Possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, or assault of school staff. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H. A student may be subject to long-term suspension or expulsion if found in possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, or the student assaults a member of educational staff.
- II. Issuance of felony or felony delinquency charges against a student/ Finding or admission of guilt to a felony charge/felony delinquency. A student who has been charged with a felony/felony delinquency may be subject to long-term suspension if the principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. A student who has been convicted of, or who has admitted guilt in a court of law to, a felony or felony delinquency charge may be expelled from school if the principal determines at the student's staff, and the principal determines the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

* All hearings to consider a student's suspension in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H and/or M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H1/2 shall be conducted by the building principal and not by a principal's designee. Appeals of suspensions or expulsions imposed accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H and/or M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H1/2 shall be conducted by the superintendent of schools and not by the superintendent's designee.

Due Process Procedures M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H:

The principal shall notify the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing of the opportunity for a hearing, and the right to have representation (at private expense) at the hearing, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses on the student's behalf. After said hearing, the a principal may, in his/her discretion, decide to impose a long-term suspension rather than expulsion. A student who is suspended from school on a long-term basis or expelled for such an infraction shall have the right to appeal the decision to the superintendent. The student shall have ten (10) calendar days from the date of the long-term suspension/expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his/her appeal. The student has the right to counsel (at private expense) at the hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student was guilty of the alleged offense. The superintendent's decision on the student's appeal shall constitute the final decision of the school district with regard to the student's long-term suspension or expulsion.

Except where circumstances warrant the student's immediate short-term, interim removal from the school premises due to immediate safety concerns or substantial disruption of the school environment, a student

shall not be suspended or expelled from school in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H until a hearing in which the student and parents have the opportunity to participate is conducted by the principal. Prior to the imposition of any such short-term interim removal, the principal shall, at a minimum conduct a preliminary informal hearing with the student to inform the student of the violation(s) of which the student is accused and provide the student with the opportunity to respond thereto.

Due Process Procedures M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H1/2:

Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony, or the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal may suspend a student for a period of time determined appropriate by the principal if the principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. Except where circumstances warrant the student's immediate short-term, interim removal from the school premises due to immediate safety concerns or substantial disruption of the school environment, a student shall not be suspended or expelled from school in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H1/2 until a hearing in which the student and parents have the opportunity to participate and to be represented by an attorney (at private expense) is conducted by the principal.

Prior to the hearing to consider the student's long-term suspension or expulsion in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H1/2, the principal shall notify the student and parents in writing of the charges and of the date and time of a hearing to consider the Student's possible long-term suspension or expulsion at which the student has the right to be represented by an attorney (at private expense) and to present evidence and witnesses in the student's defense. Upon the conclusion of said hearing, and prior to the effective date of any long-term suspension or expulsion imposed, the principal shall issue a written decision notifying the student and parents of the principal's findings and determinations, the effective date and length of any long-term suspension or expulsion imposed, and of the student's right to appeal to the superintendent any long-term suspension or expulsion imposed by the principal within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the principal's decision.

Superintendent Appeals M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H1/2:

The hearing on the student's appeal of any long-term suspension or expulsion imposed by the principal shall be conducted within three (3) calendar days of the submission of the student's appeal request. Pending the superintendent's decision on the student's appeal, the long-term suspension or expulsion imposed by the principal shall remain in effect. At the appeal hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, and the right to counsel (at private expense). The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal. The superintendent shall render a written decision on the student's appeal within five (5) calendar days of the appeal hearing.

SCHOOL-WIDE EDUCATION SERVICES PLAN FOR STUDENTS SUSPENDED OR EXPELLED FROM SCHOOL (M.G.L. c. 76, § 21, 603 CMR 53.13:

(1) Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

(2) Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and to make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide Education Service Plan.

(3) Each school has a process for developing a school-wide Education Service Plan for education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive school days. Students and their parents will be notified of the alternative educational services available to through the school or school district and of the process for arranging such services at the time of suspension/expulsion. 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 M.G.L. c 69, §§ 1D and 1F.(4)

Notice of Education Services for Students in Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion; Enrollment Reporting.
(a) The principal shall notify the parent and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or suspended in excess of ten (10) consecutive school days. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

(b) For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive school 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.

DISCIPLINE AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. In addition to those due process protections afforded to all students, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the regulations issued pursuant to said statutes require that additional provisions be made for:

Students who have been found eligible for special education services under the IDEA.

Students who the school district knows or has reason to know might be eligible for special education services. The school is deemed to have knowledge that a student is a student with a disability if before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred: (1) the student's parent/guardian expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel, or the student's teacher, that the student is in need of special education and related services; (2) the student's parent/guardian requested an evaluation of the child; or (3) the student's teacher, or other school personnel, expressed specific concerns directly to the director of special education or to other supervisory personnel about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student.

The school is not deemed to have knowledge of a disability if (1) the parent/guardian has not allowed an evaluation or has refused special education and related services, or (2) the child has been evaluated and determined not to be a child with a disability.

Students who have been found to have a disability that substantially limits a major life activity, as defined under §504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

These students are generally entitled to increased procedural protections prior to imposing discipline that will result in the student's removal for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or where there is a pattern of short term removals that exceed ten (10) school days in a given year.

If a request is made for an evaluation of a student's eligibility for special education services during the time period in which the student is subjected to disciplinary measures, the evaluation shall be conducted in an expedited manner. Until the evaluation is completed, the student shall remain in the educational placement determined by school authorities. If the student is subsequently found eligible, then he/she receives all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.

The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of students with disabilities:

Students with disabilities may be excluded from their programs for ten (10) school days or less in the school year to the extent that such sanctions would be applied to all students. Before a student with a disability can be excluded from his/her program for more than ten (10) consecutive days in a given school year or subjected to a pattern of removal constituting a "disciplinary change of placement," building administrators, the parents/guardians, and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team will meet to determine the relationship between the student's disability and behavior (Manifestation Determination).

If building administrators, the parents/guardians, and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the student's conduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the school may discipline the student in accordance with the procedures and penalties applicable to all students but will

continue to provide a free appropriate public education to those students with IEPs. The student's IEP Team will identify the services necessary to be provided in addition to any services to which the student is entitled through the school's Education Services Plan so as to ensure the student's free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion, review any existing behavior intervention plan or, where appropriate, conduct a functional behavioral assessment of the student. Eligible Section 504 students shall be entitled to receive alternative education services in accordance with the school's Education Services Plan during any suspension or expulsion in excess of ten (10) consecutive days.

If building administrators, the parents/guardians, and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the conduct giving rise to disciplinary action was a manifestation of the student's disability, the student will not be subjected to further removal or exclusion from the student's current education program for the incident of misconduct (except for conduct involving weapons, drugs, or resulting in serious bodily injury to others) until the IEP or 504 Team develops, and the parents/guardians consent to, a new placement, or unless the school obtains an order from a court or from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA) or a court authorizing a change in the student's placement. The student's Team shall also review, and modify as appropriate, any existing behavior intervention plan or arrange for a functional behavioral assessment.

If a student with a disability possesses or uses illegal drugs, sells or solicits a controlled substance, possesses a dangerous weapon on school grounds or at a school function, or causes serious bodily injury to another on school grounds or at a school function, the school may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to forty-five (45) school days regardless of whether the conduct was a manifestation of the student's disability. A court or BSEA Hearing Officer may also order the placement of a student who presents a substantial likelihood of injury to self or others in an appropriate interim setting for up to forty-five (45) school days.

Selected Massachusetts Laws - Student Conduct

1. M.G.L. c.71, § 37H – Policies Relative to Conduct of Teachers or Students: Student Handbooks

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 37H:

(A) 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; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

(B) Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

(C) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal may, in their discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

(D) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

(E) Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

2. M.G.L. c.71, § 37H ½ - Felony Complaint or Conviction of Student - Suspension: Expulsion: Right to Appeal

(1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of

the city, town, or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

(2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town, or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

M.G.L. c.71, § 37H ³/₄ - Suspension or Expulsion on Grounds other than Those set forth in Secs. 37H or 37H ¹/₂

(a) This section shall govern the suspension and expulsion of students enrolled in a public school in the commonwealth who are not charged with a violation of subsections (a) or (b) of section 37H or with a felony under section 37H¹/₂.

(b) Any principal, headmaster, superintendent or person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and shall not suspend or expel a student until alternative remedies have been employed and their use and results documented, following and in direct response to a specific incident or incidents, unless specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies are unsuitable or counter-productive, and in cases where the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school. Alternative remedies may include, but shall not be limited to, : (i) mediation; (ii) conflict resolution; (iii) restorative justice; and (iv) collaborative problem solving."

(c) For any suspension or expulsion under this section, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled, or a designee, shall provide, to the student and to the parent or guardian of the student, notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student. The student shall receive the written notification and shall have the opportunity to meet with the principal or headmaster, or a designee, to discuss the charges and reasons for the suspension or expulsion prior to the suspension or expulsion taking effect. The principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall ensure that the parent or guardian of the student is included in the meeting, provided that such meeting may take place without the parent or guardian only if the principal or headmaster, or a designee, can document reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in that meeting. The department shall promulgate rules and regulations that address a principal's duties under this subsection and procedures for including parents in student exclusion meetings, hearings or interviews under this subsection.

(d) If a decision is made to suspend or expel the student after the meeting, the principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall update the notification for the suspension or expulsion to reflect the meeting with the student. If a student has been suspended or expelled for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year, the student and the parent or guardian of the student shall also receive, at the time of the suspension or expulsion decision, written notification of a right to appeal and the process for appealing the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student; provided, however, that the suspension or expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing. The principal or headmaster or a designee shall notify the superintendent in writing, including, but not limited to, by electronic means, of any out-of-school suspension imposed on a student enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3 prior to such suspension taking effect. That notification shall describe the student's alleged misconduct and the reasons for suspending the student out-of-school. For the purposes of this section, the term "out-of-school suspension" shall mean a disciplinary action imposed by school officials to remove a student from participation in school activities for 1 day or more.

(e) A student who has been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year shall have the right to appeal the suspension or expulsion to the superintendent. The student or a parent or guardian of the student shall notify the superintendent in writing of a request for an appeal not later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion; provided, that a student and a parent or guardian of the student may request, and if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days. The superintendent or a designee shall hold a hearing with the student and the parent or guardian of the student within 3 school days of the student's request for an appeal; provided that a student or a parent or guardian of the student may request and, if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days; provided further, that the superintendent, or a designee, may proceed with a hearing without a parent or guardian of the student if the superintendent, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent or guardian. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, cross-examine witnesses and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal in writing within 5 calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension or expulsion.

(f) No student shall be suspended or expelled from a school or school district for a time period that exceeds 90 school days, beginning the first day the student is removed from an assigned school building.

4. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37L – Notification to School Personnel of Reporting Requirements for Child Abuse and Neglect and Fires; Reports of Students Possessing or Using Dangerous Weapons on School Premises, Transferred Students' School Records

The school committee of each city, town or regional school district shall inform teachers, administrators, and other professional staff of reporting requirements for child abuse and neglect under section 51A of chapter 119 and the reporting requirements for fires under section 2A of chapter 148.

In addition, any school department personnel shall report in writing to their immediate supervisor an incident involving a student's possession or use of a dangerous weapon on school premises at any time.

Supervisors who receive such a weapon report shall file it with the superintendent of said school, who shall file copies of said weapon report with the local chief of police, the department of children and families, the office of student services or its equivalent in any school district, and the local school committee. Said superintendent, police chief, and representative from the department of children and families, together with a representative from the office of student services or its equivalent, shall arrange an assessment of the student involved in said weapon report. Said student shall be referred to a counseling program; provided, however, that said counseling shall be in accordance with acceptable standards as set forth by the board of education. Upon completion of a counseling session, a follow-up assessment shall be made of said student by those involved in the initial assessment.

A student transferring into a local system must provide the new school system with a complete school record of the entering student. Said record shall include, but not be limited to, any incidents involving suspension or violation of criminal acts or any incident reports in which such student was charged with any suspended act.

School Committee Policies

POLICY 1000 NON-DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

The Wachusett Regional School District does not tolerate discrimination or harassment of students, parents, employees, or the general public on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy status, disability, homelessness, religion, age, or immigration status. Consistent with the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act, the District also does not discriminate against students on the basis of homelessness.

The Superintendent shall designate at least one administrator to serve as the compliance officer for the District's non-discrimination policies in education-related activities, including but not limited to responding to inquiries related to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Americans with Disabilities Act; the Age Act; M.G.L. c. 76, § 5; M.G.L. c. 151B and 151C; and 603 C.M.R. § 26.00. Inquiries about the application of Title IX to the District may be referred to the District's Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, or both.

The Wachusett Regional School District'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 employment, admission to a public school of the District 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, pregnancy or pregnancy status, age, homelessness, disability or immigration status.

In addition to designating at least one administrator to handle inquiries regarding the District's non-discrimination policies, the Superintendent shall adopt and publish one or more grievance procedures for addressing reports of discrimination, harassment and retaliation under the protected classes identified in this policy. If an individual is interested in filing a complaint that they have been discriminated against because of their race, color, sex, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy status, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, homelessness, disability, or immigration status, their complaint should be filed in accordance with the District's grievance procedures for discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.

The student and personnel handbooks and grievance procedures shall identify the name, office address and telephone number for the compliance officer(s) for the above-referenced statutes. This policy and related grievance procedures shall be posted on the District's website.

POLICY 1020 NON-DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF DISABILITY

The Wachusett Regional School District believes that individuals with disabilities are integral members of the school community.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires that no qualified individual with a disability shall be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, employment opportunities, and activities of the school district or be subject to discrimination in District programs. Similarly, no school district shall 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. The Wachusett Regional School District complies with the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Definition: A "qualified individual with a disability" is an otherwise qualified individual, determined through an individualized process to have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities and 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 or, in case of eligible students, to ensure a free appropriate public education as defined under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Communications: The District shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that communications with applicants, participants, students, and members of the public with disabilities are as effective as communications with non-disabled individuals. 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. 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 District's appointed ADA Coordinator 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.

Auxiliary Aids and Services: "Auxiliary aids and services" includes, but are not limited to: (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 Modifications: 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.

Notice: The District shall make available to applicants, participants, students, beneficiaries, and other interested persons information regarding the provisions the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the applicability of those statutes 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 and/or Section 504.

Compliance Coordinator: The District shall designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, including any investigation of any complaint communicated to it alleging its noncompliance or alleging any actions that would be prohibited under the ADA and/or Section 504. The District shall make publicly available 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 and/or Section 504.

POLICY 1523 DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE PUBLICATIONS

The Wachusett Regional School District shall, in accordance with the Massachusetts General Laws and Department of Education regulations, provide all publications as approved by the School Committee and required by the State Department of Education.

The School Committee Policy Book shall be made available for review to any person, upon request to the Superintendent's Office. Copies of said publications shall be placed in each of the five (5) Town Libraries and all school libraries. A nominal fee, not to exceed the cost of production, shall be charged to any person requesting a copy of one of the publications.

This policy shall be included in all Student Handbooks.

POLICY 3611.4 ENRICHMENT

The Wachusett Regional School Committee is committed to providing a high quality education for all students with the goal of maximizing the performance and achievement of every individual. Staff is encouraged and expected to use innovative teaching implementing the District curriculum in creative and flexible ways.

It is recognized that students possess a broad range of intellectual skills and creative talents that can be challenged by diverse and stimulating activities.

Wachusett Regional School District shall:

- provide opportunities for enriching activities appropriately accessible to all students;
- encourage and support staff attendance at professional development programs designed to promote the implementation of gifted and talented instructional strategies;
- promote the use of alternative strategies which may include, but are not limited to, cluster grouping, curriculum compacting, interest-based projects, independent studies, and teacher-pupil contracting, supported by appropriate classroom resources; and
- inform parents of the enriching activities available in the area of gifted education and promote parent/community involvement and participation.

This policy shall be referenced in each school's student handbook. In addition, school councils shall annually review the needs of gifted and talented students.

POLICY 3625 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.

Prevention requires education, and healthy decision-making. The objectives of this program are:

- To prevent, delay, and/or reduce alcohol, tobacco, and drug use among children and youth.
- To increase students' understanding of the legal, social, emotional, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, 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, and drug use.

The curriculum, instructional materials, and outcomes used in this program shall be recommended by the Superintendent and approved by the Wachusett Regional School District Committee.

This policy shall be posted on the District's website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents/guardians 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.

POLICY 6400 BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

The Wachusett Regional School District shall help students learn behavior patterns which will enable them to be responsible, contributing members of society. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in keeping with their level of maturity and act with due regard for their fellow students and supervisory authority. Students shall have a right to reasonable treatment from the school and its employees and, in turn, the school and its employees shall have a right to expect reasonable behavior from students.

The principal will be responsible for administering behavior and discipline procedures at the school in accordance with District policy and school procedures. In order to assure that all students and staff are made aware of their specific rights and responsibilities, a student handbook shall be developed by each school, which defines the rights and responsibilities of students and others whose actions affect student behavior. References to all School Committee policies relating to student discipline will be included in the student handbook.

Corrective actions for misbehaviors outlined in the handbook shall be commensurate with the severity of the misbehavior. Consideration shall be given to the following:

1. age of the student;
2. mitigating circumstances;
3. previous behavior of the student; and
4. attitude of the student.

Student Handbook. The student handbook shall be reviewed annually with input sought from the school council. The student handbook shall be printed and distributed to all enrolled students and all staff members at the start of each school year. The student handbook shall include, but not be limited to, sections dealing with:

1. student rights and responsibilities;
2. student behavior and discipline; and
3. glossary of terms.

Each building principal shall be responsible for providing orientation to the handbook to all enrolled students and all staff members at the start of the school year. The provisions of the student handbook shall be applied to students in a standardized, nondiscriminatory and non-arbitrary manner.

Liability for Damages. The Wachusett Regional School District shall seek compensation for District property willfully damaged by a minor or student age 18 years or older. Civil action may be brought against the minor or his/her parents, or the individual if 18 years of age or older. All incidents shall be investigated, liabilities fixed, and all costs assessed in a nondiscriminatory and non-arbitrary manner. Schools shall be monitored to ensure that findings of liability are in accordance with District procedures in affording due process guarantees.

Corporal Punishment. Corporal punishment is prohibited. Staff shall develop alternative techniques for managing student discipline in accordance with District policy.

Searches. Wachusett Regional School District authorities may exercise their rights to conduct an inspection of student lockers and/or desks. A student shall not misuse lockers and desks assigned by school authorities. Lockers and desks remain, at all times, the property of the District.

A warrant-less search (non-emergency) of a student's school locker or articles carried upon the student's

person, may be conducted if there is a reasonable suspicion that the search is necessary to protect the health and/or safety of students and staff, or to detect a violation of school rules. Such a search may be conducted if school authorities suspect that a student possesses such items as, but not limited to, weapons, dangerous instruments, stolen goods, narcotics, hallucinogenics, amphetamines, barbiturates, marijuana, unregistered drugs, controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, or evidence of cheating or other academic misconduct.

Student Suspensions. The Wachusett Regional School District shall ensure that each pupil has an atmosphere and an environment which is conducive to teaching and learning. To that end, schools shall maintain programs which maximize opportunities for learning and minimize disruptions to the educational process. The District's first concern shall be to help maintain pupils in school so that their learning process is not interrupted.

Students who create discipline problems which cannot be resolved through less severe means shall be suspended. As a last resort, the District shall, at the discretion of the school principal, and following the required due process, deny a pupil the right to attend school for a period not to exceed ten (10) days. The principal's decision is final.

Students will have the right and the responsibility to complete all assignments and make up all tests missed during the suspension. It will be the student's responsibility to confer with teachers and to complete make-up work within a reasonable time but in no instance exceeding three weeks after the suspension expires.

Expulsion. Expulsion shall be considered an action of last resort when the behavior of the student warrants such action at the discretion of the school principal. The expulsion shall be governed by Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 71, sections 37h and 37h1/2, and Ch. 76 section 17

POLICY 6431.1 TOBACCO PRODUCTS ON SCHOOL PREMISES 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 school buildings, school facilities, on school grounds or school buses, or at school-sponsored events by any individual, including, but not limited to, 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.

POLICY 6433.1 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 except for prescribed medical purposes within any school or on school grounds at any time. The Wachusett Regional School District Committee (WRSDC) also prohibits the use or consumption by students of the aforementioned on school grounds or school buses, 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.

Verbal Screening

- The school district shall utilize, in accordance with law, a verbal screening tool approved by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to screen students for substance abuse disorders. The tool shall be administered by trained staff on an annual basis at grades 7 and 10.
- Parents/guardians shall be notified of the screening 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/guardians 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.

POLICY 6515 STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

The Wachusett Regional School Committee recognizes and supports student publications and other literary activities that give students an experience in journalism.

The School Committee recognizes that the District must maintain a level of objectivity deemed to be in the best interest of the community and, to this end, the following procedures are in effect:

1. No school publication will accept advertising that is political, religious, or discriminatory in nature.
 2. All advertising is subject to review and approval by the principal or a designee relative to content and appropriateness.
 3. Final editorial control and approval of all materials intended for publication are the responsibility of, and may be subject to the approval of, the school administration.
 4. This policy shall be referenced in the "Student Handbook".
 5. A statement indicating the editorial control by the school administration regarding all advertising will be included on order forms or other similar correspondence.
-

POLICY 6613.2 ATHLETIC HEAD INJURY AND CONCUSSION POLICY

The safety of students is a high priority for the Wachusett Regional School District. Students who sustain head injuries while in extracurricular athletic activities and those involved in their treatment must follow the protocol based on 105 C.M.R 201.000

(<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/com-health/injury/105-cmr-201.pdf>) found online on the high school and middle schools' websites as well as in the student handbooks.

Students who have sustained a head injury must be appropriately evaluated according to the protocol. In order to resume athletic activity, a medical clearance and authorization form must be submitted indicating that the student has recovered. Return to academics will be consistent with the protocol.

District administration, athletic staff, and nursing staff will review the protocol annually to ensure that it is current and reflects best practice. The School Committee will review and revise this policy as needed, but at least bi-annually.

POLICY 6621 TRANSPORTATION SAFETY AND SECURITY PROCEDURES

The Wachusett Regional School District and its staff share with students and parents the responsibility for student safety during transportation to and from school. The authority for enforcing District 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 or damages properties will be notified that their children face the loss of transportation privileges. Notification of this policy shall be contained in the Student Handbook.

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 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.
-

WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOLDEN - PAXTON - PRINCETON - RUTLAND - STERLING



Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

REVISED 12/1/20

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Wachusett Regional School District Mission Statement	4
Wachusett Regional School District Core Values	4
I: LEADERSHIP	5
A. Public Involvement in Developing the Plan	5
B. Implementation	5
C. Planning & Oversight	5
II: TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	7
A. Annual staff training on the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan	7
B. Ongoing professional development.	7
C. Written notice to staff	8
III: ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES	9
A. Identifying resources.	9
B. Counseling and other services	9
C. Students with disabilities	9
D. Referral to outside services	9
E. Student Surveys and Data Collection	10
IV: ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES	11
A. Non-Academic Bullying Prevention Efforts:	11
B. Academic Bullying Prevention Efforts:	12
V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION	13
A. Reporting Bullying or Retaliation:	13
1. Reporting by Staff:	13
2. Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others:	13
B. Responding to Report of Bullying, Cyberbullying or Retaliation- Allegations of Bullying	14
1. Safety	14
2. Obligations to Notify Others	14
a. Notice to Parents or Guardians	14
b. Notice to Another School or District	14
c. Notice to Law Enforcement	15
3. Investigation	15
4. Determinations	15
5. Responses to Bullying / Consequences from Findings	16
VI: COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES	18

A. Parent Education & Resources:	18
B. Notification Requirements:	18
VII: PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION	19
VIII: PROBLEM RESOLUTION	20
IX: DEFINITIONS:	21
1. Bullying:	21
2. Cyber-bullying:	21
3. Hostile Environment:	21
4. Target / Victim:	21
5. Aggressor/ Perpetrator:	21
6. Local law enforcement agency:	22
7. Principal:	22
8. Retaliation:	22
X: RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS	23
APPENDICES	24
APPENDIX A: Bullying Reporting Forms	24
APPENDIX B: Research-Based Curricula	27
APPENDIX C: Learning & Life Competencies	29

Wachusett Regional School District Mission Statement

The Wachusett Regional School District seeks to ensure meaningful student growth and promote social emotional well-being in a safe and nurturing environment. We will integrate the talent, experience, and knowledge of all members of our community to develop lifelong learners, equipped to think critically in an ever-changing, global society.

Wachusett Regional School District Core Values

Commitment to Excellence

- Modeling effective teaching that engages and meets the needs of all students
- Providing a rigorous curriculum with expanding options and opportunities for all
- Recruiting and retaining excellent staff

Perseverance

- Tenacity and hard work
- Persisting in the face of obstacles
- Focusing on goals

Critical Thinking

- Analyzing, evaluating, and problem-solving
- Thinking creatively
- Being adaptive

Collaboration

- Listening and communicating effectively
- Maximizing strengths and respecting differences
- Cooperating to reach common ground

Global Citizenship and Responsibility

- Celebrating diversity while recognizing commonalities
- Demonstrating civic respect by giving back to the communities
- Developing student's leadership skills for success in a global society

Creativity and Innovation

- Respecting the diversity of thoughts and ideas
- Embedding the arts into content areas
- Thinking freely, not fearing mistakes

Acceptance and Respect of Others

- Demonstrating tolerance
- Fostering a community of teamwork and collaboration
- Creating an atmosphere of safety and acceptance

I: LEADERSHIP

The WRSD Leadership is committed to implementing the district's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan and in conjunction with community efforts, to promote and ensure a safe and positive teaching and learning environment.

District leaders, community leaders, teachers, parents, guardians, and student leaders, have a primary role in teaching students to regard one another in a respectful, civil, and dignified manner to create an environment that improves and sustains the emotional and behavioral health of all students. These stakeholders will promote understanding and respect for diversity and differences in all venues through modeling respectful behavior and promoting and sustaining a commitment to programs that are focused on supporting social-emotional development at all grade levels.

The WRSD will provide age-appropriate anti-bullying educational experiences for all students in the district. As a school district, WRSD will enhance student achievement by creating and maintaining an educational environment where all students feel safe. In the unlikely event that a student feels uncomfortable, the school culture will strongly support student communication of their concerns to teachers, staff, administrators, parents or guardians.

A. Public Involvement in Developing the Plan

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the Wachusett Regional School District Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan was developed in consultation with school staff, professional support personnel, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, parents and guardians.

Prior to the presentation of this plan to the School Committee, a final draft of the plan will be made available on the WRSD website for Public Comment. The plan will be reviewed biennially (every 2 years).

B. Implementation

Consistent with applicable laws and regulations, all Principals will be implementing, with the support of the Superintendent and/or the School Committee, the following documents/ action plans:

- Receive and investigate reports of Bullying
- Plan intervention support strategies that meet the needs of the targets, aggressors, retaliators, and bystanders involved in the reported incidents
- Choose and implement a Bullying Prevention Curricula that each school will use
- Review, and where necessary, update District student and staff handbooks, and code of conduct
- Lead parent, guardian and family engagement efforts by providing appropriate informational materials for this group
- Collect, analyze, and report on building and district-wide data on past bullying incidents to understand trends and patterns, define the present problem, and create a baseline from which to measure improved outcomes
- Create a Records Retention Plan for incidents

C. Planning & Oversight

The Wachusett Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan has been developed in collaboration with key stakeholders, including school and district administrators, school-based mental health staff, parents, school committee members, and local law enforcement. The principal or designee is

responsible for the implementation and oversight of the plan, except when a reported bullying incident involves the principal or assistant principals as the alleged aggressor. In such cases, the Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for investigating the report and other related steps, including addressing the safety of the alleged target. If the Superintendent is the alleged aggressor, the School Committee or designee shall be responsible for investigating the report and other steps necessary to implement the plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged target.

II: TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O the Wachusett Regional School District must provide ongoing professional development for all staff, including but not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, and paraprofessionals as well as providing opportunities for parent, guardians, and community members to participate in this anti-bullying/ cyber-bullying initiative.

All stakeholders in the Wachusett Regional School District must be made aware of the state anti-bullying law and how it changes the definitions, reporting, investigation, and punishment of bullying incidents. Our School Committee, administrators, and faculty will be responsible for disseminating this information and for projecting how these changes will reflect on cultural changes in our schools as the implementation of M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O moves forward.

A. Annual staff training on the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

School-based annual training for all school staff by the building Principal or designee will include:

- Staff responsibilities under the law
- An overview of the steps that the Principal or his/her designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation
- Modeling bystander expectations and reporting procedures.
- An overview of the bullying prevention curricula to be offered at all grade levels at each school in the district. Staff members hired after the start of the school year will be required to participate in this school-based training during the school year in which they are hired unless they can demonstrate participation in an acceptable and comparable program within the last two years.

B. Ongoing professional development.

The goal of professional development is to establish a common understanding of the tools available for staff to create a school climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences. Professional development will build upon the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying incidents. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the content of school-wide and district-wide professional development, will be informed by research and will include information on:

- Effective and developmentally or age-appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
- Developmentally or age-appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- Information regarding the power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to bullying;
- Current research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment;
- Current information on the nature of cyberbullying

Professional development will also continue to address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 Plans.

Additional areas identified by the Wachusett Regional School District for professional development may include:

- Emphasizing the importance of establishing and maintaining supportive student-teacher/staff relationships in school
- Emphasizing the importance of repairing harm (repairing relationships) in alignment with the Restorative Practices approach
- Teaching empathy, perspective-taking, and respect for the diversity and differences that exist among people
- Focusing on building students' social-emotional learning competencies and skills
- Incorporating trauma-sensitive teaching strategies
- Strategies for promoting prosocial bystander actions

C. Written notice to staff

The school district will provide all staff with an annual written notice of The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. Sections related to staff responsibilities will be included in the District Employee Handbook.

III: ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

A key aspect of promoting a positive school climate is ensuring that the underlying social and emotional needs of targets, aggressors, families, and others are addressed.

Below is a summary of strategies aimed to provide supports and services necessary to meet these needs. In order to enhance the district's capacity to prevent, intervene early, and respond effectively to bullying, cyberbullying and retaliation, these services will be available to reflect an understanding of the dynamics of bullying and to provide approaches to address the needs of targets and aggressors.

The Superintendent or their designee will regularly update and provide to all schools a list of mental health resources available in the community as well as community programs/partnerships that support student well-being. School administrators, staff, and parents will collaborate in determining appropriate referral services.

A. Identifying resources.

WRSD will annually review its capacity to provide counseling and other services for targets, aggressors, and their families. This will include a review of current staffing and programs that foster positive school culture, as well as identifying any gaps in services and resources that need to be addressed. Principals will assess the needs of their individual schools in order to analyze existing resources.

B. Counseling and other services

The District will work collaboratively with school mental health staff and outside agencies to maintain a list of providers that will support schools in developing safety plans for students who have been targets of bullying or retaliation, providing social skills programs to prevent bullying, and offering education and/or intervention services for students exhibiting bullying behaviors. Schools may consider current tools including, but not limited to: behavioral intervention plans, restorative practices, social skills groups, and other related resources and approaches. The district will reference the American School Counseling Association for guidance on these matters.

C. Students with disabilities

As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or that he/she may be vulnerable to bullying or harassment because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to identify and mitigate bullying, harassment, or teasing.

D. Referral to outside services

The school district will use a referral procedure for referring students and families to outside services. Referrals must comply with relevant laws and local policies.

E. Student Surveys and Data Collection

At least once every four years, the Wachusett Regional School District will administer a Department of Elementary and Secondary Education student survey to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in our schools.

Additionally, the district will annually report bullying incident data to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Data from these surveys will be compiled and shared annually with district and school administration as well as School Committee in order to promote continual improvement.

IV: ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

Wachusett Regional School District seeks to create a safe, respectful and caring school and classroom environment for all students regardless of their race, color, national origin, creed, religion, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, age, physical appearance, socioeconomic status, family situation or disability. WRSD will lay the foundation for a positive school climate in pre-school and will continue to teach, nurture, and positively reinforce prosocial behavior throughout students' academic experiences.

- Each grade level will be provided developmentally-appropriate and evidence-based curriculum and instruction to teach pro-social skills that support academic success. Engaging Schools identifies these skill sets as follows: ([see Appendix C: Learning & Life Competencies](#))
 1. ***Self-Awareness:*** *The ability to accurately assess my feelings, behavior, interests, values, and strengths through my experiences, and name and describe the benefits of skills, behaviors, and mindsets that help me to be a good student.*
 2. ***Self-Management:*** *The ability to express emotions skillfully, manage my emotions by using strategies, sustain focus and pay attention, and accept help, feedback, correction, or consequences with good will.*
 3. ***Social Efficacy:*** *The ability to listen respectfully, make an effort to understand the emotions, words, and actions of others, and help and support others.*
 4. ***Academic Efficacy:*** *The ability to invest in quality work, organize to learn and study, and set goals and self-assess.*
- The entire school community (e.g. students, teachers, parents, bus drivers, lunchroom staff, janitorial staff, etc.) will work collaboratively to promote a caring and supportive school environment among all of its staff and students.

A. Non-Academic Bullying Prevention Efforts:

- The administration will review student behavioral expectations during assemblies during the first few weeks of school.
- The definition of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation and the protocol for handling incidents of bullying will be emphasized.
- Staff presence will be increased in areas where bullying is most likely to occur, such as bus arrival and departure locations, hallways, lunchrooms, recess, and near restrooms.
- A variety of evidence-based prevention programs to promote diversity awareness and respect for self and others will be explored and offered. District schools currently use the following programs: Second Step, Responsive Classroom, MARC (Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center), and PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) ([See Appendix B for full descriptions of these programs](#))
- Schools will create opportunities for students to engage in a variety of activities that are meaningful to them and that help them to feel positively connected to the school and/or the local community.
- Schools will promote a culture of kindness and community where students are empowered to speak out against bullying.

B. Academic Bullying Prevention Efforts:

- When possible, Learning and Life Competencies for School Success, including related target behaviors, will be incorporated into classroom activities and instruction, as well as other aspects of the school day ([See Appendix C](#))

V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION

WRSD will investigate all bullying, cyberbullying and retaliation incidents in a fair, timely, and thorough manner while being mindful of personal privacy rights and the stigma that a student may experience from being labeled in some way or another. Verified incidents of bullying, in all of its forms will be dealt with appropriately. Dispositions will begin with education and, when deemed necessary, will move to progressively sterner measures.

All disciplinary actions will balance the need for safety and accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior and/or lagging social-emotional skills ([see Learning & Life Competencies in Appendix C](#)).

A. Reporting Bullying or Retaliation:

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member will be recorded in writing.

A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee or to the superintendent or designee when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor or to the School Committee or designee when the superintendent is the alleged aggressor, any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses.

Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously. No disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

When reporting in writing, administrators, teachers, students, parents/guardians, school bus drivers, cafeteria workers, playground monitors, and any and all other staff and community members can access the “**Bullying, Cyber-bullying, Retaliation Incident Referral Form**” ([see Appendix A](#)) in the Main Office of the school, guidance/school psychologist’s office, the nurse’s office, and on the Wachusett Regional School District website.

1. Reporting by Staff:

A staff member will promptly report to the principal or designee any instances of bullying or retaliation witnessed by the staff member or that is reported to the staff member by a student, parent, or other individual and then follow up with an **Incident Referral Form**. The requirement to notify the Principal shall not, however, limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline. ([See Appendix A for reporting form](#))

2. Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others:

The Wachusett Regional School District believes that it is the responsibility of students, parents, guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the Principal or designee.

Any individual who wishes to file such a complaint may request, and shall be provided with, assistance from a school staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff

member, or with the principal. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The filing of a false or fabricated complaint of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation is strictly prohibited and shall result in disciplinary action [\(See Appendix A for reporting forms\)](#).

B. Responding to Report of Bullying, Cyberbullying or Retaliation- Allegations of Bullying

1. Safety

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

2. Obligations to Notify Others

a. Notice to Parents or Guardians

Once an assessment of bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation has been made and been deemed valid, the Principal or his/her designee will immediately inform the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the target and the aggressor of the investigation determination and any actions taken to prevent further incidents. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.

While prior notice of an investigation shall not be required, there may be incidents where parents are notified prior to the Investigation.

In providing notice of investigation findings, the Principal shall maintain the privacy of any child/individual who is not the child of the parents/guardians to whom the notice is provided. The Principal shall not report specific information to the target’s parents/guardians about the disciplinary action taken against an aggressor unless it involves a directive for there to be no communication between the aggressor(s) and victim(s), or another directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

The Principal shall also notify the parents about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s Problem Resolution System and the process for accessing that system, regardless of the outcome of the investigation.

b. Notice to Another School or District

If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All

communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.

c. Notice to Law Enforcement

At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if they have a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the student aggressor.

In making this determination, the principal will, consistent with the Plan and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer, if any, and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.

3. Investigation

The principal or designee will investigate promptly all reports of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s), student developmental factors, and the ages of the students involved.

During the investigation, the principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, and others as necessary. The principal or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged student aggressor, target, and witnesses of the importance of the investigation, their obligation to be truthful and that retaliation against someone who reports bullying or provides information during a bullying investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Interviews may be conducted by the principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the principal or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school or district policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

4. Determinations

The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The principal or designee will:

- 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and
- 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or student aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directives that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

The principal or designee shall inform the parent or guardian of the target about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's problem resolution system and the process for accessing that system, regardless of the outcome of the bullying determination.

5. Responses to Bullying / Consequences from Findings

Bullying behavior can take many forms and can vary dramatically in its level of seriousness and what impact it has on the target and other students. Accordingly, there is no one prescribed response to verified acts of bullying. While conduct that rises to the level of "bullying," as defined in this Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, will generally warrant disciplinary action against the aggressor, whether and to what extent disciplinary actions are imposed (e.g., detention, suspension, etc.) is a matter for the professional discretion of the Building Principal or his/her designee.

District administrators will integrate a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach compensatory social-emotional skills and target behaviors. The needs and safety of the target will also be considered as part of restoring resolution to the bullying matter. Verified acts of bullying shall result in intervention by the building Principal or his/her designee and will address the acts of the aggressor and the needs of the target, and assure the sanction against bullying behavior is enforced with the goal that the bullying behavior will cease and desist.

Consequences should be considered with the following factors in mind:

- A. Nature, severity, and chronicity of the behavioral impact on the target
- B. Degree of physical, psychological, social harm on the target
- C. Student's age, development, and degree of maturity
- D. Surrounding circumstances and context in which the incident(s) occurred
- E. Prior disciplinary history and persistent patterns of behavior
- F. Relationship between and among the parties involved
- G. Context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred
- H. The need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior and social-emotional skills.

The appropriate range of consequences, subject to due process where appropriate, may include but are not limited to:

- A. Verbal explanation and/or reprimand focusing on the nature of the harm caused
- B. Temporary removal from the classroom
- C. Loss of privileges (including before and after school activities)
- D. Detention
- E. In-school suspension
- F. Out-of-school suspension
- G. Reassignment of seats in lunch, bus, class, etc.
- H. Reassignment of classes
- I. Referral to an outside agency

J. Report to law enforcement

In addition, instructional activities designed to develop the skills and proficiencies necessary to avoid engaging in further bullying and/or retaliatory behaviors will be given, which may include, but are not limited to:

- A. Reparation to the target in alignment with the Restorative Practices philosophy and model
- B. Completion of a related curricular based assignment(s)
- C. Meeting with Civil Rights Coordinator
- D. Completion of community service designed to increase the aggressor's skills in empathizing with others
- E. Therapeutic support, including counseling or referral, for both aggressor(s) and target(s)

***** All completed Bullying Reports will be forwarded to Central Office for record-keeping and review. *****

VI: COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

Wachusett Regional School District recognizes the importance of collaboration with families in order to optimize the school's effectiveness in preventing and responding to bullying.

A. Parent Education & Resources:

The District will offer education programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and social competency work being done in the District. The programs will be offered in collaboration with the PTO, PTA, School Councils, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, and other similar organizations.

B. Notification Requirements:

Each year the school or district will inform parents or guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyberbullying and online safety. The school or district will send parents written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the school's or district's Internet safety policy. All notices and information made available to parents or guardians will be in hard copy and electronic formats and will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians. The school or district will post the Plan and related information on its website.

VII: PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

All students will be afforded the same protection under this Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, regardless of their status under the law.[L1] We recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to become targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing based on actual or perceived 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.

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:

- A. on school grounds, on property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, at a function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or bullying school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the school district or a school; and at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related or through
- B. the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. As stated in M.G.L. c.71 Sec.37O nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, witnesses bullying or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the district or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

VIII: PROBLEM RESOLUTION

Under Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2014 amended Section 37O of chapter 71 of the General Laws, any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seek assistance outside of the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/prs/guide/default.html>, emails can be sent to compliance@doe.mass.edu or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information are also available at the Superintendent's office.

IX: DEFINITIONS:

1. Bullying:

The repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that:

- I. causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property;
- II. places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his/her property;
- III. creates a hostile environment at school for the victim;
- IV. infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or
- V. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

2. Cyber-bullying:

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. Cyberbullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of 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 clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

3. Hostile Environment:

A situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the target's education.

4. Target / Victim:

A student who has been subject to bullying or retaliation

5. Aggressor/ Perpetrator:

A student or a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional who engages, either individually, or as part of a group, in bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation.

6. Local law enforcement agency:

Local police department

7. Principal:

The administrative leader of a school in the Wachusett Regional School District or his/her designee for the purposes of investigating and responding to reports of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation.

8. Retaliation:

Intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying. Retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

X: RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school or district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school or district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies. In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Bullying Reporting Forms



Wachusett Regional School District

Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, Sterling

Bullying, Cyber Bullying, and Retaliation Incident Referral Form

Thank you for taking a few minutes to fill out this form. Our intent is to take all bullying reporting incidents seriously and to investigate them immediately. No disciplinary action will be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report, however please be advised that making a **knowingly false report** may result in disciplinary consequences.

This form is to be confidentially maintained in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g.

1. Name of Reporter: _____ (please print)
☐ I would like to remain anonymous
2. Date of filing of this report _____
3. Date of Incident _____
4. What type of incident was this? ☐ Bullying ☐ Cyber Bullying ☐ Online (texting / cell phone)
5. Where did the incident take place: ☐ on school property ☐ on a school bus ☐ at a bus stop
☐ at a school sponsored activity/event ☐ Other _____
6. Please tell us who you are: ☐ Student ☐ Parent ☐ Other (specify) _____
☐ Teacher ☐ Administrator
7. If student, state your school: _____ Grade _____ Homeroom _____
8. If staff, state your school or work site: _____
9. To the best of your knowledge, did a physical injury result from this incident?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Sure

10. Information about the Incident:

- | | |
|---|--|
| Name of target (person who was bullied): _____ | Check whether:
<input type="checkbox"/> Student <input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| Name of the aggressor person who is bullying: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Student <input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| Name of any witnesses: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Student <input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Student <input type="checkbox"/> Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Describe what you know about this incident on the back side of this form. (Please be as specific as possible)
After you have completed this form, please submit it to a school administrator.

Jefferson School
1745 Main Street, Jefferson, MA 01522
Telephone: (508) 829-1670 Facsimile: (508) 829-1680
www.wrsd.net



Wachusett Regional School District

Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, Sterling

Student Reporting Form for Bullying and Retaliation

*Our intent is to take all bullying reporting incidents seriously and to investigate them immediately. No disciplinary action will be taken against a student solely on the basis of an initial report. Please be advised that making a **knowingly false report** may result in disciplinary consequences.*

This form is to be confidentially maintained in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g.

Today's Date _____ Date of Incident _____

Name _____ Grade _____

Please indicate **what** is happening, **when** it is happening and **where** it is happening.

What:

When:

Where:

After you have completed this form, please submit it to a school administrator.

Jefferson School
1745 Main Street, Jefferson, MA 01522
Telephone: (508) 829-1670 Facsimile: (508) 829-1680
www.wrsd.net

APPENDIX B: Research-Based Curricula

Second Step: (K - 8)

Second Step is a universal intervention designed for use with all students in a school. Second Step teaches students how to effectively manage their emotions and demonstrate self-control. Research indicates that children who learn and use these skills do better in school academically. Direct observation of student behavior in various settings (i.e., classroom cafeteria, and playground) during different stages of the intervention (i.e., baseline, two weeks after completion, and 6 months after completion) revealed decreases in physical aggression and increases in neutral and pro-social behavior.

Link for further information:

http://www.cfchildren.org/Portals/1/SS_BPU/BPU_DOC/SEL_Bullying_Paper.pdf

Responsive Classroom: (K - 8)

Responsive Classroom is a research-based approach to K-8 teaching that focuses on the strong link between academic success and social-emotional learning (SEL). We believe that high-quality education for every child is built on the foundation of a safe and joyful learning community.

Link for further information:

<https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/about/research/>

PBIS:

Positive behavior support is an application of a behaviorally-based systems approach to enhance the capacity of schools, families, and communities to design effective environments that improve the link between research-validated practices and the environments in which teaching and learning occur. Attention is focused on creating and sustaining Tier 1 supports (universal), Tier 2 supports (targeted group), and Tier 3 supports (individual) systems of support that improve lifestyle results (personal, health, social, family, work, recreation) for all children and youth by making targeted behaviors less effective, efficient, and relevant, and desired behavior more functional.

Link for further information, Elementary:

<http://www.pbis.org/resource/785>

Link for further information, Middle / High School:

<http://www.pbis.org/resource/900>

MARC (Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center) K-5 Bullying and Cyberbullying Curriculum

The goal of this curriculum is to educate children in grades K-5 about bullying and cyberbullying and to raise their awareness about how these behaviors impact children. It utilizes both Teacher-As-Educator and Peer Learning Models.

Link for further information:

<http://marccenter.webs.com/Evaluation%20of%20the%20Massachusetts%20Aggression%20Reduction%20Center%20C2%92s%20K-2.pdf>

Grades 6-12 Advisory Curriculum (Bullying & Cyberbullying)

This is a bullying, cyberbullying, and cyber-behaviors curriculum, designed for use by grades 6 through 12. The Curriculum is divided into Lesson Plans designed to be conducted in a 20-minute period of time. The intention is to enable schools to use the Curriculum either during Advisory Periods regular class periods.

Link for further information:

<http://marccenter.webs.com/advisory-curriculum>

High School Cyber-skills Curriculum

The goal of this research-based curriculum is to increase the knowledge and awareness of children in grades 9-12 about cyber-skills.

Link for further information:

<http://marccenter.webs.com/hscyberskills>

APPENDIX C: Learning & Life Competencies

Positive **MINDSETS** that set the stage for developing Learning and Life Competencies

A **mindset** is a set of deeply held assumptions and beliefs that drive behavior and create powerful incentives to sustain prior habits, choices, and preferred ways of doing things. Mindsets set the stage for academic engagement and developing Learning and Life Competencies. Self-identification with the values of schooling and the roles of a learner will influence the attitudes and perceptions a student holds in relation to his/her learning and academic performance. When students feel that school and school work have value, when they feel a sense of belonging in the classroom, and they approach learning tasks with positive expectations, they have a capacity to sustain their effort over time and express their curiosity, enthusiasm, and personal interest in what they are learning. This boosts students' confidence about their day-to-day experiences and fires up hope in their future. The examples below provide a range of entry points for conversations with students.

EXAMPLES:

- School and school work have value for me.
- I belong to an academic community.
- I approach tasks with positive expectations and an open mind.
- I accept challenges, take academic risks, and push myself to excel.
- My ability and competence grow with my effort.
- I express curiosity, enthusiasm, or personal interest in what I am learning.
- I cultivate personal talents, values, and positive qualities of character.
- I have hope in a positive future I can make for myself.

Learning and Life Competencies for School, College, and Career Success		
Skill Set	Competency	Target Behaviors
Self-Awareness	I know myself.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am aware that my beliefs, mindsets, and emotions impact my capacity to learn and be skillful. 2. I can accurately assess my feelings, behavior, interests, values, and strengths through my experiences. 3. I know when I have done the right thing and when I make mistakes. 4. I know when I bother others or upset them.
	I am aware of skills, behaviors, and attitudes that help me.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. I can name and describe the benefits of skills, behaviors, and mindsets that help me be a good student and a good person. 6. I know what motivates me. 7. I know when it is important to follow rules, procedures, and norms of acceptable behavior.
Self-Management	I identify, express, and manage emotions.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. I name and assess emotions accurately. 9. I express emotions skillfully even when I feel angry, frustrated, or disrespected. 10. I manage my emotions by using strategies to cool down and regain my balance.
	I exhibit self-regulation.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. I sustain my focus and pay attention throughout an activity or task. 12. I work silently without bothering others. 13. I accept help, feedback, correction, or consequences with good will. 14. I follow instructions, procedures and rules.
	I demonstrate perseverance and resiliency.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 15. I persist in my effort until I "get it" and finish the task. 16. I pursue and sustain efforts to complete long-term tasks and achieve long-term goals related to my future. 17. I can right myself and bounce back even when I experience temporary setbacks, failure, or adversity.

Learning and Life Competencies for School, College, and Career Success		
Skill Set	Competency	Target Behaviors
Social Efficacy	I communicate and problem solve effectively	18. I focus my attention on people who are speaking to me. 19. I listen respectfully and paraphrase/summarize or question before speaking. 20. I use school-appropriate language and project appropriate body language. 21. I use problem-solving strategies to work things out. 22. I resolve interpersonal conflicts constructively.
	I demonstrate empathy and respect.	23. I make an effort to understand the emotions, words and actions of others. 24. I respect the dignity of each person and their rights to be heard, to be valued, and to learn in a safe classroom. 25. I accept other viewpoints respectfully and appreciate individual and group similarities and differences. 26. I stand up for people whose rights, identity, or dignity have been violated. 27. I interrupt or call attention to incidents of bullying, harassment, prejudice, or teasing.
	I foster healthy relationships.	28. I greet and talk to people in a friendly manner. 29. I use words of common courtesy like please and thank you, excuse me, sorry about that. 30. I am dependable and follow through on what I say I am going to do. 31. I help and support others.
	I am assertive and I self-advocate.	32. I use neutral, non-aggressive language to express myself. 33. I can verbalize and present my ideas my values, and my needs to others. 34. I take initiative to seek help. 35. I can navigate across different settings in order to present my best self to others.
	I cooperate and participate.	36. I work effectively with different students. 37. I take on various roles and responsibilities to complete the learning task. 38. I take turns, listen to and encourage others, and do my fair share.
	I demonstrate civic responsibility.	39. I volunteer to take on leadership roles or extended responsibilities in a group. 40. I do positive things to make class a good place to learn. 41. I take responsibility for my words and actions and acknowledge the impact of my behavior on the community. 42. I make responsible decisions.
Academic Efficacy	I invest in quality work.	43. I attempt each part of the question, task, assignment, or test. 44. I revise, edit/proof, and correct for quality and accuracy. 45. I push myself to take academic risks. 46. I complete assigned tasks regularly. 47. I engage in critical, reflective and creative thinking.
	I organize to learn and study.	48. I attend class every day and arrive to class on time. 49. I organize myself and manage my materials. 50. I prioritize and manage my time and tasks. 51. I figure out the instructions before I begin a task. 52. I use a range of study strategies to remember and apply key knowledge, skills and understandings.
	I set goals and self-assess.	53. I make sure that I know the criteria for high quality work. 54. I set specific learning goals and identify and adjust action steps to improve my grade. 55. I monitor my academic progress through written and oral self-reflection and conferencing. 56. I can identify the evidence that shows my effort to meet my goal.